

CHINA'S COAST GUARD REFORM

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Synopsis in English, [Chinese](#), [French](#) and [Spanish](#)

Initiated in 2013, China's maritime law enforcement system, known in the past for its fragmented structure, is well depicted by the metaphor of "five dragons contending for sea jurisdictions". The reform consolidated disparate agencies into the unified China Coast Guard (CCG) Bureau, blending civilian and military interests. While civilian agencies advocated for peaceful enforcement, the People's Liberation Army (PLA) emphasised unified, para-military organisation to bolster capabilities. Under Xi Jinping's leadership, this reform has gained traction, aligning with political goals and strengthening PLA influence. With the support of the People's Liberation Army Navy, the CCG's fleet has expanded, aiming to enhance efficiency and resilience in maritime disputes, particularly in the East China Sea though challenges persist in the South China Sea.

Chinese:

中国海警改革

2013 年启动的中国海上执法体系，过去一直以碎片化著称，用“五龙争海”的比喻来形容。此次改革将不同的机构合并为统一的中国海警局，融合了民事和军事利益。虽然民事机构主张和平执法，但人民解放军强调统一的准军事组织来增强能力。在习近平的领导下，这项改革取得了进展，符合政治目标并增强了解放军的影响力。在中国人民解放军海军的支持下，CCG 的舰队规模不断扩大，旨在提高海上争端的效率和应变能力，特别是在东海，尽管南海的挑战依然存在。

French:

LA RÉFORME DE LA GARDE CÔTIÈRE CHINOISE

Initié en 2013, le système chinois d'application des lois maritimes, connu par le passé pour sa structure fragmentée, est bien décrit à travers la métaphore des « cinq dragons se disputant les juridictions maritimes ». La réforme a regroupé des agences disparates au sein du Bureau unifié des garde-côtes chinois (GCC), mêlant intérêts civils et militaires. Alors que les agences civiles plaidaient en faveur d'une application pacifique, l'Armée populaire de libération (APL) mettait de son côté l'accent sur une organisation paramilitaire unifiée pour renforcer ses capacités. Sous la direction de Xi Jinping, cette réforme s'est accélérée, s'alignant sur les objectifs politiques et renforçant l'influence de l'APL. Avec le soutien de la marine de l'Armée populaire de libération, la flotte de la GCC s'est élargie, dans le but de renforcer son efficacité et sa résilience dans les conflits maritimes, en particulier en mer de Chine orientale, même si des défis persistent en mer de Chine méridionale.

Spanish:

REFORMA DE LA GUARDIA COSTERA DE CHINA

Iniciado en 2013, el sistema de aplicación de la ley marítima de China, conocido en el pasado por su estructura fragmentada, está bien representado por la metáfora de “cinco dragones que compiten por jurisdicciones marítimas”. La reforma consolidó agencias dispares en la Oficina unificada de la Guardia Costera de China (CCG), combinando intereses civiles y militares. Mientras que las agencias civiles abogaban por una aplicación pacífica de la ley, el Ejército Popular de Liberación (EPL) hacía hincapié en una organización paramilitar unificada para reforzar sus capacidades. Bajo el liderazgo de Xi Jinping, esta reforma ha ganado fuerza, alineándose con objetivos políticos y fortaleciendo la influencia del EPL. Con el apoyo de la Armada del Ejército Popular de Liberación, la flota del CCG se ha ampliado, con el objetivo de mejorar la eficiencia y la resiliencia en las disputas marítimas, particularmente en el Mar de China Oriental, aunque persisten los desafíos en el Mar de China Meridional.

Executive Summary

1. China's maritime law enforcement system initiated in 2013 has a history of fragmentation, as exemplified by the image of "five dragons contending for sea jurisdictions". The reform combined military and civilian objectives by uniting different entities into the China Coast Guard (CCG) Bureau.
2. The CCG is responsible for maritime law enforcement and maritime rights protection. Maritime law enforcement entails preventing foreign ships from entering Chinese sovereign and jurisdictional spaces, including internal waters, territorial seas, contingent zones and exclusive economic zones in the East China Sea and South China Sea.
3. Commanded by a vice admiral, the CCG is structured into three regional commands: North Sea Area Command, East Sea Area Command and South Sea Area Command. Coastal provincial authorities also operate their own CCG organisations and ships, reporting to the CCG Corps when necessary.
4. The CCG's shift towards a more assertive policy approach is reflected in its emphasis on maritime rights protection, which diverges from the previous focus on maritime stability preservation. In addition to law enforcement, the CCG engages in maritime disaster relief efforts.
5. The People's Liberation Army (PLA) emphasised cohesive, paramilitary organisation to bolster capabilities, while civilian agencies promoted peaceful enforcement. This reform gained momentum under Xi Jinping's direction, advancing political objectives and bolstering PLA influence.
6. The CCG's fleet increased with the People's Liberation Army Navy's assistance in improving effectiveness and resilience in maritime conflicts, especially in the East China Sea, even though difficulties still exist in the South China Sea.