

Chain of Command Force List (Draft)

The Chinese Army in India (a.k.a. X Force), 1943-5

General Introduction

In response to the Japanese invasion of Burma, Chiang Kai-Shek had dispatched nine divisions and supporting troops, totalling about 100,000 men, to help stem the tide. Strung out across long lines of communication in unfamiliar territory, and with only a small portion of the force actually deployed to the front, they fared little better than the Anglo-Indian army, and suffered nearly 55% casualties by the end of the retreat. Most withdrew to Yunnan, but two divisions instead accompanied the British into India: the New 38th under Sun Liren (Sun Li-Jen) and the New 22nd under Liao Yaoxiang (Liao Yao-hsiang). Rearmed and retrained by the Western Allies, these came to form what became known as the Chinese Army In India, or X Force, under the overall leadership of Joseph Stilwell as head of the Northern Combat Area Command (NCAC). In time this force swelled to five divisions, organised into the New First Army under Sun Liren, comprising the New 38th and New 30th Divisions, and the New Sixth Army under Lao Yaoxiang, comprising the New 22nd, the 14th and 50th Divisions.

A comprehensive history of X Force will not be included here, but its actions were mainly focussed on the northern part of Burma, where Stilwell hoped to both reopen the land route to China and disable Japanese airfields interdicting Allied air supply over the Himalayas. An ill-conceived attack in the dry season of 1943-4 led to a grinding campaign for control of the Hukawng Valley, which succeeded at the end of March 1944 but at the cost of some 2,700 casualties. With the battles of Imphal and Kohima shattering Japanese forces in the central sector of the front, the subsequent Chinese campaign towards Myitkyina started out with far greater alacrity. The Japanese, however, were able to reinforce their position, and although their 18th Division was badly mauled in the initial attack, Myitkyina became the site of a grinding siege that continued until August. With the prospect of lines of communication to China reopening, the CAI, now augmented by the British 36th Division and the US-led 5332nd Brigade under the overall grouping of the NCAC, formed Slim's left flank in the Allied counteroffensive. Over the opening months of 1945, the NCAC would be drawn down as its Chinese divisions were redployed back to China, where they would eventually meet their end during the civil war against the Communists which resumed after the Japanese surrender.

The CAI was mostly armed by the United States, but also fielded a small selection of British equipment as well. Uniforms could be quite variable: while many wore American helmets, many also fought almost entirely British kit, alongside some troops still wearing the soft caps with which they had marched into Burma in 1942. The US provided M1903 and M1917 rifles, Thompson submachine guns, and 60mm mortars, while the UK provided Brens and Vickers machine guns.

Putting this list together was quite fun despite its rather single-sourced nature. While most CAI platoons were of a standard type (though with a relatively nonstandard degree of organic firepower) that remained consistent down to 1945, the divisional reconnaissance company comprised three types of platoon with radically different armament.

Sources

Basically all the information here is drawn from Leland Ness and Bin Shih's *Kangzhan: Guide to Chinese Ground Forces 1937-1945* (Helion, 2016). Broader histories of China in the Second World War that include the Burma campaign include Rana Mitter's *Forgotten Ally* (Harper Collins, 2014) and Hans van de Ven's *China at War* (Profile Books, 2017). Any errors are my own.

Core Platoons

All CAI troops are rated as Regulars. They should be Poor Jungle Troops until the end of the Hukawng campaign; Experienced afterwards.

CAI Rifle Platoon - Poor -2, Experienced +2				
HQ Elements	Senior Leader, Pistol	Senior Leader, SMG	2 SMGs*	
Rifle Sections 1-3	Junior Leader, Rifle	Bren Team 3 crew	Rifle Team 8 riflemen	
Mortar Section	Junior Leader, Rifle	60mm Mortar Team 5 crew	60mm Mortar Team 5 crew	

The platoon HQ included two runners issued with submachine guns. These can be fielded as a Team unto themselves or incorporated into one or two of the platoon's Rifle Teams.

From July 1944 onwards, one rifleman per section was issued with an M1903 and served as a rifle grenadier. It may be assumed that rifle grenades were used beforehand, but on a more ad hoc basis.

Field commanders had in January 1944 unsuccessfully proposed that each platoon be expanded with ten additional ammunition carriers, two for each Bren and mortar. If you want to employ a platoon enlarged in this way as a field improvisation, raise the platoon rating to +3.

In addition to its establishment strength of 81 rifle platoons (3 regiments of 3 battalions of 3 companies of 3 platoons each), each division had a designated reconnaissance company comprising two bicycle, one cavalry, and one jeep-mounted platoon, all of which had their own distinct structure and armament:

CAI Bicycle Reconnaissance Platoon - Poor -4, Experienced -1				
HQ Elements	Senior Leader, Pistol	Senior Leader, SMG	3 SMGs*	
Recce Sections 1-4	Junior Leader, Rifle	Recce Team 2 SMGs + 4 riflemen		

CAI Cavalry Reconnaissance Platoon - Poor -4, Experienced -1				
HQ Elements	Senior Leader, Pistol	Senior Leader, SMG		
Recce Sections 1-4	Junior Leader, Rifle	Bren Team 3 crew	Rifle Team 3 riflemen	

CAI Jeep Reconnaissance Platoon - Poor ±0, Experienced +5				
HQ Elements	Senior Leader, Pistol	Senior Leader, SMG		
Recce Sections 1-3	Junior Leader, Rifle	Bren Team 3 crew + 1 rifleman + 1 SMG	Bren Team 3 crew + 1 rifleman + 1 SMG	Bren Team 3 crew + 1 rifleman + 1 SMG

Each jeep reconnaissance section apparently comprised three Jeeps and a motorcycle, with four Brens, three Thompsons, and six rifles issued per section. How many, if any Brens were supposed to be dismounted from the jeeps (and was one carried on the motorcycle?) if the section went into action is unclear; I have chosen to go with this unwieldy but plausible setup for a dismounted platoon.

Support

In the support list below, all options in **red text** (mainly engineers and fixed defences) are only available to CAI forces with enough transport and/or time to allow full access to their heavier engineering equipment. This was rare to nonexistent historically, but theoretically conceivable. Options in **blue** are tentative inclusions based on references I ran across in *Kangzhan* that didn't offer much in the way of supporting detail.

Since the CAI's equipment was all Anglo-American, stats for all equipment are to be taken from the core rulebook and the Far East handbook; the latter supersedes the former in case of contradiction.

CAI Support List	
Name	Notes
List One	
Medical Orderly	
Adjutant	
Entrenchment for one Team	
Engineer Wire-Cutter Team	
Engineer Demolition or Mine-Clearing Team	
Barbed Wire	
Jeep (without crew)	
Rifle Grenade Launcher for one Section	All rifle platoon sections have a rifle grenade launcher for free from July 1944 onwards.
List Two	
Pre-Game Barrage	CAI was relatively light on artillery; barrages are subject to the same restrictions as for the Japanese.
AA Machine Guns	
Red Die	
Bicycles	Only for the Bicycle Reconnaissance Platoon
Boys Anti-Tank Rifle Team with 2 crew	
Bazooka Team with 2 crew	
Minefield	
Roadblock	
List Three	
Bicycle or Mounted Recce Section with Junior Leader	A Mounted Recce Section cannot be brought as support for a Mounted Recce Platoon.
Boys Section with Junior Leader	
Bazooka Section with Junior Leader	
37mm M3 Anti-Tank Gun with Junior Leader	
Universal Carrier with 2 crew and Junior Leader	Apparently some 1,100 Carriers were provided to X-Force, but used only for training and never in combat.

Name	Notes
List Four	
Regular Rifle Section with Junior Leader	
MMG with 5 crew	Typically the American M1917A1.
Engineer Flamethrower Team	According to an unreferenced footnote in <i>Kangzhan</i> , Y-Force (the Chinese forces on the Yunnan-Burma frontier) received 120 American flamethrowers, and the Chinese army as a whole had 332 available by April 1945. How many, if any, may have been issued to X Force is unclear.
List Five	
Jeep Recce Section with Junior Leader	Cannot be brought as support for a Jeep Recce Platoon
M3 Stuart with Junior Leader	From January 1944
List Six	
Forward Observation Officer for 81mm mortar platoon	Subject to same restrictions as British and Japanese mortars. Note this is a full platoon and so its bombardment covers an 18" square area.
List Seven	
M4A4 Sherman with Junior Leader	From April 1944

Chinese anti-tank weapons could sometimes be fielded as part of dedicated anti-tank infantry sections with escorting riflemen. As a general rule, formal anti-tank rifle and bazooka platoons were found in the New First Army and the 22nd Division, respectively, but independent teams for both weapons could still be found in nearly all formations.

CAI Portable AT Section				
AT Section	Junior Leader, SMG	Rifle Team 3 riflemen	AT Rifle or Bazooka 6 crew	

The CAI and Chindits never quite linked up properly, but players who wish to may select Chindits as supports during the mid-to-late stages of the siege of Myitkyina, during which the latter captured Mogaung. From July 1944, 36th Division were also attached to the Northern Combat Area Command until late in the year, during which time a CAI platoon can also draw on British regular infantry support.

Force Morale

All CAI platoons use the following morale track:

Morale Track					
Morale	1	2	3	4	5+
Command Dice	2	3	3	4	5
Special				J	

National Rules

Concentrated Fire

When a Leader is attached to a Bren Team and uses two Command Initiatives, the Team may focus their fire against one enemy Team, even when other Teams are present within 4" of the target.

Know Your Enemy

By 1943 China had been at war with Japan for over half a decade, and while equipment and motivation were often in short supply, experience was not. It was not for nothing that the only major Japanese offensive in 1941-2 that failed was in China. The officers and NCOs of the CAI, while suffering a bloody nose during the fall of Burma, would nevertheless have built up a familiarity with the Japanese way of war.

To reflect this, whenever a Japanese player attempts to use a Ruse against a CAI platoon, they must spend an additional 1D3 Chain of Command Points. If this brings the cost above what the player can afford, the Ruse is not executed. This does not expend one of the player's purchased Ruses, but the specific Ruse chosen cannot be attempted again.

A Dragon's Head and a Serpent's Tail

CAI commanders were aware of the limitations of their transport and logistics, and so a heavy emphasis was placed on organic firepower at the platoon, company, and battalion level, on the understanding that support was limited and that the rapid movement of reserves could rarely be counted upon. If under pressure, the infantry would have to dig in and hold out as long as it took.

Although CAI troops must place a Line of Communications marker as normal, any Bad Things Happen rolls that result from its capture are taken without the +2 penalty.