Chinese Northern Combat Area Command ('X' Force)
Burma, Late 1942 to Mid 1944 (ae)
Lieutenant General J W Stilwell

BATTLEGROUP CH-X01
22nd Infantry Division

BATTLEGROUP CH-X03
64th Infantry Regiment

BATTLEGROUP CH-X03
65th Infantry Regiment

BATTLEGROUP CH-X03
66th Infantry Regiment

BATTLEGROUP CH-X01
38th Infantry Division

BATTLEGROUP CH-X03
112th Infantry Regiment

BATTLEGROUP CH-X03
113th Infantry Regiment

BATTLEGROUP CH-X03
114th Infantry Regiment

ADDED IN LATE 1943

BATTLEGROUP CH-X01
30th Infantry Division

BATTLEGROUP CH-X03
88th Infantry Regiment

BATTLEGROUP CH-X03
89th Infantry Regiment

BATTLEGROUP CH-X03
90th Infantry Regiment

ADDED IN FEBRUARY 1944

BATTLEGROUP CH-X04
US 5307th Composite Unit (Provisional)
('Galahad' Force/'Merrill's Marauders') (b)

ADDED IN MARCH 1944

BATTLEGROUP CH-X05
1st Battalion, 1st Provisional Tank Group (c)

ADDED IN MAY 1944

BATTLEGROUP 14A-04
14th LRP Infantry Brigade (Chindits) (d)

BATTLEGROUP 14A-04
77th Indian LRP Infantry Brigade (Chindits) (d)

BATTLEGROUP 14A-04
111th Indian LRP Infantry Brigade (Chindits) (d)

BATTLEGROUP 14A-04
3rd West African LRP Infantry Brigade (Chindits) (d)

ADDED IN JUNE 1944

BATTLEGROUP CH-X05
2nd Battalion, 1st Provisional Tank Group (c)

ADDED IN JULY 1944

BATTLEGROUP
36th Indian Infantry Division (f)

BATTLEGROUP 14A-02
29th Infantry Brigade

BATTLEGROUP 14A-02
72nd Infantry Brigade

(a) Stilwell's Northern Combat Area Command, code-named 'X' Force, was formed in 1942 from the remnants of the Chinese Expeditionary Force formations that had retreated into India following the disastrous attempt to defend Burma against Japanese invasion during the first half of that year. The 22nd and 38th Divisions were completely rebuilt in India using British/US stores and US training. A third division (the 30th) was formed in 1943 from reinforcements flown over the 'Hump' from China and a fourth (50th) was also in the process of forming. Army support troops included a battery each of 105mm and 155mm artillery, plus Combat Engineer and various other ancillary units – particularly road-construction engineers. 'X' Force went on the offensive in February 1944, in conjunction with the assaults by Wingate's Chindits, Merrill's Marauders and the Chinese 'Y' Force.

(b) The 5307th Composite Unit (Provisional), also known as 'Galahad' Force, or informally as 'Merrill's Marauders', was a US Long-Range Penetration unit modelled on the British Chindits. It spearheaded 'X' Force's February 1944 offensive, though was badly misused and suffered terrible casualties, finally being withdrawn in May 1944, after taking Myitkyina against all odds.

(c) The 1st Provisional Tank Group numbered six battalions, though only the 1st Battalion saw any action during 'X' Force's first offensive from February to June 1944. The 1st Battalion mainly supported 22nd Division and Merrill's Marauders during this period. The 1st Battalion had one US Company and two Chinese, while the other battalions were all-Chinese. The 2nd Battalion arrived at the front just as the monsoon set in during June 1944.

(d) Four of the six Chindit Brigades were transferred to Stilwell's command in May 1944, once 'X' Force began pushing into the Chindits' area of operations. However, they were badly misused in the subsequent battles for Myohaung and Myitkyina and suffered horrific casualties. The shattered remnants of 77 & 111 Brigades were withdrawn in July 1944, while 14 and 3 West African Brigades were finally withdrawn in August 1944.

(e) NCAC support elements included a Heavy Artillery Battery with 155mm guns, a Field Artillery Battery with 105mm howitzers, combat engineers and numerous ancillary units.

(f) The 36th Indian Division was flown in to reinforce the garrison of the the newly-captured Myitkyina airfield during July 1944. It lacked its artillery component, though a Chinese artillery battalion was soon added to fill that gap. The division was re-designated as the British 36th Infantry Division on 1st September 1944.

Chinese Northern Combat Area Command ('X' Force)
Burma, Late 1944 to 1945 (ae)

Lieutenant General J W Stilwell (until October 1944)
Lieutenant General D Sultan

Chinese New I Army
Lieutenant General Sun Li-jen

BATTLEGROUP CH-X01
30th Infantry Division

- BATTLEGROUP CH-X03
  88th Infantry Regiment
- BATTLEGROUP CH-X03
  89th Infantry Regiment
- BATTLEGROUP CH-X03
  90th Infantry Regiment

BATTLEGROUP CH-X01
38th Infantry Division

- BATTLEGROUP CH-X03
  112th Infantry Regiment
- BATTLEGROUP CH-X03
  113th Infantry Regiment
- BATTLEGROUP CH-X03
  114th Infantry Regiment

Chinese New V Army
Lieutenant General ?

BATTLEGROUP CH-X01
22nd Infantry Division

- BATTLEGROUP CH-X03
  64th Infantry Regiment
- BATTLEGROUP CH-X03
  65th Infantry Regiment
- BATTLEGROUP CH-X03
  66th Infantry Regiment

BATTLEGROUP CH-X01
50th Infantry Division

- BATTLEGROUP CH-X03
  148th Infantry Regiment
- BATTLEGROUP CH-X03
  149th Infantry Regiment
- BATTLEGROUP CH-X03
  150th Infantry Regiment

BATTLEGROUP
British 36th Infantry Division (b)

- BATTLEGROUP 14A-02
  29th Infantry Brigade
- BATTLEGROUP 14A-02
  72nd Infantry Brigade
- BATTLEGROUP 14A-03
  26th Indian Infantry Brigade (b)
- FIRE SUPPORT ELEMENT CH-X04
  Light Artillery Battalion

BATTLEGROUP
'Mars' Force (c)

- BATTLEGROUP CH-X04
  US 475th Infantry Regiment
- BATTLEGROUP CH-X04
  US 124th Cavalry Regiment
- BATTLEGROUP CH-X04
  Chinese 1st Infantry Regiment

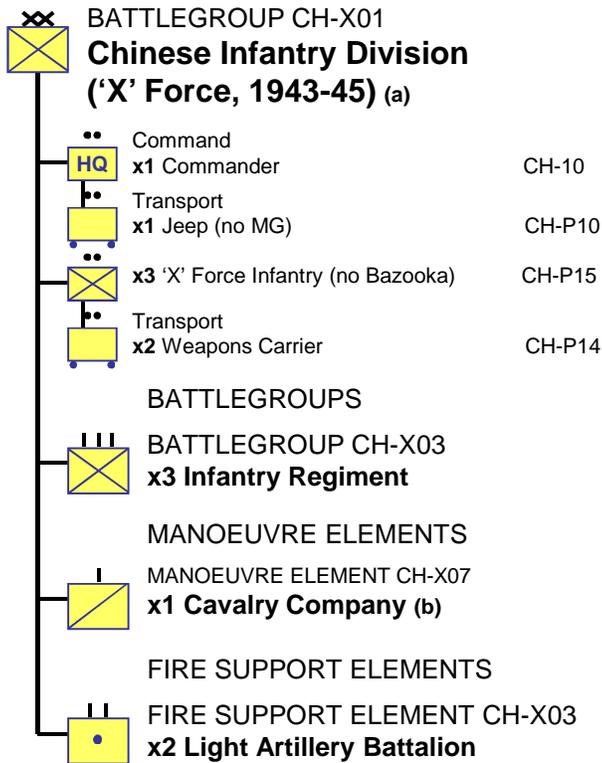BATTLEGROUP CH-X02
1st Provisional Tank Group (d)

(a) 'X' Force launched its second major offensive in October 1944, this time aiming to re-open the 'Burma Road' to China, in concert with 'Y' Force from the East and the British XIV Army from the West. 'X' Force had been expanded to five divisions (four Chinese and one British), organised into two reformed Chinese Armies – New I & New V Armies. However, following ongoing political wrangling, 'Vinegar Joe' Stilwell was replaced in October as overall commander by Lieutenant General Dan Sultan.

(b) The understrength British 36th Division, consisting of just the British 29 & 72 Brigades with very few divisional assets, was stationed on 'X' Force's right flank during the march south. Artillery was provided by the Chinese. It was eventually joined by 32 Indian Mountain Artillery Regiment and 26 Indian Brigade in December 1944. The division was transferred back to the British XIV Army on 1st April 1945.

(c) Following the disbandment of 'Galahad' Force (Merrill's Marauders), the lessons learned from the Marauder and Chindit operations were used to create a new, brigade-sized US-Chinese long-range penetration force, code-named 'Mars' Force.

(d) The 1st Provisional Tank Group had a total of six tank battalions and an Assault Gun Battery. However, while we can be certain that the 1st & 2nd Battalions, plus the Assault Gun Battery saw action, it is not clear if the 3rd to 6th Battalions ever got into action before the war's end.

(e) In addition to 'Mars' Force and the 1st Provisional Tank Group, NCAC support elements included a Heavy Artillery Battery with 155mm guns, a Field Artillery Battery with 105mm howitzers, combat engineers and numerous ancillary units.

BATTLEGROUP CH-X01
Chinese Infantry Division ('X' Force, 1943-45) (a)

Command		
x1 Commander	CH-10	
Transport		
x1 Jeep (no MG)	CH-P10	
x3 'X' Force Infantry (no Bazooka)	CH-P15	
Transport		
x2 Weapons Carrier	CH-P14	

BATTLEGROUPS

BATTLEGROUP CH-X03
x3 Infantry Regiment

MANOEUVRE ELEMENTS

MANOEUVRE ELEMENT CH-X07
x1 Cavalry Company (b)

FIRE SUPPORT ELEMENTS

FIRE SUPPORT ELEMENT CH-X03
x2 Light Artillery Battalion

(a) While most Chinese divisions remained very weak (barely the strength of an Allied Brigade), the 22nd & 38th Divisions with 'X' Force in India were re-equipped from US & British sources and were expanded to be nearer to the strength of a British/Indian Division. The 30th & 50th Divisions were also then re-formed in India along the same lines. They still lacked divisional-level combat support assets, but they did at last have strong regiments and some organic divisional artillery. The training quality of these divisions was also much improved at all levels.

(b) It is not entirely clear as to where 'X' Force's Cavalry Companies fitted into the overall order of battle, but our guess is that they were divisional reconnaissance assets.

BATTLEGROUP CH-X02
Provisional Tank Group (ac)

Command		
x1 M3A3 Stuart 37mm Light Tank	CH-P04	
x2 M3A3 Stuart 37mm Light Tank	CH-P04	

MANOEUVRE ELEMENTS

BATTLEGROUP CH-X05
x1 to x6 Provisional Tank Battalion (b)

MANOEUVRE ELEMENTS

MANOEUVRE ELEMENT CH-X02
x1 to x6 Infantry Company (c)

FIRE SUPPORT ELEMENTS

FIRE SUPPORT ELEMENT CH-X01
x1 Assault Gun Battery (b)
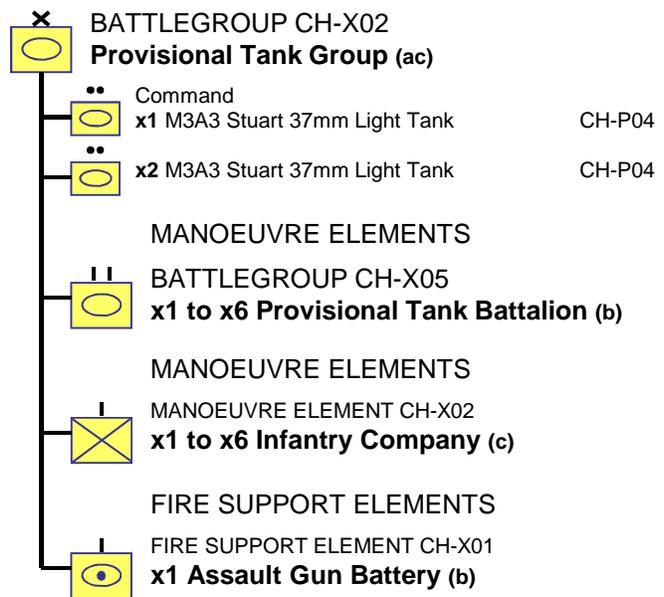
(a) The Provisional Tank Group was formed in India, as part of 'X' Force, in 1943. The Group was commanded by an American, but all battalion commanders and the majority of personnel were Chinese. Most technical personnel were American and the 1st Company of the 1st Battalion was also completely American. The Group never saw action as a complete unit; sub-units were committed piecemeal as they became combat-ready.

(b) The 1st Battalion, including the American Company, saw action from early 1944 onwards, in support of 'X' Force's first offensive, being mainly attached to the Chinese 22nd Infantry Division and the US 'Galahad' Force (i.e. 'Merrill's Marauders'). The 2nd Battalion was moved up to the front line in June 1944 and the 1st Assault Gun Battery was moved forward in August 1944. It is not clear if the 3rd to 6th Battalions ever saw any action during WW2.

(c) There are references in a short history of the 1st Provisional Group to Chinese 'Armored Infantry'. It is clear that these were tank-riders rather than half-track mounted Armored Infantry in the traditional sense. However, it is not clear if these were organic to the Group or were on loan from a Chinese Infantry Division. We suggest adding a single company of infantry (tank-riders) to each tank battalion.

Lt Gen Joseph Stilwell

Lt Gen Sun Li-jen

BATTLEGROUP CH-X03
Infantry Regiment

Command	**x1** Commander	CH-10
Transport	**x1** Jeep (no MG)	CH-P10
Forward Air Controller	**x1** Forward Observer	CH-12
Transport	**x1** Jeep (no MG)	CH-P10
	x3 'X' Force Infantry (no Bazooka)	CH-P15
Transport	**x2** Weapons Carrier	CH-P14

BATTLEGROUPS

BATTLEGROUP CH-X06
x3 Infantry Battalion

MANOEUVRE ELEMENTS

MANOEUVRE ELEMENT CH-X05
x1 Anti-Tank Company

FIRE SUPPORT ELEMENTS

FIRE SUPPORT ELEMENT CH-X02
x1 Mortar Company

BATTLEGROUP CH-X04
LRP Infantry Regiment (ab)

Command	**x1** Commander	US-19
	x3 Marauder Infantry (no Bazooka)	US-P24

MANOEUVRE ELEMENTS

MANOEUVRE ELEMENT CH-X03
x6 LRP Combat Team (c)

(a) While this Battlegroup is correct for 'Galahad' Force (Merrill's Marauders), we have thus far been unable to discover any detail regarding the composition of the three regiments belonging to 'Mars' Force. However, a number of brief descriptions do state that 'Mars' Force was organised and equipped based on the lessons learned from the Chindit expeditions and 'Galahad' Force, so it is highly likely that organisation remained very similar. Note that the three 'Mars' Force regiments fought independently and the Force did not fight as a unified formation.
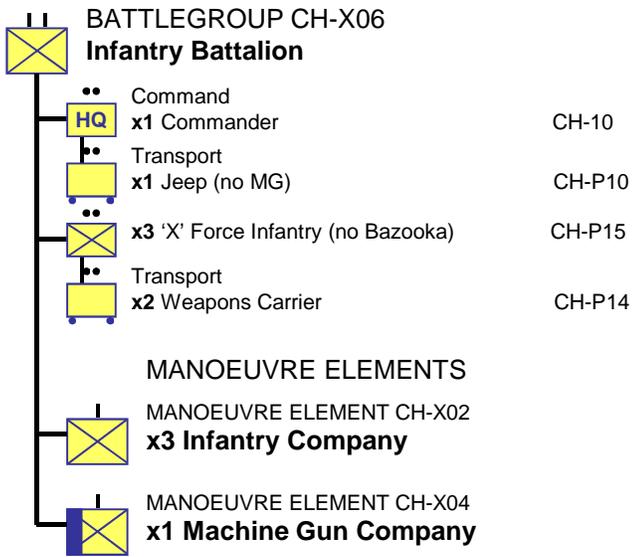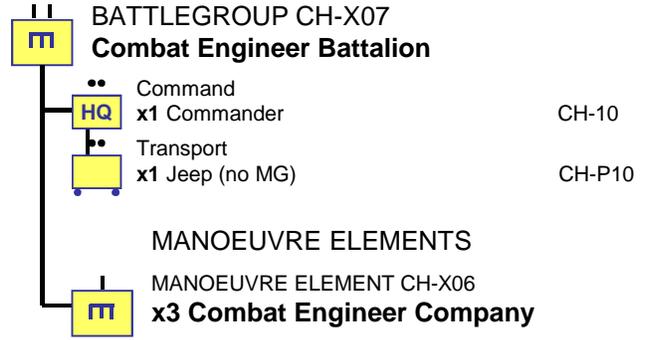
(b) The 1st Chinese Infantry Regiment were by all accounts, organised and equipped identically to the two US regiments of 'Mars' Force – 475th Infantry and 124th Cavalry, so US cards are used throughout.

(c) As in Wingate's Chindits, battalions were used as administrative units, but when in the field the battalions were split into two Combat Teams (the Chindits called them 'Columns').

BATTLEGROUP CH-X05
Provisional Tank Battalion (a)

Command
x1 M3A3 Stuart 37mm Light Tank **(b)**   CH-P04

x2 M3A3 Stuart 37mm Light Tank **(b)**   CH-P04

MANOEUVRE ELEMENTS

MANOEUVRE ELEMENT CH-X01
x3 Provisional Tank Company

(a) The 1st Company of the 1st Provisional Tank Battalion was manned by US personnel. All other units were manned by Chinese personnel, with a smattering of US advisors, technicians and other specialists.

(b) The Provisional Tank Group's tanks were drawn from Lend-Lease stocks supplied to the British and Indian Armies. The unit therefore used types that were not normally used by the US Army. These were M3A3 Light Tanks (known as Stuart Mk V to the British) and M4A4 Medium Tanks (Sherman Mk V in British parlance).

BATTLEGROUP CH-X06
Infantry Battalion

Command
x1 Commander   CH-10

Transport
x1 Jeep (no MG)   CH-P10

x3 'X' Force Infantry (no Bazooka)   CH-P15

Transport
x2 Weapons Carrier   CH-P14

MANOEUVRE ELEMENTS

MANOEUVRE ELEMENT CH-X02
x3 Infantry Company

MANOEUVRE ELEMENT CH-X04
x1 Machine Gun Company

BATTLEGROUP CH-X07
Combat Engineer Battalion

Command
x1 Commander   CH-10

Transport
x1 Jeep (no MG)   CH-P10

MANOEUVRE ELEMENTS

MANOEUVRE ELEMENT CH-X06
x3 Combat Engineer Company

MANOEUVRE ELEMENT CH-X01
Provisional Tank Company (bd)

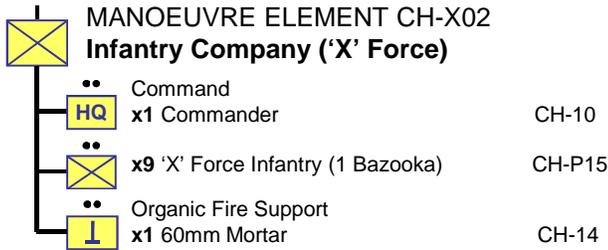|		
	Command	
	x1 M3A3 Stuart 37mm Light Tank	CH-P04
	x4 M3A3 Stuart 37mm Light Tank (a)	CH-P04
	Recce	
	x2 M3A3 Stuart 37mm Light Tank (c)	CH-P04

(a) From 19th April 1944, replace **x2** Stuart per company with:
M4A4 Sherman 75mm Medium Tank   CH-P05

(b) In 1945 add an additional Medium tank to each company:
x1 M4A4 Sherman 75mm Medium Tank   CH-P05

(c) In the American Company (1st Company, 1st Battalion), one Stuart platoon was designated as the Reconnaissance Platoon. It therefore seems probable that the Chinese Companies were also organised in this manner.
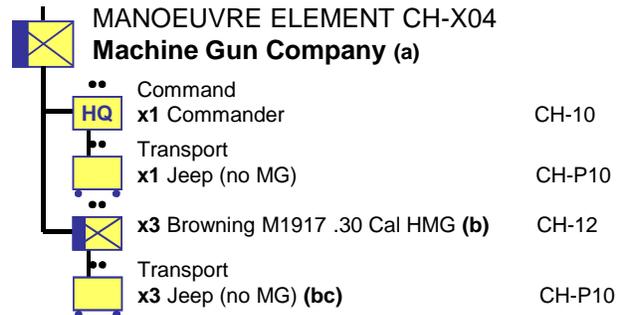
(d) Note that the tanks used by the Provisional Tank Group were taken from Lend-Lease stocks intended for the Indian Army, so for models, look for British Sherman V and Stuart V.

MANOEUVRE ELEMENT CH-X02
Infantry Company ('X' Force)

	Command	
HQ	x1 Commander	CH-10
	x9 'X' Force Infantry (1 Bazooka)	CH-P15
	Organic Fire Support	
	x1 60mm Mortar	CH-14

MANOEUVRE ELEMENT CH-X03
LRP Combat Team (ab)

	Command	
HQ	x1 Commander	US-19
	Forward Air Controller	
▲	x1 Forward Observer	US-21
	x12 Marauder Infantry (1 Bazooka)	US-P24
	Recce	
	x3 Marauder Infantry (no Bazooka)	US-P24
	x3 Combat Engineers (no flame) (b)	US-P20
	x2 Browning M1919 .30 Cal LMG	US-22
	x2 Browning M1917 .30 Cal HMG	US-23
	Organic Fire Support	
	x2 60mm Mortar	US-24
	Organic Fire Support	
	x2 81mm Mortar	US-25
	Transport	
	x6 Pack Mules	

(a) Each Combat Team was particularly well-supplied with officers and each platoon was well-trained and capable of independent action. May therefore divide the Combat Team into smaller, platoon-sized MEs, each of **x3 to x5** units. Designate one unit in each platoon ME as the Platoon Commander.

(b) May place a portion of the Combat Team under the 2IC's command. May therefore add:
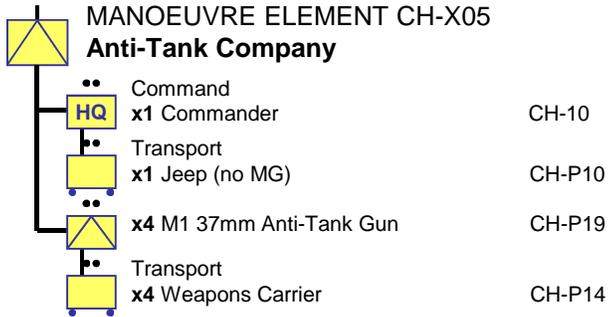**x1** Commander   US-19

(c) We can find no mention of flamethrowers being used by the Marauders, but the Chindits used them and they were also used by 'X' Force Chinese forces at this time. American flamethrowers were even supplied in large numbers to the British-Indian XIVth Army. May therefore arm **x1** Combat Engineer unit with flame.

MANOEUVRE ELEMENT CH-X04
Machine Gun Company (a)

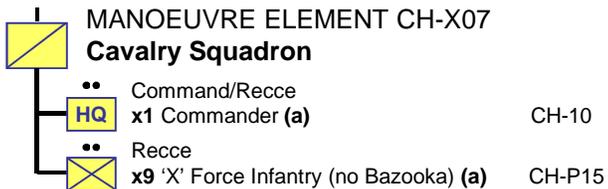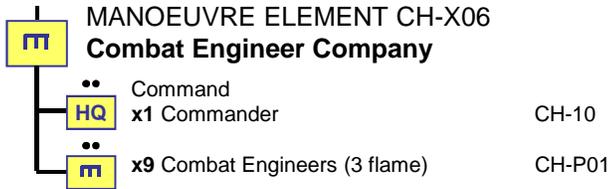|		
	Command	
HQ	x1 Commander	CH-10
	Transport	
	x1 Jeep (no MG)	CH-P10
	x3 Browning M1917 .30 Cal HMG (b)	CH-12
	Transport	
	x3 Jeep (no MG) (bc)	CH-P10

(a) The company may be split up as direct unit attachments to the battalion's other companies.

(b) MGs may fire from their Jeep transports when mounted – use Jeep's MG factors.

(c) Transport may be exchanged for:
Pack Mule

MANOEUVRE ELEMENT CH-X05
Anti-Tank Company

	Command	
HQ	**x1** Commander	CH-10
	Transport	
	x1 Jeep (no MG)	CH-P10
	x4 M1 37mm Anti-Tank Gun	CH-P19
	Transport	
	x4 Weapons Carrier	CH-P14

(a) The company may be split up as direct unit attachments to the regiment's other companies.

MANOEUVRE ELEMENT CH-X06
Combat Engineer Company

	Command	
HQ	**x1** Commander	CH-10
	x9 Combat Engineers (3 flame)	CH-P01

MANOEUVRE ELEMENT CH-X07
Cavalry Squadron

	Command/Recce	
HQ	**x1** Commander **(a)**	CH-10
	Recce	
	x9 'X' Force Infantry (no Bazooka) **(a)**	CH-P15

(a) When mounted, replace Commander and Infantry with:
Cavalry   CH-17

Close Air Support

With the disbandment of the AVG's 'Flying Tigers' in late 1942, 'X' Force's air support was provided by the USAAF's 10th Air Force in Assam. The only fighter or fighter-bomber element of this force was the 51st Fighter Group, equipped with two Fighter Squadrons (25th & 26th) of P-40N Warhawks.

By December 1943, the Allied air forces in India and Burma had expanded massively. The 51st Fighter Group (still equipped with P-40N) had been transferred to Yunan Province in China, to provide close air support and air defence for the Chinese 'Y' Force. Their place in Assam was taken by the following units:

80th Fighter Group USAAF (Dinjan)
88th, 89th & 90th Fighter Squadrons – P-40N Warhawk
459th Fighter Squadron – P-38 Lightning

311th Fighter-Bomber Group USAAF (Dinjan)
528th & 529th Fighter Squadrons – A-36A Apache & P-51A Mustang
530th Fighter Squadron – P-51A Mustang

293 Wing RAF (Alipore)
67 Squadron – Hurricane IIc
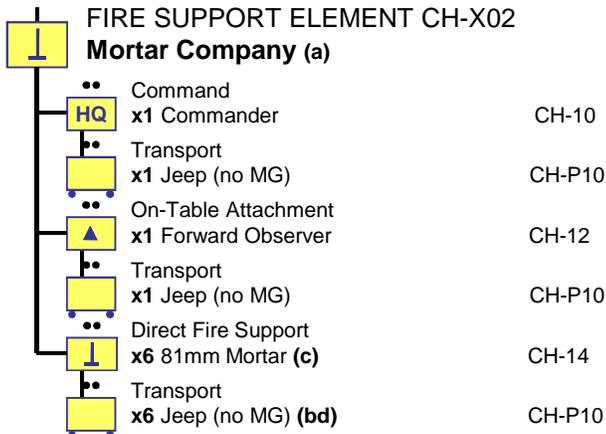146 Squadron – Hurricane IIb
176 Squadron – Beaufighter NF

By July 1944, the situation remained the same, except that 67 & 146 Squadrons RAF had converted to Spitfire VIII and most of the USAAF squadrons had deployed forward to Myitkyina. The 311th Fighter-Bomber Group moved soon afterwards to China.

By December 1944, 293 Wing RAF had been disbanded, with the squadrons dispersed to other RAF Wings in India and Burma. The 80th Fighter Group, still operating from Myitkyina, had converted to P-47 Thunderbolt, though had lost the 459th Fighter Squadron. However, they had been joined at Myitkykina by another fighter group:

33rd Fighter Group USAAF (Myitkyina)
58th & 60th Fighter Squadrons – P-47 Thunderbolt
59th Fighter Squadron – P-38 Lightning
490th Bomb Squadron (Medium) – B-25 (close support role)

The 58th & 60th Squadrons converted to P-38 in April 1945.

FIRE SUPPORT ELEMENT CH-X01
Assault Gun Battery

Command	**x1** M3A3 Stuart 37mm Light Tank	CH-P04
Direct Fire Support	**x3** M7 Priest SP 105mm Howitzer	CH-P22
On-Table Attachment	**x1** Forward Observer	CH-12
Transport	**x1** Jeep (no MG)	CH-P10

FIRE SUPPORT ELEMENT CH-X02
Mortar Company (a)

Command HQ	**x1** Commander	CH-10
Transport	**x1** Jeep (no MG)	CH-P10
On-Table Attachment	**x1** Forward Observer	CH-12
Transport	**x1** Jeep (no MG)	CH-P10
Direct Fire Support	**x6** 81mm Mortar **(c)**	CH-14
Transport	**x6** Jeep (no MG) **(bd)**	CH-P10

(a) The Mortar Battery may be split up as individual unit attachments to MEs or BGs in the Regiment. Note that the FO may only direct the fire of those mortars which remain unified as part of the Mortar Company.
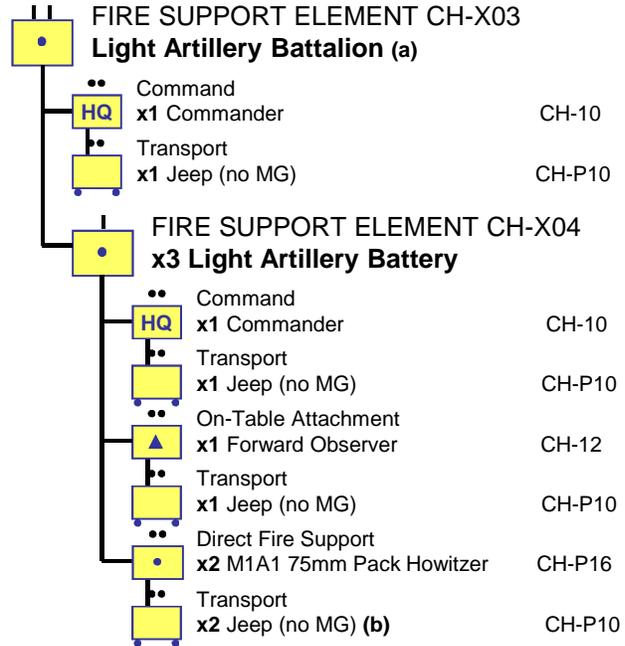
(b) May replace Jeep transports with:
Pack Mules

(c) One of Stilwell's accounts from mid-1944 also mentions the use of 4.2-inch (107mm) mortars, though this isn't confirmed elsewhere. It is entirely possible that 4.2-inch mortars were issued in small numbers to the Chinese forces. May therefore replace some or all mortars in the battery from 1944 with:
4.2-inch Chemical Mortar — CH-P25

(d) Australia supplied the Chinese with SP 3-inch mortars based on the Universal Carrier. May therefore replace 81mm Mortar and transport in some units with:
3-inch Mortar Carrier — CH-P26

FIRE SUPPORT ELEMENT CH-X03
Light Artillery Battalion (a)

Command HQ	**x1** Commander	CH-10
Transport	**x1** Jeep (no MG)	CH-P10

FIRE SUPPORT ELEMENT CH-X04
x3 Light Artillery Battery

Command HQ	**x1** Commander	CH-10
Transport	**x1** Jeep (no MG)	CH-P10
On-Table Attachment	**x1** Forward Observer	CH-12
Transport	**x1** Jeep (no MG)	CH-P10
Direct Fire Support	**x2** M1A1 75mm Pack Howitzer	CH-P16
Transport	**x2** Jeep (no MG) **(b)**	CH-P10

(a) The battalion, or individual batteries, may be split up as individual unit or battery attachments to MEs or BGs within the Division.

(b) May replace Jeep gun-tractors with:
Pack Mules
Weapons Carrier — CH-P14

FIRE SUPPORT ELEMENT CH-X05
Field Artillery Battery

Command HQ	**x1** Commander	CH-10
Transport	**x1** Jeep (no MG)	CH-P10
On-Table Attachment	**x1** Forward Observer	CH-12
Transport	**x1** Jeep (no MG)	CH-P10
Direct/General Fire Support	**x2** 105mm Howitzer	CH-P20
Transport	**x2** GMC 2.5 ton Truck	CH-P17

FIRE SUPPORT ELEMENT CH-X06
Heavy Artillery Battery ('X' Force)

General Fire Support	**x2** 155mm Howitzer	no card