

**CHINA'S NEW CADRE EVALUATION
SYSTEM**

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Executive Summary

1. In preparation of the Chinese Communist Party's 17th Party Congress in late 2007, China has been engaged since March 2006 in a massive change of guard in all four main components of the Chinese political system—the communist party, the government (inclusive of the People's Court and the People's Procuratorate), the People's Congress, and People's Political Consultative Conference—and at all four levels of the local government: township, county, prefecture and province (including the municipalities at the county, prefecture and provincial levels).
2. Although the succession (换届) is a routine process that occurs at the end of the five-year term of the government, the 2006-7 round is unprecedented in scale and critical for the Hu-Wen team's second term in office if it hopes to realise its own political visions of “scientific view of development” and a “harmonious society”. Above all, it must select the right cadres who are not only loyal but appropriate for the tasks ahead.
3. For that purpose, a new cadre evaluation system has been introduced. It consists of six procedures: “democratic nomination”, “democratic assessment”, “public opinion poll”, “analysis of actual achievements”, “interview”, and “comprehensive evaluation”. Cadres must pass all six successfully to advance to candidacy for promotion.
4. “Democratic nomination” entrusts the nomination of the candidates for evaluation to the colleagues—cadres of the same locality; “democratic assessment” emphasizes the opinions of those who work for or around the candidates, who must have the “majority support” of these people in order to be considered for promotion. These people provide an “insider's view” of the candidate.
5. “Public opinion poll” is used to get an “outsider's view” of the candidate. However, characteristic of the CCP's cautious approach to political reform,

the “public” here refers not to the general public but to the base level deputies of the “People’s Congress” and members of the “People’s Consultative Conference”.

6. It is hoped that the limited “democratization” will create a measure of popular responsiveness badly needed now for heading off social unrest and building a “harmonious society”, while maintaining the CCP rule and political stability.
7. Because of the overwhelming concern for political stability and the CCP rule, the new system also leaves plenty of loopholes for the intervention by the CCP when the situation calls for it. These same loopholes however may also render the new cadre evaluation system ineffective.