



Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessments

PRESS RELEASES

CSBA Introduces New Strategic Choices Tool to Assess China's Military Modernization

August 4, 2022

Related Experts: Jack Bianchi, Madison Creery, Harrison Schramm, Toshi Yoshihara

Washington, DC, July 28, 2022 – The Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessments (CSBA) is pleased to announce the launch of its latest analytical innovation, the China Strategic Choices Tool (SCT). Developed as the result of a dedicated multi-year research and analysis effort, the China Strategic Choices Tool builds on more than a decade of experience with CSBA's proprietary U.S. Strategic Choices Tool. The China Strategic Choices Tool represents a truly unique analytical capability that allows users to explore Chinese defense investments as well as the costs associated with various defense options. Using a relative cost approach to estimate China's military investments, the China SCT allows users to simulate investments in and divestments from a broad portfolio of People's Liberation Army capabilities, allowing users to construct alternative future force structures within budgetary constraints.

To mark the launch of the China SCT, CSBA has released *China's Choices: A New Tool for Assessing the PLA's Modernization*, by CSBA Research Fellow Jack Bianchi, Senior Analyst Madison Creery, Non-Resident Senior Fellow Harrison Schramm, and Senior Fellow Toshi Yoshihara. The report, which advances Western understanding of China's defense resource tradeoffs, is the result of a series of CSBA-organized budgeting and strategic choice simulations using the China SCT. The authors introduce the tool and describe the methodology behind its development. More broadly, they examine how analysts can use relative cost estimates to overcome Beijing's opacity on defense spending, evaluate China's defense modernization tradeoffs, and advance the development of Allied competitive strategies toward a resource-constrained PRC.

According to Dr. Thomas G. Mahnken, CSBA's President and CEO, "The China Strategic Choices Tool represents a much-needed analytical resource for an era characterized by Sino-American competition. It will allow users to explore alternative future scenarios for the Chinese military, and to develop and test various strategies for competition. The China SCT, when coupled with our U.S. SCT and wargaming capabilities, represents a potent analytical tool that can be used to support U.S. and allied national security."