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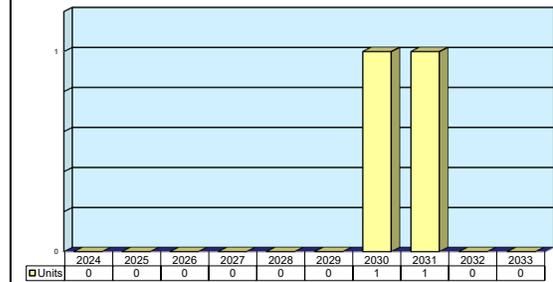
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Project 056 FFL

Outlook

- Very capable small warship
- China's procurement now complete
- Some potential for export

Unit Production Forecast
2024-2033



Orientation

Description. Project 056 Jiangdao class corvette tasked with coastal patrol and general presence, replacing previous generation of small patrol craft.

Sponsor

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Status. In operational service. Chinese production is likely over, while export production is still possible.

Total Produced. An estimated 82 ships (all variants) worldwide are estimated to have been commissioned by the end of 2024.

Application. The Project 056 corvettes were built by four Chinese shipbuilders to replace the aging Type 037 fleet of the People's Liberation Army Navy (PLAN). They can be deployed in patrol, escort, search-and-rescue, surveillance, exclusive economic zone (EEZ) protection, electronic warfare (EW), fishery resources protection, anti-air warfare (AAW), anti-submarine warfare (ASW), and anti-surface warfare (ASuW) operations.

Price Range. The Project 056 is designed to exploit modular construction as a means of producing a range of variants suitable for a variety of customers. The least expensive is the P18 variant that has a unit cost of \$42 million, while the C13 is priced at \$50 million. The Project 056 for the Chinese Navy has been reported to have an estimated cost of \$100 million, with the Project 056A costing \$102 million in 2020 dollars.

Project 056 FFL**Pennant List**

<u>Name</u>	<u>Variant</u>	<u>Builder</u>	<u>Laid Down</u>	<u>Launched</u>	<u>Commissioned</u>
Algeria					
940 <i>El Moutassadi</i>	OPV	Hudong-Zhonghua		8/2021	April 2023
Bangladesh					
F 111 <i>Shadhinota</i>	C13B	Wuchang Shipbuilding	1/8/2013	11/30/2014	12/11/2015
F 112 <i>Prottoy</i>	C13B	Wuchang Shipbuilding	1/8/2013	12/30/2014	12/11/2015
F 113 <i>Shongram</i>	C13B	Wuchang Shipbuilding	8/9/2016	2/12/2018	6/18/2020
F 114 <i>Prottasha</i>	C13B	Wuchang Shipbuilding	8/9/2016	4/8/2018	11/5/2020
China (Navy)					
580 <i>Datong</i>	Project 056	Hudong-Zhonghua		8/2012	5/2013
581 <i>Yingkou</i>	Project 056	Hudong-Zhonghua		11/2012	8/2013
582 <i>Bengbu</i>	Project 056	Hudong-Zhonghua		5/2012	2/2013
583 <i>Shangrao</i>	Project 056	Hudong-Zhonghua		8/2012	6/2013
584 <i>Meizhou</i>	Project 056	Hudong-Zhonghua		7/2012	7/2013
585 <i>Bayse</i>	Project 056	Hudong-Zhonghua		10/2012	10/2013
596 <i>Huizhou</i>	Project 056	Wuchang Shipbuilding		6/2012	7/2013
597 <i>Qinzhou</i>	Project 056	Wuchang Shipbuilding		8/2012	7/2013
586 <i>Ji'an</i>	Project 056	Huangpu Shipbuilding		2/2013	1/2014
587 <i>Jieyang</i>	Project 056	Huangpu Shipbuilding		1/2013	1/2014
588 <i>Quanzhou</i>	Project 056	Huangpu Shipbuilding		6/2013	8/2014
589 <i>Qingyuan</i>	Project 056	Huangpu Shipbuilding		11/2013	6/2014
590 <i>Weihai</i>	Project 056	Huangpu Shipbuilding		7/2013	7/2014
591 <i>Fushun</i>	Project 056	Huangpu Shipbuilding		7/2013	7/2014
595 <i>Chaozhou</i>	Project 056	Huangpu Shipbuilding		11/2013	11/2014
592 <i>Luzhou</i>	Project 056	Dalian Shipbuilding		7/2013	6/2014
593 <i>Sanmenxia</i>	Project 056A	Hudong-Zhonghua		11/2013	11/2014
594 <i>Zhuzhou</i>	Project 056A	Hudong-Zhonghua		11/2013	11/2014
501 <i>Xinyang</i>	Project 056	Dalian Shipbuilding		5/2014	3/2015
503 <i>Suzhou</i>	Project 056	Dalian Shipbuilding		5/2014	2/2015
504 <i>Suqian</i>	Project 056A	Hudong-Zhonghua		6/2014	06/2015
505 <i>Qinhuangdao</i>	Project 056A	Hudong-Zhonghua		10/2014	10/2015
506 <i>Jingmen</i>	Project 056A	Hudong-Zhonghua		12/2014	12/2015
507 <i>Tongren</i>	Project 056A	Hudong-Zhonghua		3/2015	3/2016
508 <i>Qujing</i>	Project 056A	Hudong-Zhonghua		7/2015	7/2016
509 <i>Huai'an</i>	Project 056A	Hudong-Zhonghua		8/2016	8/2016
502 <i>Huangshi</i>	Project 056A	Hudong-Zhonghua		5/2014	3/2016
509 <i>Huaian</i>	Project 056	Huangpu Shipbuilding		12/2014	12/2016
510 <i>Ning'de</i>	Project 056	Huangpu Shipbuilding		10/2015	10/2016
511 <i>Baoding</i>	Project 056	Huangpu Shipbuilding		10/2015	10/2016
512 <i>Heze</i>	Project 056	Huangpu Shipbuilding		11/2015	12/2016
513 <i>Ezhou</i>	Project 056A	Hudong-Zhonghua		10/2015	10/2016
514 <i>Liupanshui</i>	Project 056A	Hudong-Zhonghua			2017
520 <i>Hanzhong</i>	Project 056A	Huangpu Shipbuilding			2017
518 <i>Yiwu</i>	Project 056A	Huangpu Shipbuilding			2017
535 <i>Xuancheng</i>	Project 056	Huangpu Shipbuilding		2016	9/26/2017
556 <i>Yichun</i>	Project 056A	Hudong-Zhonghua			2017
552 <i>Guangyuan</i>	Project 056A	Hudong-Zhonghua		2016	11/2017
551 <i>Suining</i>	Project 056A	Hudong-Zhonghua		2016	11/2017
557 <i>Nanchong</i>	Project 056A	Hudong-Zhonghua		6/2017	6/13/2018
608 <i>Liaocheng</i>	Project 056A	Hudong-Zhonghua		2017	2018
603 <i>Dingzhou</i>	Project 056A	Hudong-Zhonghua			2019
610 <i>Shuozhou</i>	Project 056A	Hudong-Zhonghua		2017	12/10/2019
611 <i>Luan</i>	Project 056	Huangpu Shipbuilding		2017	2020
620 <i>Ganzhou</i>	Project 056	Huangpu Shipbuilding		2017	2020
621 <i>Panzhuhua</i>	Project 056	Huangpu Shipbuilding		2017	2020
623 <i>Wenshan</i>	Project 056	Wuchang Shipbuilding		2017	2020
625 <i>Bazhong</i>	Project 056	Wuchang Shipbuilding		2017	11/5/2019
626 <i>Wuzhou</i>	Project 056	Dalian Shipbuilding		9/12/2016	1/2018

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<u>Name</u>	<u>Variant</u>	<u>Builder</u>	<u>Laid Down</u>	<u>Launched</u>	<u>Commissioned</u>
540 <i>Wuhai</i>	Project 056	Huangpu Shipbuilding		2017	2018
541 <i>Zhangye</i>	Project 056	Huangpu Shipbuilding		2017	2018
554 <i>Dayang</i>	Project 056A	Hudong-Zhonghua		2018	2019
605 <i>Zhangjiakou</i>	Project 056A	Hudong-Zhonghua		2018	2019
627 <i>Enshi</i>	Project 056A	Huangpu Shipbuilding		3/2019	2020
628 <i>Yongzhou</i>	Project 056A				2020
616 <i>Taian</i>	Project 056A				2020
615 <i>Xiaogan</i>	Project 056A	Hudong-Zhonghua		5/2018	2020
622 <i>Guangan</i>	Project 056A				2020
604 <i>Mudanjiang</i>	Project 056A				2020
617 <i>Jingdezhen</i>	Project 056A				2020
624 <i>Suizhou</i>	Project 056A				2020
606 <i>Xinji</i>	Project 056A				2020
607 <i>Dongying</i>	Project 056A				2020
609 <i>Shizuishan</i>	Project 056A				2020
600 <i>Songyuan</i>	Project 056A				2020
629 <i>Tongling</i>	Project 056A				2020
631 <i>Tianmen</i>	Project 056A				2020
619 <i>Nanyang</i>	Project 056A				2021
618 <i>Shangqiu</i>	Project 056A				2021
636 <i>Jining</i>	Project 056				2021
637 <i>Shiyan</i>	Project 056				2021
602 <i>Pingdingshan</i>	Project 056				2021
630 <i>Aba</i>	Project 056				1/ 2021

33103		Huangpu Shipbuilding		2015	1/29/2016
44104		Huangpu Shipbuilding		2015	2016

Nigeria					
F 91 <i>Centenary</i>	P18N	Wuchang Shipbuilding		1/2014	2/2015
F 92 <i>Unity</i>	P18N	Wuchang Shipbuilding		11/29/2014	12/15/2016

TBD = To Be Determined

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Contractors are invited to submit updated information to Editor, International Contractors, Forecast International, 75 Glen Road, Suite 302, Sandy Hook, CT 06482, USA; rich.pettibone@forecast1.com

Project 056 FFL**Technical Data**

	<u>Metric</u>	<u>Standard</u>
Dimensions		
Length	89 m	295.3 ft
Beam	11.6 m	38.0 ft
Draft	4.4 m	14.4 ft
Displacement, standard	1,365 tonnes	1,343.4 tons
Performance		
Speed – maximum	55.5 kmph	30 kt
Speed – cruising	33.3 kmph	18 kt
Range	3,700 km at 33 kmph	3,500 nm at 18 kt
Endurance	15 - 20 days	
Crew	Total of 60 (18 officers and 42 enlisted)	
Armament		
	<u>Type</u>	<u>Quantity</u>
Medium-caliber gun	H/PJ-26 76 mm	1
Small-caliber guns	H/PJ-17 30 mm	2
Torpedoes	Yu-7 324 mm	2x 3
Missiles, anti-ship	YJ-83	4
Missiles, anti-aircraft	HHQ-10	1x 8
Electronics		
Radar – surface search	Type 360 (SR64)	1
Radar – fire control	Type 760 (TR47)	1
Radar – navigation	LN-66	2
Radar – helicopter approach	Type 754	1
Propulsion		
Configuration	CODAD diesel	
Diesels	SEMT-Pielstick PA6-STC	2x 6,900 shp
Propeller	2	2

Design Features. The Project 056 corvette has a stealthy hull design with a sloped surface and reduced superstructure clutter. There is a helipad at the stern for a Harbin Z-9C light utility helicopter, but the ships have no organic helicopter support facilities. The deck of the vessel can accommodate one rigid-hull inflatable boat and four inflatable life rafts packed in hard-shelled canisters.

Project 056 is the first Chinese warship with modular design, which makes it cover the roles from offshore patrol vessel (OPV) to multirole frigate. The People's Liberation Army Navy (PLAN) developed versions that included patrol ships, ships optimized for ASW, ASuW and AAW operations, and ships proposed for use as flagships. Modularization also allowed the export versions to be fitted out according to customers' requirements. At this point, at least three export variants of Project 056 exist, with the same hull design but varying bridge designs and armament layouts.

The basic Project 056 corvette is armed with four YJ-83 (C-803) sea-skimming anti-ship cruise missiles, an eight-round FL-3000N (HQ-10) surface-to-air missile

launcher, and two 324mm triple torpedo tubes. The gun armament includes an H/PJ-26 (AK-130) 76mm main gun and two H/PJ-17 30mm dual-mode remote-control weapon systems, which can be operated automatically or manually.

The standard Project 056 is equipped with a Type 360 air/surface search radar, Type 760 fire control radar, LR-66 navigation radar, and Type 754 helicopter control and approach radar, plus a hull-mounted sonar.

The warship is also equipped with two jammers, decoy launchers, an IR-17 electro-optical surveillance system, and a satcom communication system.

The Project 056 is powered by two SEMT-Pielstick PA6-STC marine engines driving two shafts. Each engine generates a power output of 5.158 MW. The vessel can achieve a maximum speed of more than 30 knots and has a range of over 2,000 nautical miles at an 18-knot speed.

Operational Characteristics. The Project 056 is optimized for mid-range missions and littoral duties, but not for high-intensity combat operations. It is built with

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a 15-day endurance for patrol and escort missions and the protection of EEZ maritime interests within 200 nautical miles of the coast. Within these parameters, the Project 056 can supplement larger warships tasked with open ocean deployment.

The air defense system fitted to the Project 056 is for short-range use only and lacks the ability to engage crossing targets. The single launcher has limited capacity, having only eight HHQ-10 short-range surface-to-air missiles. These missiles are fire-and-forget weapons and have a range of up to 9 kilometers.

This system is supported by an H/PJ-26 (AK-176), which is a capable weapon against approaching targets including aircraft and missiles up to a maximum range of 15 kilometers. In addition, the Type 056's two 30mm guns are reasonably effective close-range "last-ditch" weapons. In summary, this anti-aircraft suite provides only limited self-defense capability against air and missile attack and no ability to defend other ships.

The Project 056 corvette has a normal crew of 60 including 18 officers but has accommodation for up to 78 people.

Variants/Upgrades

Jiangdao I. NATO code name for Project 056 corvettes.

Jiangdao II. NATO code name for Project 056A corvettes.

Project 056A is an ASW variant of the basic Project 056. Built at the Hudong-Zhonghua yard, the Project 056A is equipped with additional ASW equipment, including towed and variable depth sonars. Production of these began in late 2013.

C13B is a surface combat variant of the Project 056 for use by the Bangladesh Navy. It carries the same equipment as the Project 056, except it lacks the sonar and torpedo tubes. Bangladesh already operates four of this class, with the final two delivered in 2019. Unlike the P18N, the C13B is about the same size as the standard Type 056.

P18. This is a patrol version of the Project 056 with somewhat larger dimensions, a reduced armament, and a helicopter hangar. Kazakhstan and Argentina have considered buying P18s.

P18N is an OPV derived from the basic P18. It is significantly larger at 1,800 tons and 95 meters in

length. Armament is almost entirely for surface-to-surface warfare. It carries a single 76mm gun, two 30mm guns, and two 20mm guns. It also has both a hangar and a landing pad. So far, two are in service with the Nigerian Navy.

Coast Guard Patrol Vessel. This is a version of the Project 056 with some superstructure changes and greatly reduced armament. The Huangpu Shipbuilding yard is constructing these patrol vessels. The total number planned, as well as the names and designation of the vessels, remains unannounced. It appears that construction of the Project 056 corvettes for the Chinese Navy coincided with a pronounced surge of OPV construction for the newly formed Chinese Coast Guard. This seems to mark the separation between coastal defense and maritime policing roles that had featured in previous Chinese construction. In October 2018, control of the Chinese Coast Guard was shifted from the civilian Ministry of Land and Resources to the People's Armed Police Force. In 2021, Beijing transferred an estimated 22 Type 056 corvettes to the China Coast Guard. These ex-PLAN vessels are armed primarily with a 76mm main gun; however, it is unclear if all Coast Guard variants match this configuration.

The official designation of the Project 056-derived ships remains unclear.

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Chinese Navy Project 056 Corvette *Meizhou*

Source: Chinese People's Liberation Forces Navy

Program Review

Background. The length of the Chinese coastline that requires surveillance and protection has long been a problematic strategic issue for the Chinese armed forces. Attempts to structure a Chinese Navy with the capability to provide maritime law enforcement, emergency services and coastal protection over the distances involved while also providing a fleet offering adequate combat power to deter an aggressor proved unsuccessful. The resulting force structures proved incapable of fulfilling either role adequately.

The earlier Project 037 was a design intended to fulfill the missile attack, submarine chaser, and coastal patrol craft roles. The size of these corvettes was restricted by the need to operate inshore, resulting in a design that was overloaded, lacking in seaworthiness and slow. They have all the worst characteristics of a compromise design and none of the advantages. They were over-equipped for some roles and under-equipped for others. The sight of patrol ships armed with medium-caliber guns and heavy anti-ship missiles sitting off tourist beaches to warn holidaymakers of encroaching jellyfish (a humanitarian role but not one requiring warships) highlighted the basic flaws in the Project 037 concept.

New-Generation Corvettes

A new generation of naval leaders saw the role of the Chinese Navy as a power-projection force intended to keep any confrontation at a distance from China. This change in Chinese strategic policy coupled with the exposure of Chinese designers to modern design

principles had led to a major change in Chinese shipbuilding practices. The policy of building "coastal corvettes" was one casualty of this development.

Under a May 2002 agreement, China State Shipbuilding Corporation agreed to build two offshore patrol vessels for the Royal Thai Navy. Since no appropriate Chinese design was available, Thai and Chinese designers cooperated to produce a modern OPV design. Two ships of this type were built, HTMS *Pattani* and HTMS *Naratiwat*, at Hudong-Zhonghua Shipbuilding in Shanghai. The *Pattani* was launched in 2004 and delivered to the Royal Thai Navy on December 16, 2005. The design and construction of these two ships showed that the Project 037 class was hopelessly outdated and ineffective. Almost immediately, an effort was started at Hudong-Zhonghua to design a domestic version of the *Pattani* class.

Funding shortages, largely brought about by the concentration on construction of the Project 052 large surface combatants and Project 022 missile attack craft (see reports in this service), delayed introduction of the Project 056 class to 2012. Once construction started, it was to proceed with great speed. Hudong-Zhonghua produced the first few ships, but China State Shipbuilding Corporation quickly decided to expand construction to three additional yards. The first ship of the class, *Bengbu*, was commissioned in early 2013.

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Export Orders

Hudong-Zhonghua had overcome the problems of combining multiple roles within a single basic demand, partly by accepting a ship almost three times the displacement of the preceding Project 037 class and partly by adopting a modular construction principle that allowed a basic design to be optimized for specific requirements. The original project for the Chinese Navy featured the basic general-purpose model (Project 056) and an ASW derivative of that ship (Project 056A). AAW and ASuW versions of the design were also proposed but did not proceed to production. A command/flagship version was also proposed but was not adopted.

In parallel with the Navy development program, a variant of the Project 056 was produced for the newly formed Chinese Coast Guard. It appears that at least two ships of this configuration have been built, but their details remain obscure. There is some suggestion that the design may have been turned down in favor of a larger OPV based on the Project 054 frigate.

The same multiple configurations did provide the design with an entry point to the international market. In 2014, the Bangladesh Navy ordered two examples of the ASuW configuration. These carried the export designation of C13B (C apparently standing for corvette, 13 for the displacement in hundreds of tons, and B for Bangladesh). An order from Bangladesh for two more C13Bs was placed in 2016.

The OPV version was picked up by the Nigerian Navy. Two ships under the export designation P18N (P for patrol, 18 for an 1,800-ton ship, and N for Nigeria) were ordered in 2012 and delivered by the beginning of 2016. As this designation shows, the P18N has been substantially modified from the original Chinese design, being significantly larger and featuring more capable helicopter-operating characteristics.

Argentina and Kazakhstan both expressed an interest in acquiring Project 056 class ships, but Kazakhstan eventually settled for Russian-built light frigates while Argentina was unable to pay for its desired class of four patrol ships.

Mass Production

Information from Chinese sources suggests that the original plan was to build a total of around 20 Project 056 ships, but the success of the design and its quickly proven value in patrolling Chinese waters led to this total being reconsidered. The ships are almost ideal "presence" ships, inexpensive enough to build in large numbers, economical in terms of operating costs and crew requirements, and adequately armed to deal with second-tier threats. They also proved ideal for

supporting the isolated island garrisons that the Chinese defense forces were installing on a variety of rocks and reefs across the South China Sea.

A total of 10 ships were completed in 2015 before numbers settled to a production average of six to eight ships per year. While most international attention focused on the construction of Chinese frigates and destroyers and the introduction of the Chinese aircraft carrier fleet, it was the Project 056s that were slowly spreading across Southeast Asian waters and establishing a presence there. The planned fleet increased to more than 40 by 2016 and stood at over 60 by the middle of 2018.

Program Future

In 2019, Chinese media reported that the planned total for Project 056 ships had risen to 52 basic 056s and 20 ASW-oriented Project 056A class corvettes. The same reports indicated that 12 Project 056 ships were under construction in Chinese yards.

In January 2020, this situation became confused by reports that a recently commissioned Project 056 corvette, the *Aba*, was the last of the class and that the Chinese PLAN had ended construction of this type in favor of larger and more powerful surface combatants. This report was given some credibility by other news that the Chinese were indeed slowing their naval construction programs due to a worsening economic situation. As a result, the report in question was picked up and repeated by other news sources.

The problem is that the numbers simply do not add up. The *Aba* was the 43rd ship of the Project 056/056A class to be commissioned, meaning there are at least nine more ships of this class known to be under construction – with eight more authorized. Unless extensive cancellations have gone unreported, the discrepancy between the number of ships under construction and the *Aba* being the last of the class is too great to be easily accepted.

One suggestion is that the Chinese PLAN has already ordered the planned number of Project 056 class ships and that "no more to be ordered" was mistranslated as "no more to be built." Another possibility relates to the COVID-19 pandemic. At the time the statement was made, the Chinese were locking down to prevent the spread of the disease and naval shipbuilding was badly hit by a shortage of labor. Therefore, Project 056 construction may have been suspended and the labor diverted to higher priority projects. This matter will remain unclear until additional information is received. However, as of 2024, no new Type 056 corvettes have entered service since the *Aba*'s commissioning.

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The U.S. Department of Defense confirmed in 2022 that China had transferred an estimated 22 Type 056 corvettes from the PLAN to the China Coast Guard in 2021. The ex-PLAN ships were of the original design, lacking variable depth sonars. Following transfer, the ships saw their armament stripped down, leaving them believed to be fitted with only a 76mm gun. LED panels were also added at the port and starboard sides for display messaging.

Corvette Order for Algeria

In July 2020, media sources reported that the Algerian Navy had ordered a corvette built by China off the Project 056 design. The ship, delivered in 2023, was designated the F-15A class and named *El Moutassadi*. Unconfirmed reports suggest Algeria could pursue the acquisition of a total of six F-15A corvettes, however no further units have been announced yet.

Funding

The Project 056 family of corvettes was developed by the Chinese government on behalf of the Chinese People's Liberation Forces Navy, although the design of the Pattani class parent was funded by the Royal Thai Navy. Chinese ships are produced by a group of shipyards coordinated by China State Shipbuilding Corporation. Export ships are built by Wuchang Shipbuilding Corporation, a subsidiary of China State Shipbuilding Corporation.

Contracts/Orders & Options

No contractual information has been made public.

Worldwide Distribution/Inventories

Algeria. One corvette in service.

Bangladesh. Four ships in service.

China. 75 ships in service (includes training ships and those built or reassigned to the Chinese Coast Guard).

Nigeria. Two ships in service.

Forecast Rationale

Despite some media reports to the contrary, the future of the Project 056 corvette program remains unclear. Some snippets of reporting from China claim that construction of these ships has been curtailed in favor of larger surface combatants. However, these reports do not correlate with the numbers of ships of this type known to be under construction, raising the possibility that the reports in question are mistaken. They may refer to a general slowdown of Chinese naval construction due to financial pressures and the COVID-19 pandemic. Another possibility is that the known termination of the Project 054 frigate has been confused with building plans for the Project 056 light frigate.

Project 056 corvettes are well-suited for their primary role. They have a properly sized hull that combines

capacity for a multipurpose sensor fit with a reasonable but not excessive combat capability. They also feature a realistic maximum speed and adequate range. They appear to be establishing a presence in selected areas of waters over which China extends its claims. Port visits and generally "showing the flag" are key parts of this presence role. Both are aimed at building a favorable impression with local citizens and establishing the ships' presence as a routine part of naval life.

Limited export potential exists for the Type 056 corvette. The ship offers a reasonable option for multirole medium-range ships at a lower cost than comparable European or U.S.-built alternatives.

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Ten-Year Outlook

ESTIMATED CALENDAR YEAR UNIT PRODUCTION												
Designation or Program		High Confidence				Good Confidence			Speculative			
	Thru 2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	2031	2032	2033	Total
China State Shipbuilding Corporation												
Project 056 FFL												
	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	2
Total	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	2