

## China and the South China Sea

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### Defence comment on China's testing of an Intercontinental Ballistic Missile in the Pacific Ocean

- China's People's Liberation Army Rocket Force conducted a test launch of an intercontinental ballistic missile into the Pacific Ocean for the first time in 44 years on 25 September 2024.
  - Beijing advised us of a planned activity the evening prior to the launch, but specific details were not forthcoming.
- Following the launch, Defence and Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade officials raised concerns and sought an explanation from the Chinese Embassy in Canberra on 25 September 2024 (the same day).

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## Timeline of Major Events and Ministerial Announcements

Date	Event
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25 September 2024	China tested an Intercontinental Ballistic Missile carrying a dummy warhead into the Pacific Ocean, the first test outside of China since 1980.
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- On 26 September 2024, ABC [reported](#) on China testing an intercontinental ballistic missile carrying a dummy warhead into the Pacific Ocean.

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Supplementary Estimates November 2024  
Last updated: 5 November 2024  
Key witnesses: Hugh Jeffrey, Air Marshal Robert Chipman, Rear Admiral Jonathan Earley, Bernard Philip

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Prepared by: Karen Radford Assistant Secretary, North and South Asia Mob: s22 Ph: s47E(d) Date: 5 November 2024	Cleared by Division Head: Brigadier Michael Say DSC Acting First Assistant Secretary, International Policy Mob: s22 Ph: s47E(d) Date: 27 September 2024
Consultation: s47E(d) Director, Domestic & Regional Military Strategic Commitments	
Cleared by Deputy Secretary/3 Star: Hugh Jeffrey Deputy Secretary Strategy, Policy, and Industry Group Date: 22 October 2024	

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## QUESTION BRIEF (QB)

### TOPIC: China Bilateral Defence Relationship

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#### ***If asked: What is Australia's comment on China's test launch of an Intercontinental Ballistic Missile?***

- China's People's Liberation Army Rocket Force conducted a test launch of an intercontinental ballistic missile over the Pacific on 25 September 2024.
  - Beijing advised us of a planned activity the evening prior to the launch, but specific details were not forthcoming.
- Following the launch, Defence and Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade officials raised concerns and sought an explanation from the Chinese Embassy in Canberra.

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### BACKGROUND AND CHRONOLOGY

- On 25 September 2024, The People's Liberation Army – Rocket Force test-launched an Intercontinental Ballistic Missile (ICBM) in the Pacific Ocean. This was China's first testing of a nuclear-capable ICBM into the Pacific since 1980.

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