



AS IT IS

Chinese Spy Ships Monitor Australia War Games

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Chinese ships are closely **monitoring** the largest-ever military **drills** involving the United States and Australia. Defense officials expect the high-tech spy ships to remain outside of Australia's territorial waters during the drills.

Around 30,000 military troops from more than 12 countries are joining the drills, called "Talisman Sabre." They include troops from Canada, Germany, Japan and Britain.

Australia is monitoring two Chinese ships. One is reported to be in international waters off Shoalwater Bay in the eastern state of Queensland. Australia made contact with the Chinese ship, which gave a "**courteous** response." That information comes from a senior Australian military officer.

John Blaxland is head of International Security and Intelligence Studies at the Australian National University's Coral Bell School of Asia Pacific Affairs. He said he believes that the monitoring of the war games has become a usual event for China.

He told VOA that it will make Australia and its allies more aware to any possible threat in the future.

He said, "China is a potential **adversary**." And he added, "China is looking to collect information and that in doing so it plans to be in a position potentially to use it against us."

Drills are taking place in the states of Queensland, Western Australia and New South Wales, as well as the Northern Territory.

"Operation Talisman" began more than 10 years ago. This year's event is the largest in terms of its spread and the number of countries taking part. It includes drills on the land, in the air, in the sea, and landings.

Soldiers from Australia, the United States, Japan, and South Korea carried out a joint live-fire event at the Shoalwater Bay Training Area in Queensland on July 22 to launch this year's war games.

Carlos Del Toro, the U.S. Secretary of the Navy, said that the exercise increases the nations' ability to work together in dealing with issues they may face in the Indo-Pacific area.

The drills are set to run until early August.

I'm Gregory Stachel.

Phil Mercer reported this story for Voice of America. Gregory Stachel adapted it for VOA Learning English.

Words in This Story

monitor – *v.* to watch, observe, listen to, or check (something) for a special purpose over a period of time

drill – *n.* an exercise done to practice military skills or procedure

courteous – *adj.* very polite in a way that shows respect

potential – *adj.* capable of becoming real: possible

adversary – *n.* an enemy or opponent

intimidate – *v.* to make (someone) afraid

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