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Congressional commission focuses on China's cyberwar capability

by [Mark Rutherford](#)

In war and possibly in peace, China will wage [cyberwar](#) to control the information flow and dominate the battle space, according to a new report compiled for a congressional commission.

Chinese military strategists see information dominance as the key to overall success in future conflicts and will continue to expand the country's computer network exploitation capabilities, according to the report, titled "Capability of the People's Republic of China to Conduct [Cyber Warfare](#) and Computer Network Exploitation." The report was prepared for the U.S.-China Economic and Security Review Commission under contract by Northrop Grumman's Information Systems Sector.

In a conflict, China will likely target the U.S. government and private industry with long-term, sophisticated computer network exploitation and intelligence collection campaigns, the report concludes. U.S. security agencies can expect to face disciplined, standardized operations; sophisticated techniques; high-end software; and a deep knowledge of the U.S. networks, according to the report ([PDF](#)).

The strategy employed by the People's Liberation Army--China's military organization--is to consolidate computer network attacks with electronic

warfare and kinetic strikes, creating "blind spots" in enemy systems to be exploited later as the tactical situation warrants, according to the report. The strategy, which has been adopted by the world's other technologically inclined armies, is referred to by the PLA as "Integrated Network Electronic Warfare," the report stated.

The emphasis on information warfare has forced the PLA to recruit from a wide swath of the civilian sector, according to the report. As is the case with the [U.S. military](#) and its new Cyber Command, the PLA looks to commercial industry and academia for people possessing the requisite specialized skills and pasty pallor to man the keyboards. And although it hints broadly at it, the report offers no evidence of ties between the PLA and China's hacker community.

The U.S.-China Economic and Security Review Commission reports and provides recommendations to Congress on the national security implications of the bilateral trade and economic relationship between the United States and the People's Republic of China.