



Written by [Warren Mass](#) on August 21, 2018

Defense Department: Chinese Military Buildup Posing Threat to U.S. Targets

The Defense Department's Annual Report to Congress: Military and Security Developments Involving the People's Republic of China 2018, published on August 16, was the first such report to acknowledge that China poses a direct threat to U.S. territory. The report indicated that China is practicing long-range bombing runs against U.S. targets.



A section of the report about China's bombers warned:

China's bomber force is composed of variants of the H-6 BADGER bomber, and China has worked to maintain and enhance the operational effectiveness of these aircraft. The latest variant, the H-6K which China is fielding in greater numbers, integrates standoff weapons and features more efficient turbofan engines in redesigned wing roots. This extended-range aircraft has the capability to carry six land-attack cruise missiles (LACMs), giving the PLA a long-range standoff precision strike capability that can range Guam.

"Over the last three years, the PLA (China's People's Liberation Army) has rapidly expanded its overwater bomber operating areas, gaining experience in critical maritime regions and likely training for strikes against U.S. and allied targets," the report said.

Last October, *Military Times* published a "Flashpoints" item that cited a statement from unnamed officials at Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam, Hawaii, observing that China has practiced simulated bombing runs targeting the U.S. territory of Guam. This was one of many Chinese activities causing U.S. forces in Hawaii to consider China as the "most worrisome" potential threat in the Pacific.

The report said the officials described the troubling escalation in Chinese military exercises in a briefing held for reporters traveling with Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff General Joseph Dunford.

China "is very much the long-term challenge in the region," the report said, quoting Dunford, who was not part of the briefing. "When we look at the capabilities China is developing, we've got to make sure we maintain the ability to meet our alliance commitments in the Pacific."

Chinese aircraft are also testing U.S. air defense identification zones, the report said, citing the officials, who said that Chinese H-6K "Badger" bombers upgraded with 1,000-mile-range air launched cruise missiles are testing U.S. defense zones around Guam.

The Badgers run "not infrequent" flights to get within range of the U.S. territory, they said.

"The PRC [People's Republic of China] is practicing attacks on Guam," the report stated, quoting the officials.

Photo of Chinese People's Liberation Army Air Force H-6K: [Government of Japan](#)

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