

**THE EMERGING SUPERVISORY POWER
IN CHINA: MISCONDUCT AND
REGULATION**

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EAI Background Brief No. 1508

Executive Summary

1. China's leaders have exercised supervisory power, an important institutional arrangement, since the dynastic period to maintain political stability and control the bureaucracy. Under the Xi Jinping administration, China strengthened this power with a newly established national level state organ, the National Supervisory Commission (NSC).
2. The NSC has already worked under the leadership of the party's Central Commission for Discipline Inspection (CCDI) for over a year. Recently, the CCDI enacted new rules to regulate the use of supervisory power and prevent internal official's misconduct.
3. The new rules clarified CCDI's main role as exercising party disciplines and maintaining officials' accountability while the NSC focuses on investigating cases and administering administrative punishment.
4. The rules also spelled out the procedures and responsibilities for case investigation and emphasised the importance of self-supervision such as recording officials' participation and inquiries in the investigation process.
5. The misconduct of supervisory officials is labelled as *Dengxiahei*, or literally the dark under a lamp, is a depiction of the "light" and "dark" of strengthened supervisory power, respectively, the achievement and misconduct of supervisory work in recent years.
6. Since the establishment of the NSC, it has worked jointly with the CCDI on a large number of cases. Particularly, the two bodies listed 655 major cases online from March 2018 to July 2019.
7. Local supervisory bodies were responsible for most of the investigation work in these cases. Guangdong, Jilin and Inner Mongolia had processed more cases than

other provinces, while Fujian had the least cases among Han Chinese inhabiting regions.

8. Half of the investigated officials worked mainly in the government or state-owned enterprises and about one sixth worked solely in the party. They were aged between 36 to 73 and about two thirds fell in the 54-62 year group.
9. Among the 655 cases, 12 were on supervisory officials. The abuse of supervisory power was mostly on investigation procedures.
10. The roots of supervisory misconduct lie in the institutional arrangements and individual incentives. China's supervisory system heavily relies on an internal accountability structure to monitor and regulate its officials' behaviour.
11. The expanded supervision scope and growing workload gave more power to officials, hence creating opportunities for individual misconduct and corruption.