Chinese Northern Combat Area Command (‘X’ Force)
Burma, Late 1942 to Mid 1944

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

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

ADDED IN LATE 1943

BATTLEGROUP CH-X03
89th Infantry Regiment

BATTLEGROUP CH-X03
90th Infantry Regiment

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

ADDED IN MARCH 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 MAY 1944

BATTLEGROUP 14A-02
2nd Battalion, 1st Provisional Tank Group (c)

ADDED IN JUNE 1944

BATTLEGROUP 14A-02
29th Infantry Brigade

BATTLEGROUP 14A-02
72nd Infantry Brigade

ADDED IN JULY 1944

BATTLEGROUP 36th Indian Infantry Division (f)

(f) The 36th Indian Division was flown in to reinforce the garrison of 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.

(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.
**Chinese Northern Combat Area Command (‘X’ Force)**

**Burma, Late 1944 to 1945**

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

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**Chinese New I Army**

Lieutenant General Sun Li-jen

- **BATTLEGROUP CH-X01**
  - 30th Infantry Division
    - BATTLEGROUP CH-X03
      - 88th Infantry Regiment
      - 89th Infantry Regiment
      - 90th Infantry Regiment

- **BATTLEGROUP CH-X01**
  - 38th Infantry Division
    - BATTLEGROUP CH-X03
      - 112th Infantry Regiment
      - 113th Infantry Regiment
      - 114th Infantry Regiment

**Chinese New V Army**

Lieutenant General ?

- **BATTLEGROUP CH-X01**
  - 22nd Infantry Division
    - BATTLEGROUP CH-X03
      - 64th Infantry Regiment
      - 65th Infantry Regiment
      - 66th Infantry Regiment

- **BATTLEGROUP CH-X01**
  - 50th Infantry Division
    - BATTLEGROUP CH-X03
      - 148th Infantry Regiment
      - 149th Infantry Regiment
      - 150th Infantry Regiment

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**British 36th Infantry Division**

- **BATTLEGROUP 14A-02**
  - 29th Infantry Brigade
  - 72nd Infantry Brigade

- **BATTLEGROUP 14A-03**
  - 26th Indian Infantry Brigade

**Fire Support Element CH-X04**

- Light Artillery Battalion

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**Mars’ Force**

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

**1st Provisional Tank Group**

- **BATTLEGROUP CH-X02**

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(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

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**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**

**FIRE SUPPORT ELEMENTS**

**FIRE SUPPORT ELEMENT CH-X01**
-x1 Assault Gun Battery (b)

(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.

(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.

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Lt Gen Joseph Stilwell

Lt Gen Sun Li-jen
(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’).
(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).
MANOEUVRE ELEMENT CH-X01

Provisional Tank Company (bd)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Command</th>
<th>CH-P04</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>x1 M3A3 Stuart 37mm Light Tank</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>x4 M3A3 Stuart 37mm Light Tank (a)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recce</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>x2 M3A3 Stuart 37mm Light Tank (c)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(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)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Command</th>
<th>CH-10</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>HQ x1 Commander</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>x9 ‘X’ Force Infantry (1 Bazooka)</td>
<td>CH-P15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organic Fire Support</td>
<td>CH-14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>x1 60mm Mortar</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(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-X03

LRP Combat Team (ab)

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

(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-X04

Machine Gun Company (a)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Command</th>
<th>CH-10</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>HQ x1 Commander</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transport x1 Jeep (no MG)</td>
<td>CH-P10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>x3 Browning M1917 .30 Cal HMG (b)</td>
<td>CH-12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transport x3 Jeep (no MG) (bc)</td>
<td>CH-P10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(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
**Anti-Tank Company**

- **Command**: CH-10
- **Transport**: CH-P10
- **x4 M1 37mm Anti-Tank Gun**: CH-P19
- **x4 Weapons Carrier**: CH-P14

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

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**Combat Engineer Company**

- **Command**: CH-10
- **x9 Combat Engineers (3 flame)**: CH-P01

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**Cavalry Squadron**

- **Command/Recce**: CH-10
- **Recce**: CH-P15

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

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**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 Yunnan 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 Myitkyina 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
- Direct Fire Support
  - x3 M7 Priest SP 105mm Howitzer
- On-Table Attachment
  - x1 Forward Observer
- Transport
  - x1 Jeep (no MG)

FIRE SUPPORT ELEMENT CH-X02
Mortar Company (a)

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

(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

(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

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

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

(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

FIRE SUPPORT ELEMENT CH-X04
x3 Light Artillery Battery

- Command
  - x1 Commander
- Transport
  - x1 Jeep (no MG)
- On-Table Attachment
  - x1 Forward Observer
- Transport
  - x1 Jeep (no MG)
- Direct Fire Support
  - x2 M1A1 75mm Pack Howitzer
- Transport
  - x2 Jeep (no MG) (b)

FIRE SUPPORT ELEMENT CH-X05
Field Artillery Battery

- Command
  - x1 Commander
- Transport
  - x1 Jeep (no MG)
- On-Table Attachment
  - x1 Forward Observer
- Transport
  - x1 Jeep (no MG)
- Direct/General Fire Support
  - x2 105mm Howitzer
- Transport
  - x2 GMC 2.5 ton Truck

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

- General Fire Support
  - x2 155mm Howitzer

no card