Release Notes Version 1.8 Jan 2019

Welcome to the 1.8 release of LANCER! It's a new year and a new edition, and it's been a ton of work getting here. We're nicknaming this one the 'kitchen sink' update. Everything is here. There's so much here we might end up partitioning off some stuff as bonus content to preserve our poor page count. If it seems a little overwhelming right now, don't worry! This is as close to the release version of LANCER as we're going to get in terms of volume of content.

In this update our number one goals were to expand the play structure outside of mech combat to support more narrative play, to clarify the pilot play rules and make them more explicitly narrative, and to make mech construction both more unique and simpler to manage (without having to calculate secondary stats all the time). We've also removed a lot of systems that were passive in favor of a new traits system, reworked some talents and added 100+ pages of new content (mostly for narrative play, lore, and GM tools).

Thanks as always for your feedback and play testing, and to the wonderful LANCER discord community for their overwhelming support. This will likely be close to the final version of LANCER, and we will be announcing plans for putting the book out officially this year.

Cheers,

- Tom and Miguel

GENERAL - Fixed many typos (thanks to the lancer discord and discord Community Edition .pdf)

- There is now an explicit split between narrative play (freeform roleplay) and mech combat. This is

something people do anyway, but we wanted to make it more clear that pilot play should be mostly narrative, even combat (or at least give people that option)

- In general the book has received some rewriting to make sections more clear and chronological

Play structure - LANCER now has a defined play structure (downtime ¿ mission) with specific steps. In general I

wanted to provide a clear structure to the game so people can easily see what LANCER is 'about' (running missions) to both help GMs and set expectations. This structure allows time for

narrative and story play with downtime and also explicitly sets goals and stakes for every mission. Like any RPG this structure is flexible and can easily be adapted to your game.

- LANCER has more clearly defined time (mission/downtime/narrative play/scene)

- 'Actor' is used in many places instead of 'target'

STATS - Level up chart moved to start of the book

- Grit is now a flat number that simply means '1/2 your level'. Now used for all pilot and mech attack

rolls

- Grit now adds to HP/SP instead of the old SP and HP scaling

NARRATIVE AND PILOT PLAY - New pilot play system: skill triggers + background accuracy/difficulty bonuses. In general, I

wanted less things for players to track and more flexibility in their bonuses. This might be reduced down in the final version but tracking 10 pilot skills was a bit much - now you just track stuff you

are good or bad at and get some flat bonuses

- First session tables added for new players
- Brief mission prompts
- Reserves concept + tables. Reserves is a new concept to codify anything you are bringing on the

next mission outside your mech (NPC help, story bonuses, gear, etc) that you can acquire during downtime

- Moved power at a cost tool and skill challenges tool to player section and added reserves concept

into many downtime actions

- Skill checks are now name a goal: 9- fail, 10+ success, 20+ excel, GM can more explicitly throw

complications in on any roll that doesn't excel but cannot take away success

MECHS - Mech skills (HASE) now conceptually tied to pilot

- Explicit rules about LoS/damage while inside and piloting a mech
- Modular mech concept made more explicit
- Mounts changed around, spinal mount removed, main/aux added, now aux weapon can be fired

when main weapon is fired but doesn't get bonus damage

- Integrated mount concept added for core systems
- Now impossible to get a heavy mount if you don't start with one, heavy mounts stand alone

DAMAGE - Critical damage renamed structure damage

- Structure damage and heat now count stress/structure remaining
- Burn now immediately inflicts damage, then at end of turn, to remove confusion
- Removed vulnerable/volatile conditions
- Can no longer repair structure or stress by default
- Repair cap now decided by hull, 4+ hull
- Engineering now gives +limited systems (2 for 1)
- Destroyed no longer a condition
- Added explicit rule for only printing 1 mech at a time
- Adjusted cloning quirk table slightly
- Clarified rules on bonus damage

COMBAT - Combat concept renamed 'mech combat' to be more explicit about its use

- Combined with pilot combat section
- Round now alternates actors (no longer possible for players to take 2 turns int a row, was ambiguous)
- Clarified involuntary movement
- Falling now has a damage cap
- Light/heavy cover made more explicit
- Line/Cone weapons no longer ignore cover

- Ram only knocks back 1 space
- Grapple breaks on knock back
- Bolster quick tech action up to 2 accuracy
- Stabilize no longer re-shackles AI (have to shut down mech now)
- Activate system now 'activate'
- Sensor range now grants awareness of actors
Conditions - New shredded condition to counter armor
- Renamed crippled to slowed
- Shut down now reduces to 5 evasion again
Action economy - Skirmish and barrage back to per weapon instead of per mount but added caveat about aux weapons
- Barrage down to 2 weapons but lost penalties, should speed up combat and make choices more
interesting
- Max reactions to 1/turn
Gear tags - Added knock back tag
- Removed unreliable, added new spicy overcharged tag that increases avg damage but can proc
heat
- New explicit pilot tags for pilot gear (clothing, armor, etc)
- Fixed a lot of inconsistencies in pilot gear
TALENTS
ACE: Rank I and III changed, new rank II
ARMSMAN: New talent for main weapons, focuses on ammo
BRAWLER: Only gives +acc to melee attacks, increased damage on knock-out blow, knock back reduced
BRUTAL: Now uses knock back tag
CRACK SHOT: II moved to III, III removed, new II allows range boost
CENTIMANE: New nexus talent
COMBINED ARMS: Blade shield now applies to allies
DUELIST: Feint now explicitly only works on target
DRONE COMMANDER: Now focused only on deployed drones, new rank III
EXECUTIONER: Removed rank III threat increase
EXEMPLAR: Rank III now stops working if you run away, you coward
GUARDIAN: New talent focused on suppression with heavy weapons
GREASE MONKEY: III now allows replenishing limited systems in exchange for repairs
HACKER: New rank III, return of an old LANCER favorite
INFILTRATOR: New rank III, requires buildup
NUCLEAR CAVALIER: Fuel rod gun now a main weapon
SIEGE SPEC: New rank III focused on knock back, old one replaced
SKIRMISHER: Lockbreaker distance changed, new rank III
Spotter: Now grants information for rank I
STORMBRINGER: Rank II now free action but requires firing a launcher
TECHNOPHILE: NHPs now like you more again at rank III

PILOT GEAR - Pilot gear: new tags added, armor reduced, now most add HP
- New sidearm and primitive tags
- Pilot guns only kill grunts on 20+ now
MECHS - New format where mechs provide base statistics that are added on to by stats instead of having
to take extra steps
- New Trait system for passive systems - Rebalanced all mechs slightly, also balanced Effective HP a bit for mechs with more armor or
evasion
- Stats should have much more variance, please be patient with the balance of this for now
- Now in alphabetical order
- Renamed SHELL to FRAME
- Renamed ultimate to CORE system
GENERAL GEAR CHANGES - A huge number of general minor tweaks have been made to gear, too numerous to count here.
Some damage numbers have been changed slightly. Only major changes are generally listed here
- All ammo systems have been combined into 'mods'
- All tech options now add on to invasion (so gain +1d3 heat base)
- In keeping with lore all AI now renamed NHP (tag is still the same for now)
GMS - Improved armament now gives a flex mount
- Can no longer use mount retrofitting to get a heavy mount
- EVEREST: New passive only activates first turn of combat
- AMR: damage reduced, accurate tag added
- Assault rifle: gains reliable 2
- Heavy melee: damage reduced
- Tactical knives can now be thrown
- Shotgun has threat 3
- RPG has ordinance tag and slight damage up
- Paint job now works like its old version
- Clarified stable structure
- Removed GMS shield II
IPSN Titanomacy mesh - Now 1/round, only activates on melee attacks
BLACKBEARD - Synth muscle - now works with ram, sp increase
- Chain axe - shredded effect
- Lock/kill made a passive, replaced with reinforced grapples
- Sekhmet wording tweaked
DRAKE
- Assault cannon size down
- Siege scales removed, replaced with argonaut shield
- Aegis generator now gives +1 armor instead of boosting to 4
LANCASTER - Repair drone nexus replaced with MULE harness, ablative shielding replaced with sealant spray

- Restock drone now ends conditions instead of healing
- Lancaster has high repairs and other mechs can spend them
- Size up
- Aceso swarm now quick action
- Plasma cutter bonus vs cover
NELSON - War pike threat and knock back up
- Passive movement works on any attack
- Adaptive armor removed, added RAMJET
RALEIGH - New loading traits
- Breaching charge uses fixed, now deals bonus damage vs objects
- Removed impact shielding, added ROLAND chamber
- Bolt thrower gains damage knock back and loading
- UNCLE increase to difficulty, locks out weapons
TORTUGA
- New art!
- Siege Ram now a system, damage down, increased damage vs objects
- Throughbolt SP up
- Daisy cutter aoe down, uses down
- Hyper dense armor now has heat cost
VLAD - New art!
- Removed weapon mods, added Snare Traps and Impact Lance
- Combined impaler and railgun, added caltrop launcher
SSC
Full subjectivity sync - Back to +2 evasion
SSC all theatre movement suite - Now generates 1 heat
BLACK WITCH
- Mag projector damage capped, duration reduced
- Mag cannon now deals energy damage
DEATH'S HEAD - New CORE system
- Removed kodandams/veil generator, now gains core siphon and vulture
DMR from Dusk Wing
- Slight damage buff for railgun
DUSK WING - Heavy systems/concept update
- New core system
- New gear - veil rifle, OASIS
- Stun crown radius reduced, now affects allies, no longer affects targets in
cover
METALMARK - AP mod removed, now has flash grenade that blocks LoS
- Rail rifle - range increase, heat added
MONARCH - Companion gun only fires once a round
- Stabilizer mod now gives ordnance tag
- Pinaka missiles - now blast 1 areas
MOURNING CLOAK - Variable knife/sword lose AP and unique tags, now
deal low damage normally but higher on critical hits
- Hunter logic now has terrify effect
SWALLOWTAIL - New art!

- Scout drone and Athena now reveals stats of target
- Oracle lmg now requires rank ii
HORUS
BALOR - Now has high hp, regenerates
- Removed boost drones, added swarm body
- Renamed nanite ammo to nano composite materials, now mod
- 1 difficulty on systems check for nanobot whip
- Seeker swarm nexus - damage up
GOBLIN - Auto pod now unique, main weapon
- Huge rework to all hacking systems
- OSIRIS can now hurl your foes into the Duat
GORGON - PDW now a drone, works differently
- Monitor now requires adjacency
- Scylla now requires a quick action
HYDRA - New passives that should help you keep your little buddies alive
- Puppet master has different tech options
- GHAST drone can now be deployed like a deployed drone
MANTICORE - Removed RAM drive, haywire ammo, emp pulse
- Arc projector - chaining line effect now instead of cone
- New systems - catalyst pistol, Beckoner, SMITE
- Lightning generator sp up but gains old RAM drive effect
- You can now lay fire upon APEP
MINOTAUR - Localized maze now a passive, added Metafold Carver
PEGASUS
- New art!
- Smart weapon mod removed, now has the SISYPHUS NHP
- Mimic gun is now all weapon types
HARRISON ARMORY
BARBIE'S DREAM HOUSE - New art!
- Molded armor now passive - gets Roller Grenades instead
- Auto loader drone now takes quick action
- EAF now takes quick action, heat reduced
GENGHIS - Explosive vent now also deals burn
- HAVOK ammo to mine
- AGNI can now activate only once per scene
ISKANDER - Stub cannon now deals explosive, minor tweaks
NAPOLEON - Phasing ammo renamed and tweaked lightly
- Displacer damage down slightly
SALADIN - Removed warp shield (now passive), added Impulse missiles
- Hardlight now generates line cover instead of a bubble shield
SHERMAN
- Reactor stabilizer now works for all stress, but SP up
- Redundant system upgrade - uses down to 2, now quick action
- ASURA can only be activated once a scene
TOKUGAWA - New art!
- External batteries now explode on structure damage

- Experimental heat sink - now gives resistant to heat in danger zone, SP way up
- Plasma Lash - increased self heat

GM GUIDE
- Advice on rewards now reworked to accommodate new reserves concept
- Engagement tool for missions where the starting situation is unclear
- New SITREP tool for creating wargame scenario style battles
- New generator tools for worlds, mission parameters, etc

NPCs - Can now fire one weapon as a skirmish action and two as barrage
- Damage up by about 20-30
- Encounter guidelines updated
- Many actions changed to tech actions to interact better with player options

LORE
All the following received major changes:
- Notable Faction: The Karrakin Trade Baronies
- Notable Faction: Voladores
- Notable Faction: Horizon
- Changed 5V "Horizon" to "Witness"
- Timeline changes

ADDED Entries:
- "A Curious Alchemy, A Mundane Miracle"
- "Time, and Its Passage"
- Locations - Karrakis, Ras Shamra, and Carina
- Lore epigraphs to "Players On A Galactic Scale"
- "The Third Committee"
- "Piracy"
- Notable Faction: The Ungratefuls
- Notable Faction: Sparri Clans
- New art for ALBATROSS, voladores, Aun, and Sparri

Contents

1 The Cavalry

It's 5014, and our arm of the galaxy is home to trillions. It is not a safe place, but it burns bright, and for some there are gentle lands.

Out from our humble beginnings, humanity has colonized the darkness. We have set empty worlds and barren moons alight with civilization, have tamed asteroids and gas giants, have even built homes in the hard vacuum of space itself. We have taken root throughout our arm of the Milky Way galaxy. In every situation and setting, humanity has made their home; life, however it expresses itself, continues. Stories begin and end across the stars, though most never leave the worlds they were born to.

But for some, their life is as a river, ever-moving, with the land of their birth left somewhere far behind. Traders and smugglers, refugees and immigrants, miners, pirates, scientists, volunteers, colonists, soldiers and conscripts: humanity on the move, always. Wars pull hundreds of thousands into the current, trade and migration yet more. For every ten stable homes, there is one family's worth that has been uprooted, for good or ill.

Blink gates dot the galaxy. These massive, star-bound stations - gatehouses - tap into an unknowably vast and strange plane known as the Blink and facilitate safe, instant travel, opening all corners of the Deep to the daring. These portals are open and common to those with the permission, money, or clearance to enjoy it: Thousands of ships travel through the Blink each standard day for trade, migration, travel, war, or any myriad other purposes, so long as they have clearance.

The Omninet connects all of humanity to one another, a decentralized network that links every computer, every server, every thing to everything. More than just a way to communicate, more than just a way for far-flung worlds to read of the galaxy's news and listen to the music of the spheres, the Omninet facilitates government and industry. Data is the new wealth, and the Omninet allows for the sharing of the wealth of all worlds.

Manna, the universal currency, unites all the disparate nations of the human diaspora. A single currency — based on a combination of material wealth, labor, intellectual property, experience, and data — that any market on any planet will accept as fair currency. When a galaxy's wealth of raw resource is available for exploitation, what becomes valuable is not gold but data.

This vast spread of humanity, these trillions of souls, can only be administered by one body: Union, the hegemonic council that rules from Cradle, the ancestral home of the human diaspora. Earth and Mars, Mercury and Venus. Saturn, Jupiter, Neptune, and Uranus. Io. Titan. Europa. Phobos and Deimos. Sol. These worlds and moons around this warm yellow star form Cradle, the seat of Union's power, and the very heart of humanity. Union controls the triumvirate of progress: the Blink Gates, the Omninet, and Manna. Without the triumvirate, without Union, the galaxy falls into chaos.

All that being so, Union, Cradle – and far more so Earth herself – are things and places of myth to the vast majority of humanity, fictionalized in Omninet dramas and novels, dreamt about by

children and wanderers, idealized as the promised land or damned as the pit from whence we came by religions across the galaxy. Few have ever seen a Union administrator, or suffered a Union naval campaign. For all its control over human affairs, Union prefers to rule from a distance.

The galaxy, despite its interconnectedness, is a dangerous place. Rebellion, insurrection, piracy, civil wars – even wars between worlds – flare up and burn their way through Union space, though only the most desperate or dangerous of conflicts require Union's direct attention. Disputes between Union's subject states are common enough that there is a need for individual militaries and militias: Five major suppliers have permeated the galaxy to offer arms and armor to those with Manna enough to afford them and an Omninet connection with enough bandwidth to download them.

Into this broad and dangerous environment come the players. You take on the role of a lancer – a mech pilot, or simply pilot for short – in a squadron with your fellow players. Whatever the conflict, whatever the scale, you can bet that lancers will be involved; together, you and your squadron will run missions as the tip of the spear, fighting in only the most dangerous and important engagements. You're the backbone, the heroes, the knights in shining armor, the decorated aces sent in when all hope seems lost and victory must be assured.

In short, you, the players, are the cavalry.

Your character in the world of LANCER is a mechanized cavalry pilot of particular note – a Lancer. You play as the cavalry. Whatever the role, whatever the terrain, whatever the enemy, you are the one who gets called in to break the siege, to hold the line. To save the day.

Your pilot hails from a world and culture of your choice and description, but is human. You might call Earth home (or, to be accurate to the setting, Cradle), but to be born on Earth in the age of Union is exceedingly rare — in the world of LANCER it's been millennia since we left Earth, and the majority of humanity live among the stars and habitable worlds in our arm of the Milky Way. In LANCER, humanity is familiar and strange in equal measure.

As a pilot, you represent the end product of heavy technological and capital investment on the part of your employers or officers, be they corporate, state, tribal, mercenary, a noble family, or military. Through a combination of training, natural skill, battlefield experience, and neural augmentation, a mech pilot is the equivalent of a knight of old, a flying ace, or other prestige- class warrior.

Mech pilots, they will proudly tell you, are a cut above the rest.

They are not entirely wrong. Recruiting, training, and maintaining a mech pilot involves a tremendous amount of capital and time investment compared to your average soldier. To operate

a mech at peak efficiency, a pilot needs to have extensive physical and mental augmentation – or be outfitted with advanced, expensive equipment – years of virtual training, extensive field experience, and rigorous zero-G acclimation. Washout rates are high, as are injury rates as a result of the demanding training process, but this high bar is necessary: Once a candidate has attained their final certifications and has been shipped out to their first post, they face only the most dangerous missions. Mechs and their pilots aren't sent in to keep the

peace: they're sent in when all other options have failed.

You are one such person. A pilot. They're human, though, and flawed like the rest of us. Pilots are heroes and villains, brave souls and cowards, lovers and fighters all. They stand when everyone else flees, are the first to run to danger, are the best and the brightest of us. But, they too, break under the pressure, fail, and kill when they could have saved or spared.

Pilots come from all walks of life. Station, criminal status, wealth – once a candidate has been identified, there are no disqualifying factors for their recruitment. The galaxy is vast, and humanity numbers in the trillions, but there's only one of you. Whatever the circumstances, whatever the road that brought you to where you are, you are a now a pilot. You are a cut above the rest. You're the cavalry, the tip of the spear, humanity's best hope.

Congratulations. You made it through selection and training. You now have your requisite certifications. You have your first post, and you are en route to meet your new squadron. This is the last real downtime you've got before you start your tour, so acquaint yourself with the rules and regulations. Write down a bit about yourself. Figure out a callsign, something in Common so that everyone knows your talk.

You're a pilot now, but you're still a rookie, a greenhorn, a wet-behind the ears boot with no live drops notched on their helm. Maybe you're gonna make a name for yourself out there on the line, or maybe some deck techs will hose you out of what remains of your cockpit.

Either way, as they say, you're a cut above the rest.

Let's see what you got.

2 Basic Rules

BASIC RULES

The bulk of the rules in this book focus on actions, movement, and interactions between mechs in a wide variety of hostile and habitable environments. That being said, pilots spend time outside of their machines as well (though sometimes not voluntarily). Pilots and mechs are two components of the same character that each play with slightly variations on the same rules. The first section of these rules will tell you how to make a pilot and how playing as a pilot works, the second how to make a mech and how mechs work. The third part talks about the basic structure of the game (missions and downtime), the fourth is the compendium, where character options can be found, and the last is the GM section for tweaking rules, creating NPCs, and running missions.

2.1 Setup

SETUP

This game makes use of two types of dice, the 20 sided dice (referred to from hereon as a d20) and the 6 sided dice (referred to from hereon as the d6). Multiple dice will be referred to in the following format - 1 six sided die = 1d6, 2 six sided dice = 2d6, etc.

Sometimes the rules will call for you to roll a 1d3. That is simply a 1d6 with the results halved and rounded up (1-2 =1, 3-4=2, 5-6=3).

Each player should have at least one 1d20 and a number of d6s. Players will also need a character sheet or a piece of paper to write down information, and it might be helpful to have paper with a square or hexagonal grid on it (such as graph paper or a pre-prepared battle map) since this game makes use of tactical combat. Miniatures are not required to play this game but can make combat easier to visualize.

One player must play the Game Master (referred to from hereon as the GM). The Game Master acts as a referee, storyteller, and arbitrator of rules. They help create the story and narrative for the game and play all of the non-player characters (NPCs). For more information on the Game Master as well as a list of rules, tips, and tools to use as a Game Master, you can refer to the GM guide in the section at the end of this book. The rest of the players will play the role of pilots, or characters in that story.

THE GOLDEN RULE When referring to the rules in this book, specific rules override general statements or rules.

For example, making a ranged attack typically takes into account cover. However, a weapon with the Seeking keyword ignores cover. In this case, the weapon's keyword supersedes the more general rule.

ROUND UP

Always round up in LANCER (to the nearest whole number).

2.2   Space and Measurements

SPACE AND MEASUREMENTS

This game makes use of measurements in 'spaces' for ranges such as movement, weapon ranges, etc. Most things in the game are measured in sizes, with size 1 being a square or hex 1 space wide on each side. By default 1 space = about 10 feet in game. Size indicates the physical presence of a mech or other actor on the battlefield. It is measured as a number where size 1 = a square or hex measuring 1 on each face. Size can be smaller than 1, such as 1/2, or larger, such as 2 or 3. An actor or object is usually as tall vertically as its size, but that's not always the case. Size often does not represent the physical size of an actor, but the space they control around them. An actor takes up a square area on the battle map equal to its size, rounded up, with a minimum size of 1. For example, a size 1 mech takes up a 1x1 square area and a size 1/2 human would also take up a 1x1 square area.

It's recommended to use a map and tokens, icons, or miniatures to track actors while playing this game for ease of play (though you can certainly play without them). You can easily play this game on a tactical grid or hex battle map (as the designers of this game do) or simple measure ranges using a standard ruler or measuring tape.

The scale of space can be changed if the situation needs it - for example, you might decide each space is 50' on each side, or a mile, or something similar. The space that an actor occupies does not necessarily indicate its size, but the space it controls around it. Most actors take anywhere from a 1x1 to a 3x3 space on the map, with some exceptions.

Measure all ranges indicated for weapons, effects, etc as originating from any exterior side of a an actor. That means larger actors will have slightly longer range for their weapons or actions. To be in range, an actor must be physically inside the range of an effect.

3 Skill Checks and Attacks

Skill Checks and Attacks

There are two types of rolls in LANCER:

A skill check is required in a challenging or tense situation that requires some effort to overcome. To make a skill check, first name your goal (break down the door, hack the computer), then roll 1d20, and add any relevant bonuses. On a total result of 10 or higher, you accomplish your goal. On a 20+ you excel at your goal, giving you better results than you expected. a total result of 9 or lower, you don't accomplish your goal. A failed roll doesn't necessarily mean you fail completely, but further complicates the situation. The GM cannot change the target number (10) of a skill check, but can add additional Difficulty (see just below) to the check if it's harder than normal.

An Attack is an offensive roll against another actor in mech combat, such as firing a weapon, attempting to hack a target, or wrestle them to the ground. An attack roll is made the same way as a skill check (1d20 + relevant bonuses), but the target number can differ from 10, and usually depends on the numerical defensive statistic of your target, such as evasion, or electronic defense. An attack is successful if it equals or exceeds the target defense. Some attacks can deal a Critical Hit on a 20+, allowing you to deal more damage or trigger extra effects.

If a rule refers to an 'attack', it applies to an individual roll. The rules might also refer specifically to ranged or melee attacks (attacks typically made with a weapon or part of your mech) or tech attacks (attacks made with electronic warfare).

CONTESTED CHECK

As a mech or pilot, you may be called on to perform a contested check. Both the attacker and defender make skill checks, adding bonuses and penalties. The winner of the contest is whoever has the highest total result - in the case of any ties, the attacker wins.

FAILING CHECKS

You can always choose to voluntarily fail any skill check (mech or otherwise). You can take this option if a friendly actor is trying to help you out, or simply if you think it would lead to a more interesting situation or make more sense narratively.

4 Bonuses

BONUSES

Every skill check or attack roll in LANCER has two types of bonuses applied to it: Accuracy or Difficulty, or a flat number that comes from a skill rating or Grit. Often you can apply both bonuses!

4.1 Accuracy and Difficulty

ACCURACY AND DIFFICULTY

Accuracy and Difficulty represent the momentary advantages and disadvantages gained and lost during rapid, chaotic moments of action:

Opposed offensive and defensive electronic warfare systems bombard each other with viruses and counter viruses, spoofing targeting systems and layering desperate firewalls.

Pilots, matched in skill, duel each other amidst the shifting debris of a shattered frigate, avoiding incoming fire and slagged, floating bulkheads as they attempt to land their shots.

Their mech about to overload, a pilot struggles against an unshackled AI to regain control of their machine, pitting their skill against the best efforts of their newly freed system.

These situations (and more!) cause pilots to accrue Accuracy and Difficulty on rolls.

1 Accuracy adds 1d6 to the roll it is applied to.

1 Difficulty subtracts 1d6 from the roll it is applied to

Accuracy and Difficulty cancel each other out, on a 1 to 1 basis.

Accuracy and Difficulty do not stack: instead, the greatest result is chosen and applied to the final roll.

● An attack roll made with +2 Accuracy would not add the results of those two rolls. Instead, you would pick the greatest result between the two and apply it to your final roll. ● An attack roll made with +1 Accuracy and +1 Difficulty would have no bonus or subtraction applied to it: the single Accuracy die and single Difficulty die would cancel each other out before there is a need to roll. ● An attack roll made with +2 Accuracy and +1 Difficulty would be made as a roll with +1 Accuracy

4.2 Grit

GRIT

Pilots are skilled and unique individuals, multi-talented and resilient. Even so, a brand new pilot cannot measure up to a tempered, battle-hardened veteran when push comes to shove. This is represented in game by Grit.

Grit is a flat number equal to half your character's license level, rounded up. License levels go from 0-12 and track the general resources, skill, and experience of your character. Your grit improves as you level up, and can't typically be

increased any other way. It represents your direct combat experience, expertise, and will to survive.

4.3   Pilot Skills

PILOT SKILLS

The part of your pilot related to their personal abilities and experience are your pilot skills. These skills are mostly used during narrative play. At level 0, your pilot has 4 skills based on narrative triggers, representing different aspects of their character's training or background. Skills apply a flat bonus from +2 to +6 to pilot skill checks, and you also might get an accuracy or difficulty bonus depending on your character.

4.4   Mech Skills

MECH SKILLS

The part of your pilot directly related to building, piloting, and fighting with mechs are your mech skills. There are four, and they go from +0 to +6:

Your HULL skill describes your ability to build and pilot durable, heavy mechs that can take punches and keep going Your AGILITY skill describes your ability to build and pilot fast, evasive mechs

Your SYSTEMS skill describes your ability to build and pilot technical mechs with powerful electronic warfare Your ENGINEERING skill describes your ability to build and pilot mechs with powerful reactors, supplies and support systems

Mech skills help you directly in turn based combat and when piloting your mech. They also give you additional bonuses when building a mech.

WHICH TO USE?

When you make a skill check, and use your pilot's natural skill, experience, or abilities, use your pilot skills (1d20 + pilot skill) When you make a skill check and rely on your mech's systems, survivability, or raw power, use your mech skills (1d20 + mech skill) When you make an attack roll, add Grit. You might add other skills, like Hull or Systems, instead, but only when specified.

You can get extra bonuses on all checks or attack rolls from talents, gear, or pilot backgrounds. Most, if not all bonuses take the form of bonus Accuracy or Difficulty.

4.5   Time in Lancer: Mission, Downtime, and Scene

TIME IN LANCER: MISSION, DOWNTIME, and SCENE

Before we dig into pilot and mech play in detail, it might be important to note that a game of LANCER is usually split up into missions. A mission might encompass one or several play sessions. A mission is a goal or objective that can be completed in a discrete amount of time, such as destroying a target, evacuating civilians, uncovering a conspiracy, or holding the line against enemy attack. Each time you embark on a mission, you pick the pilot gear you're embarking with and the mech you're bringing with you.

If you're not actively on a mission, you're in downtime. This is the narrative time between missions where the moment-to-moment action doesn't matter as much, and roleplaying is much more important. During downtime you can progress plots, projects, or personal stories.

Within missions and downtime, play is split up into scenes. A scene is a continuous section of play or activity. The word 'scene' is used here because it's helpful to think about it in cinematic terms. As long as the 'camera' or focus is on their players and their action, a scene is happening. When the 'camera' cuts away from the current scene, it's over (this is a lot easier to judge naturally than it sounds). A good example of a scene is a single battle or combat. A scene could even span many locations or be a montage of action where the moment-to-moment action doesn't matter too much. When the current activity or course of action naturally ends, that's when the scene should end too.

In keeping somewhat with these terms, the game commonly uses the term 'actor' to refer to any individual character, player or non-player.

Completing a mission is the primary way to level up in LANCER. Once a pilot completes a mission, they gain a license level.

For more information on missions and downtime, see the section further on in this book.

4.6   Narrative Play and Mech Combat

NARRATIVE PLAY AND MECH COMBAT

LANCER makes a distinction between narrative, freeform play, and mech combat, where tracking individual turns and actions is important. Most of the game and story will typically be in narrative play. During narrative play, players and the GM can take actions naturally and spontaneously as they come up. Time and scenes might be faster and individual rolls might count for more.

During mech combat, players must take turns to act, and are restricted in the number and type of actions they can take, making each action much more impactful and tactical.

Certain types of actions or effects will work differently in narrative play vs mech combat. For example, attacking someone as a pilot is typically a skill check in narrative play that could use skill triggers like Applying Fists to Faces, Assault, or Taking Someone Out, and narratively stretching much further. In the world of mech combat, however, attacking something is typically an attack roll, adding grit, and each individual roll accomplishes much less.

5   Licensed to Kill: Characters in Lancer

Unlike other role playing games, LANCER does not track currency. Your access to mech gear, upgrades, talents, and other aspects of your character are instead gated by licenses. Licenses are controlled tightly by the major powers in LANCER and allow holders nearly unlimited access to the items they contain.

Progression in LANCER is represented through gaining license levels by completing missions, which allows you to unlock Ranks in Mech Licenses, unlocking more gear and mechs for your pilot to use. All pilots begin at license level 0 and can level to level 12. Higher license level not only allows you to unlock mech gear but also allows your pilot's skills to improve, improves both your pilot and mech's hit points, gives them more talent points to spend on mech combat abilities, and allows your pilot to gain extra customization options.

Your license level describes both your pilot and your mech - as you level up, your pilot and mech will both become stronger and have access to more advanced gear and combat techniques. The first section of this book deals with narrative play and playing as a pilot, the second with mech combat and playing as a mech, each going into a lot more detail. You can return to this section later if you need to refer back to it.

Pilot progression

If you're new to LANCER, it's recommended you start a character at Level 0 (you haven't completed any missions). At this level, your pilot has access to only a limited pool of basic licenses available to all pilots.

At level 0, characters have 4 pilot skills at +2 based on their background, some specialties based on their background, +2 to one mech skill or +1 to two mech skills, three rank I talents, and have access to all G.M.S. mech licenses. These are basic licenses that give mechs and gear that all qualified pilots can access, regardless of license level. For more information on mech licenses, building a mech, and a list of gear and mech components, see the section later in this book

When a character completes a mission, they level up.

- They get +2 to any pilot skill and +1 to a mech skill
- They gain one talent point and one license point to spend on mech talents and licenses. Spending a talent point acquires a talent or license at rank I. Further points can then be spent to take a talent or license to rank II or III.

Grit: A character adds 1/2 their level to attack rolls, pilot Hit Points, mech Hit Points, and mech System Points

Advance: Every 3 levels (3/6/9/12), a character can get a new pilot specialty, and gets a core bonus, a powerful improvement to all mechs they build

Retrofitting

Every time you level up, you can re-allocate all the points from one of your talents to any other talent, or you can re-allocate all the points from one of your licenses to any other license. If this would cause you to no longer qualify for a CORE bonus, you must replace that bonus with a new one that you qualify for.

6 Leveling Chart

Leveling chart:

License Grit Total mech Total Talent CORE bonuses/ Pilot skill Level (+1 (+HP, skill points (+1/ bonus specialties points (max license +attack, points level) skill +6) point/ +SP) (+1/level, level) max +6)

License (+1/level)	Grit (max +6)	Total mech skill points (+1/skill point/level)	Total Talent points (+1/level)	CORE bonuses/ bonus specialties (max license level)	Pilot skill points	Level (+1 +HP, +attack, +SP) max +6
0	0	2	3	+0	8	
1	1	3	4	+0	10	
2	1	4	5	+0	12	
3	2	5	6	+1	14	
4	2	6	7	+1	16	
5	3	7	8	+1	18	
6	3	8	9	+2	20	
7	4	9	10	+2	22	
8	4	10	11	+2	24	
9	5	11	12	+3	26	
10	5	12	13	+3	28	
11	6	13	14	+3	30	
12	6	14	15	+4	32	

7 The Pilot

THE PILOT

Your pilot is the person inside the machine, and who you will be playing as for your entire career. A pilot's general skill and access to gear is tracked by License Level (from 0-12). Your pilot typically starts at level 0, an inexperienced rookie, and levels up once they complete a mission.

7.1 Pilot Skills

Pilot Skills

A pilot's skills refer to a pilot's general experience, proficiency, personal ability, and aptitude with particular approaches or courses of action. They don't have to necessarily describe physical qualities of your pilot.

They go from +0 to +6. This number is a flat bonus applied to a pilot skill check (a check used to describe your pilot's personal abilities or aptitudes) to get the final result when the skill triggers.

A skill trigger (or just the skill itself) tells you when you can get that bonus. This is pretty simple in practice. If your pilot gets +2 when blowing something up, if your goal ever involves setting off explosives, throwing grenades, setting charges, etc, you get that skill bonus.

Your pilot skills are used for narrative actions and generally don't get used during mech combat.

Tracking Bonuses

You don't actually have to write down skills you don't have any sort of bonus to. It's just a flat 1d20 vs 10 roll with situational accuracy or difficulty applied otherwise. For example, at level 0, a pilot might write down '+2 to threaten, get somewhere fast, assault, and spot'. There's no reason to write down or track the rest!

Skills

Here's the list of skills, which are thematically grouped here to help you choose. Each bolded word or group of words describes a skill and when that skill would trigger, giving you a bonus on a skill check. You get 4 of these at level 0, each at +2.

Your pilot's ability to use, resist, and apply direct force, physical or otherwise:

Get a bonus when: - You're applying fists to faces - You're assaulting a position, person, or group of people (in battle or otherwise), hard, fast, and up close - You want to blow something up - You're forcing someone's hand by threatening them - You want to take control of something (an object, a captive, the situation) - You want to survive through harsh or unforgiving conditions

Your pilot's ability to perform skillfully and accurately under pressure:

Get a bonus when: - You want to stay cool and collected while performing an action that takes skill or precision

- You want to take someone out, cleanly - You want to perform some flashy action, like shooting an apple off someone's head - You want to get somewhere

fast, on foot or in a vehicle - You want to act unseen and unheard

Your pilot's ability to notice details, think creatively, and prepare:

Get a bonus when: - You want to fix, hack, or wreck a system or device or patch a bleeding wound - You want to invent or create something with tools and supplies - You want to read a situation for subtext, motive, or threat - You want to spot hidden details, track a target, make out distant objects, or observe with an eagle eye - You want to investigate, research a subject, or look at something in great detail

Your pilot's ability to talk, lead, change minds, make connections, and requisition resources

Get a bonus when: - You want to charm an audience with your words or actions - You want to pull rank on someone - You want to get word on the streets - You want to get a hold of useful allies, assets, or connections - You want to lead or inspire allies, troops, or a whole organization

There's a little more detail on each of these uses in the Narrative Play section below

7.2   Backgrounds

Backgrounds

Your background describes your life up until you became a mech pilot. A background does not necessarily describe your pilot's role in the squadron now — a background tells your GM and fellow players a bit about what your pilot did before they enlisted. Think of backgrounds as a prompt for you to draw from when describing your pilot's full backstory: how did they first become a soldier, a doctor, or a miner (or whatever your background may be), and from there how did they become the pilot they are now?

When you make a background, you can either roll 1d20 for one of the backgrounds in the compendium, choose a background from that same list, or simply make your own up.

At level 0, choose four skills above based on your background.

Then choose two of the four skills you just chose. You have a speciality in those skills, giving you +1 Accuracy on top of your flat bonus. These are things you are especially good at, that your background has given you an edge in.

Finally, choose any two other skills that you didn't choose in your original four. These skills are flawed for you and get +1 difficulty when you make a relevant pilot skill check that uses those actions. These are things your character is unpracticed at or has some difficulty performing, based on their background, personality, or personal abilities.

Your background bonuses generally never change, but if you and your GM feel like part of your background is no longer relevant or has changed significantly, you can change the bonuses around during downtime. Having a flawed skill does not prevent you from training that skill when you level up, mitigating your background.

7.3   Creating a Pilot

Creating a pilot

Making a pilot at level 0 is as simple as the following:

1. Create a background: When you create a pilot at level 0, you'll need to make up a background for your pilot - where your pilot comes from. You can create your own background, or roll or choose from the list of backgrounds in the compendium.

2. Set pilot skills: Choose four triggers at +2

3. Set background bonuses: Based on your background, choose two skill triggers. You get a specialty in those skills, giving you +1 Accuracy. Then choose two others that you didn't choose in step 2. These skills are flawed, giving you +1 difficulty.

4. Write down HP, e-defense, speed. and evasion: Your pilot has HP (hit points), how much damage you can take before you're down and out, and evasion and e-defense, how hard it is to hit you with weapons and electronic systems in mech combat. You also have speed (how far you move in spaces when you move). At level 0 that's 6 HP, 10 e- defense, 10 evasion, and 4 speed. More on the importance of these stats in the mech combat section. 5. Before you embark on a mission, you'll choose pilot gear, which might change your stats. More on that in the mission section. You can take clothing, armor, up to two weapons, and two other pieces of gear. Gear can be acquired from the compendium, and you can't take gear that has a total rarity greater than your level. All General Massive Systems gear is level 0, allowing any pilots (even license level 0 pilots) access to it.

Advancement: - Each time you level up, you can increase one of your existing skills by +2, to a maximum of +6, or gain a new skill at +2. - Every 3 levels, you can gain a new specialty. If you gain a specialty in a flawed skill, it cancels out, leaving it a normal skill. - A pilot can add 1/2 their level (grit) to their HP and attack rolls in mech combat - Your pilot's total gear they can bring with them on a mission is limited by license level

8 The Basic Structure of Lancer: Narrative Play

The Basic Structure of LANCER: Narrative Play

LANCER as a game is focused on the mission. The most important thing about a mission is there are some stakes involved. There's something that needs doing, and probably needs doing

fast! There's natural tension in the story that needs to be resolved through player action, and without the players intervening, the outcome will be radically different (often for the worse!). If you're not on a mission, you're in downtime. During downtime, the moment-to-moment action is probably not as important, and things can 'montage' or jump from scene to scene quite easily. There's often less tension or time sensitivity (but not necessarily none at all).

Any given story of LANCER always begins in downtime, unless it's the first session. If it's the first session, see the section below!

During downtime, players do the following:

- Take downtime actions to work on personal projects to progress the story or gain reserves (more on that shortly)

- Play out any other freeform scenes between the players or NPCs

Downtime lasts until the next mission. Before a mission starts, the following steps take place:

- Brief - The players or the GM establish what the goal of the mission is, and the GM establishes the stakes. - Preparation - Players choose the mech they are going to start with for this mission, pick pilot gear, establish reserves, and make any other preparations

- Boots on the Ground - We cut to the players right as they arrive on the scene.

When the mission is over (completed or abandoned or resolved in one way or another -even negatively!), players can debrief, level up, and return to downtime. The loop then continues.

The following sections will explain each step in a little more detail. We'll go in the order you'd usually go during your first session

The first session

During the first session, it's recommended to skip right over downtime and go right to the brief and onwards. You'll also want to take the extra step of establishing who we are with the players, if you haven't already. Some GMs and players already have a good idea of what this is before coming to the table, but it's perfectly fine to start the first session without having anything firmly established. Many groups even play through a first session in order to establish who their group is and don't want to establish it before they start- that's fine too.

However, establishing a common goal or purpose before the end of the first session will definitely help with explaining character motivation and cohesion. If you need inspiration you can roll on the tables below or establish it with your group.

TABLE: Who are we?

d20 Identity

1 An infamous private military corporation
2 Glory-seeking warriors
3 Union Regulars, career soldiers
4 Union Auxiliaries, recruited from a local world
5 Elites of the Planetary Defense Force
6 Enforcers of the Law
7 Criminals, Thieves, and Swindlers
8 Acolytes of an ancient martial order
9 Devotees of a higher power
10 Guardians of an ancient royal lineage
11 Corporate security, asset protection
12 Explorers of the unknown
13 Pirate scum
14 Defenders of the homeland
15 The forefront of the rebellion
16 Saviors of the weak and helpless
17 Hungry travelers, in it for the money
18 Inventors, engineers, and test subjects
19 Inheritors of a famous legacy
20 The only ones who can stop what's coming

If your players have a patron or a parent organization, you can establish that here

TABLE: Who gives us orders?

d20 Patron
1-2 Anyone who pays us
3-4 Our commanding officer
d20 Patron
5-6 The Hierophant or high priest
7-8 A corporate patron or sponsor
9-10 Our ancient martial code or law, our duty
11-12 Our mentor and founder
13-14 Our local Union Administrator and high command
15-16 The whisperings of a long-dead monolith
17-18 Our liege lord or king
19-20 The elders of our organization

Finally, if you want to establish some history or relationships between the players, you can do that quickly and easily. Go around the table and ask each player to choose exactly one or two other players and ask them to establish one quick fact or experience that the two characters have between them. If you like, and you have time, you can play out a scene or two to get a good feeling of the characters.

You can use the questions on the table below as prompts. A player can ask one or two of these to the table in general and write down answers. Nobody has to answer any question, especially if they don't know the answer yet or the question makes them uncomfortable. Remember to be respectful of your fellow players!

TABLE: Personal History
d20 Personal History
1 Which of you did I grow up with?
2 Which of you almost killed me once?
3 Which of you was I in love with (or still am)?
4 Which have you have I served with for some time?
5 Which of you distrusts me?
6 Which of you have I gotten drunk with more than once?
7 Which of you sees me as a mentor?
8 Which of you taught me all I know about building mechs?
9 Which of you was I marooned with on a hostile planet for some time?
d20 Personal History
10 Which of you took me on my first mission?
11 Which of you is most likely to ask me for advice?
12 Which of you knows a deep secret of mine? What is it?
13 Which of you thinks they have me all figured out?
14 Which of you finds me completely incomprehensible?
15 Which of you is the most curious about me?
16 Which of you finds me attractive?
17 Which of you thinks they can teach me a thing or two?
18 Which of you never expected to see me again?
19 Which of you will support and stand by me, no matter what?
20 Which of you calls me a friend?

Adding personal history between the character adds hooks and relationships that can influence how characters treat each other and creates fun roleplaying opportunities. It's perfectly fine to start without any history between characters if that's how you prefer to play your game.

8.1 Brief

BRIEF

The Brief is the very first step before you can start on a mission. This is when your pilots sit down around their consoles, or in their cockpits, or in a board room or a barracks somewhere and figure out what needs to be done. It doesn't have to be an actual brief, and could be an entirely out of character conversation between players and the GM. You need to establish a couple of clear things with the Brief: the mission goal, and the stakes.

Your mission Goal is what you, the players, hope to accomplish with your mission. This might be the same goal set out by the GM, or it might be defined entirely by the players. For example, the GM might set it up so that a powerful NPC general needs the players to hold a checkpoint against rebels. If the player's goals align, then their goal would also be to defend the checkpoint. Perhaps the players want to secretly defect and help the rebels take control of the checkpoint instead (in that case, that would be their goal).

Alternately, the players might come up with a goal without any GM initiative, such as deciding they want to clear out and secure a pirate-infested asteroid

to gain a new base of operations for their mercenary company and decide to set that as their goal with the GM. Both are valid missions.

Here's some example goals for inspiration:

TABLE: Mission Goals

d20 Goal

1 Escort a VIP from a compromised location to a new safe one

2 Respond to an SOS from an unknown source, location noted in message.

3 Retrieve a valued or strategic object, item, or information from a secure, hostile location 4 Investigate a rumor or tip from a valued informant

5 Escort a long-flight weapon or ordinance to its target

6 Defend an area expecting an an attack (from pirates, hostile alien fauna, etc)

7 Explore a long-abandoned derelict for artifacts

8 Bring down a piece of massive infrastructure (bridge, skyhook, dam, etc)

9 Go loud to provide cover for a covert mission of utmost importance

10 Assassinate a VIP, discretely, or in broad daylight, to send a message

11 Attack a hostile defensive position in order to destroy a key objective

12 Board a hostile ship or station and take it over; or, destroy it

13 Be first on the ground on a world hostile to human life; create a beachhead

14 Smuggle something safely or securely through hostile territory

15 Hunt down a team of notorious, feared, or respected mech pilots

16 Provide cover for an evacuation

17 Rescue and extract a someone from a secure or dangerous location, such as a prison or a war zone 18 Secure a dangerous location

19 Liberate a people held hostage from their cruel ruler, with Union's backing.

20 Intervene in a desperate attempt to stop an incoming missile or attack.

Success of a mission depends on completing the mission goal, but mission completion does not. Characters that complete a mission (success or failure) always gain 1 license level. The mission goal might also change mid-mission as more information comes to light or the circumstances or parameters change. This is perfectly normal and can create dynamic and interesting stories.

You can often easily find the stakes by phrasing them as a question, such as the following:

- Will the players save the newborn colony on Astrada IV from total destruction by the hands of the White Tiger rebels?

- Will the players discover who has stolen the Harrison Armory bioweapon before they get the opportunity to use it?

- Will the players escort the diplomatic envoy safely through the raider riddled Mars Reef, or will the envoy's ship be torn to pieces like so many others?

- Will the players discover the source of the mysterious artifacts buried beneath the planet's surface before the rival corpro acquisitions team locks it down forever?

And so on and so forth. The actual stakes will often depend on the kind of story the GM is trying to tell. Stakes can be deeply personal or more broad. They can be immediate and brutal, or slow and gradual. They can often be as

simple as survival. Generally the GM will establish stakes for a mission, but player actions, history, and background both greatly influence stakes and can play directly into stakes themselves. For example, a player that was a former slave might have a lot more of a personal stake in stopping slave traders.

It's really important to start a mission with both goal and stakes established. Not only does it give clearly defined motivation for the characters to be undertaking a mission, but it also sets up what will potentially happen if they fail, and allows the GM to take harder moves if that should come to pass (you knew what the stakes were!).

8.2 Preparation

Preparation

During this stage, players choose the mechs and gear they are going to bring with them to start the mission (if they're bringing mechs along). This doesn't necessarily prevent them from changing gear mid-mission, but only the resources, gear, weapons, etc that they start with.

LANCER does not track currency. Instead, players are assumed to have access to whatever gear, mech parts, etc that their licenses have allowed them to unlock (usually freely available to print from a nearby facility). You can always wait to establish what your pilot has on them or what mech your pilot is bringing until this step.

Mechs: Players can bring one mech with them on a mission. Information on mechs and their creation is found in the section directly following this one.

Pilot gear: Players can choose clothing, armor, up to two weapons, and up to two other pieces of gear to embark with, as long as all the gear's total rarity is equal to or less than their license level.

You can find pilot gear and mech parts in the compendium (pilot gear is at the beginning of each manufacturer's section). Basic General Massive Systems pilot gear is rarity 0 and available to all players - basic GMS mech parts are available to all pilots from LL0.

Players might not always have entirely free access to gear, depending on where they start their mission or story circumstances. For example, pilots that are stranded in the middle of an alien wasteland after crash landing (with the mission: find civilization) might not have the best access to gear. Pilots can always trade, barter, build, or acquire other gear across the course of a mission. In such a situation, the GM can use the Power at a Cost tool (see below) to give the players what they need.

Reserves

Before a mission starts, in this step, pilots must establish reserves that they're bringing on this mission. Reserves is a catch-all term for extra gear, ammunition, support, reinforcements, information, access, or anything similar that has been prepared during downtime or established during the course of the mission. You typically acquire reserves during downtime, but you could also be granted reserves as part of a mission. There's an example list of typical reserves

later in this section, but it's more of a general term for anything extra you're bringing on a mission.

8.3   Boots on the ground

BOOTS ON THE GROUND

This step cuts out unnecessary planning or stalling and cuts right to when the players arrive on the scene. Boots on the ground means immediately establishing a situation and put the players in that situation, ready to take action and respond.

This doesn't have to throw the players right into combat (and probably shouldn't the majority of the time). For an example, let's say the players have embarked on a mission to escort a refugee caravan through a heavily guarded checkpoint manned by local partisans. The GM decides the moment players get boots on the ground is when they meet up with the caravan outside of the checkpoint.

Here's some other examples.

- The mission is to infiltrate a guarded facility. The mission starts as players are creeping up to the facility, lit eerily from below

- The mission is to scout for missing colonists in a newly founded colony planet. The mission starts as players are making their way through the jungle and hear unearthly howls rising through the trees in the distance

- The mission is to help guard a diplomatic summit. The mission starts as the players see a suspicious figure dart aware from the crowd during the opening ceremony.

9 Narrative Play

NARRATIVE PLAY

Once you've made your engagement roll, prepared your gear and supplies, set your goal and your stakes, you're officially on a mission. A mission could last one session or several sessions. You might abandon your original goal in favor of a new one, or encounter a twist in the story that throws your mission into disarray. Playing a mission out is mostly a matter of the GM - there's no strong guidelines here as to how to structure it! However, here's some tools, advice, and aid for running a mission.

Narrative play vs. mech combat

The following section deals with narrative play, typically when you're using your pilot skills. This is the bit of the mission outside of mech combat, which is a lot more structured. Generally in narrative play each roll accomplishes much more, scenes can cover large stretches of time, and the outcome of individual rolls is more important.

Mech combat is turn based, tactical combat. Cutting to mech combat is as simple as declaring it's started, drawing a map out, and picking who goes first. When you want each roll to accomplish more and want to play out turn based, tactical combat, you can swap to mech combat.

These are two different modes of play and the rules work slightly differently for each, especially combat. If you're in narrative play and get into combat, you do combat with skill checks, and don't make attack rolls. NPCs don't get their own turns (nobody gets a 'turn' in narrative play), but their actions are narrated by the outcome of player rolls. If you're doing mech combat, you use turn based, tactical play, make attack rolls and track hit points, and NPCs will take their own turns.

The rules for mech combat (and the difference from narrative play) are found right after the mech section.

9.1 Making Skill Checks

Making Skill Checks

Skill checks are only required when there is a tense narrative situation or when the check would move the story forward. You don't need to make a skill check to open a door, to cook a meal, or to talk to a superior, unless that situation is tense or would add to the story. You should generally always succeed on mundane tasks, especially if they relate to your background. A barroom brawl, a tense escape, decoding an encrypted message, hacking a computer, talking down a pirate, picking someone's pocket, distracting a guard, hunting alien wildlife, or flattering the planetary governor are all situations that have some degree of tension and consequence, and might require a skill check.

Skill checks can cover as much or as little as the narrative requires. For example, you could have one skill check cover an entire day's worth of infiltration into a covert facility if you so desire. Or,

you could instead cover the moment to moment action - sneaking into vents, hacking doors, disabling guards, etc.

When making a skill check:

- First name your goal.

- The target number is always 10, and the check is a simple 1d20 roll. You then add any accuracy or difficulty from your skills, and then any accuracy or difficulty the GM imposes to get the total accuracy or difficulty on the roll.

- You should only roll once to accomplish your goal (the GM can't require extra rolls of you), though the GM could tweak the difficulty if you're asking something very hard or complicated, or declare that given your goal or circumstances the roll would be impossible.

- On a 9 or below, you don't accomplish your goal. On a 10-19, you accomplish your goal. On a 20+, you excel on your goal.

- On a 19 or lower, the GM can choose to add complications.

Complications or consequences from failing or succeeding pilot skill checks always follow the fiction and stakes established.

A failure doesn't necessarily mean outright failure, but that you don't directly accomplish your goal. Additionally, if you fail a check, you cannot attempt the same activity again until you change the narrative circumstances or approach (it's a new day, you try something different). For example, you try to climb back up that cliff bare-handed, but fail. You could only make another skill check to climb the cliff again if you try it with a grappling hook, or get some other help.

Complications

On any result less than a 20+, the GM can throw additional complications or costs into the mix, as established. The GM doesn't have to throw a complication in every time, and can just let the action play out - however rolling less than 20+ gives them the ability to do so.

Complications are typically chosen from the categories of Harm, Time, Resources, Collateral, Position, Effect. This can never nullify your success if you roll a 10+ or cause you to not accomplish your goal, but can add additional nuance to the outcome of your skill check.

It's important to note that the GM can only inflict complications if it makes sense to do so - in other words it must be established clearly before the roll. If you're trying to take someone out with a sniper rifle at 500 meters and they have no way to see you or shoot back, you probably can't take harm as a complication. If you're trying to knock out a soldier from hiding that soldier probably doesn't have a good way to fight back right away, even if you miss. If that soldier is alerted and looking for you, however, she might get a shot off.

- Harm is damage, injury, or bodily harm, as established. If someone is pointing a gun at you, you attempt to take control of that gun and you fail, you will probably take harm.

- Time means the activity takes more time than normal

- Resources means something must be used up, lost, or temporarily expended. This could be something concrete like running out of ammunition,

losing a map, or your gun jamming, or could be something like political influence.

- Collateral means someone or something else takes harm or injury instead of you or your intended target, like an innocent bystander, the whole building, your organization or an ally

- Position means you are put in a worse position through your actions, like right in the line of fire, clinging to the edge of a cliff, in the bad graces of the Baron, or under a spotlight

- Effect means your action has less effect than you intend. If you were trying to take someone out cleanly, you make a lot more noise than you intended. If you try to fix a broken door, it will only open for a few people at a time.

Narratively, complications are probably much worse if you fail (since you failed to accomplish your goal and got a complication).

Example complications:

- Harm: A player rolls to knock someone out who just drew a knife on them by applying fists to faces. They don't manage to knock their target out however, and they get a knife in the gut for 2 damage.

- Time: A player rolls to charm the baron into granting them an audience, succeeding. The baron lets them stew for a few hours, but gives them the audience.

- Resources: A player rolls to patch up an NPC's wounds, and fails. The NPC not only bleeds out, but the player runs out of medical supplies trying to treat them. - Collateral: A player rolls to blow up a door and fails. The whole building starts to collapse

- Position: A player rolls to take out an assassination target in a hidden base with a sniper rifle and succeeds. They kill their target, but they have to fire multiple times, exposing their position to the entire base.

- Effect: A player rolls to wreck a security system. It only shuts it down for 5 minutes, however, giving the players limited time to act.

Excel

If you excel on a skill check (get a 20+), tell the GM how you surpass your initial goal. The GM can moderate this if it's not within reason. In addition, the GM can't throw complications at you - you did that well.

Examples:

- Bruja excels when making a skill check to hack a door control. She suddenly finds herself with access to the whole network

- Penny excels when making a skill check to threaten a royal guard to stand down. The guard not only surrenders, but offers to help her get an audience with the king

- Xi excels when making a skill check to get to the extraction point quickly. He decides is able to find a shortcut to get the whole party there instead of just himself.

- Raja excels when making a skill check to get a hold of transport off world for his party. He decides that he manages to talk the shuttle pilot to walk off the job and hand the whole ship to his party

9.2 Player Initiative and NPC Action

Player initiative and NPC action

Players always have initiative when making skill checks or taking action in narrative play. That's a fancy way to say that the GM can never ask for a roll unless prompted by the players. Players must name their goal or aim of their action, then GMs can ask for a roll and set difficulty. When the roll is made, initiative turns back to the players (probably with a 'what do you do?' from the GM). What this does in practice is let players decide the course of action and make sure that each roll has clearly established stakes and parameters - it'll help the game feel more fair and prevent unnecessary rolling.

If the players don't take action, stall, or pass off responsibility for action, then they are effectively turning initiative over to the GM!

In addition, NPCs (non-player characters) don't take actions or make rolls by themselves. Their actions are based on player rolls. For example, if a player lies to an NPC, the NPC doesn't roll to see if the player is lying. If the player is successful, the NPC doesn't see through their deception - if they fail, the NPC sees they are clearly lying. If the GM feels like the particular NPC is astute or insightful and can easily see through lies, they might add 1-2 difficulty to the roll.

There's a little more on this in the GM section if you need examples. In practice you probably won't even think about this that much.

9.3 Skills in Detail

Skills in detail

Each skill has basic triggers that allow you to easily decide which skill to use and which bonuses from backgrounds or training apply to a roll. You don't have to track or know all of them (just the ones which you have +accuracy or +difficulty in from backgrounds or training). If you're stuck as to which skill you should be using, you can quickly refer to the triggers to get a good idea.

Here's a little more detail on each skill and when they might trigger. There's intentionally a little overlap between some of the triggers, and each is designed to be somewhat flexible. Remember, you don't need to track all the skills, just the ones you are good or bad at!

Applying fists to faces

Punch someone in the face, or alternately fight in open, brutal unarmed combat, whether it's a fist fight, martial arts duel, or a huge brawl. This is probably not the smoothest or cleanest fist fight and probably causes a lot of noise.

Assault Take part in or direct an open or pitched battle, like a corridor gunfight, a huge shootout, fighting your way across a battlefield, or undertaking a boarding action. When you assault, you're always assaulting something (a position, a rival pilot, an enemy force, a group of guards), and it's always loud, open, direct action.

Blow something up Use explosives (improvised or otherwise), weapons, or maybe just good old fashion brawn to totally wreck something or turn it into an enormous fireball (maybe a wall, sensor array, outpost, reactor core - the good stuff). Whenever you're totally destroying an object, building, etc, you can use this. Probably not to be used against people unless they're incidentally in the way.

Threaten Use force or threats of force to get someone to do what you want them to do. Name what you want someone to do and what you're going to do to them if they don't listen to you. This could also be blackmail, leverage, or something similarly nasty. Threatening someone can be very high risk but very effective if successful. If you threaten someone unsuccessfully, your threats have no further effect on them unless you change something about the situation (like all other skill checks).

Take control Use force, violence, presence of will, or direct action to take control of something. This is often something concrete, like an object someone is holding. You could take control of someone's gun or a keycard they have on their person. You can additionally can take control of a situation to force those present to listen, calm down, stop moving, or stop what they're doing, though you can't necessarily force them to do anything further without threatening them. Taking control is never subtle and always direct and dangerous.

Survive Persevere through harsh, hostile, or unforgiving environments, such as the vacuum of space, frozen tundra, a pirate enclave, a crime-ridden colony, untamed wilderness, or scorching desert. You most often use survive when you want to take a journey through wilderness environments, navigate, or avoid natural hazards such as carnivorous wildlife, rockfalls, thin ice, or lava fields. Alternately you could use it to avoid man-made hazards, such as navigating a city safely, or avoiding dangerous areas of a space station. You could also use it when testing personal endurance, such as shaking off poison or alcohol.

Stay cool and collected Do something that requires concentration, speed, or intense precision under pressure, like picking a lock, finding the right frequency for your omnihook, carefully disarming an explosive, or unjamming a gun. If you've got to do something complicated in a high stress situation without messing up (and possibly not even breaking a sweat) this is the action to use.

Take someone out Kill or disable someone quickly, quietly, effectively or from a distance, probably before they even notice. This is probably a single person but could be two people relatively close together (any more is sort of stretching it). If you're looking down a sniper scope at a target, preparing to nerve pinch a guard to knock them out instantly, quick-drawing during a gun duel, or dropping from a ceiling to slit a throat, this is the action to use.

Flash Do something flashy, cool, or impressive with your weapon other than killing, like shoot a very small or rapidly moving target, shooting someone's hat off or their weapon out of their hand, knocking someone out by throwing a gun at them, performing an acrobatic flourish with a sword, throwing a spear to pin a fleeing target to the ground, or something similar.

Get somewhere quickly Get somewhere without complications and with speed, but not necessarily quietly. Climb, swim, or perform acrobatic maneu-

vers. Fall safely from a great height. Move gracefully in zero-g. Chase or flee from, outrun or out pace a target. Get somewhere faster than anyone else. You can also use this when you want to drive or pilot a vehicle.

Act unseen or unheard Get somewhere or do something without being detected, but not necessarily with speed. Hide, sneak, or move quietly. Infiltrate a facility while avoiding security, patrols, or cameras. Perform a quick action or maneuver without being seen or heard, such as picking a pocket, unholstering your gun, or cheating at cards. Wear a disguise.

Fix, hack, or wreck Repair a device or faulty system. Alternately, hack it wide open, or totally wreck, disable or sabotage it. You can use this for hacking or safeguarding electronic systems, such as electronic door locks, computer systems, omninet webs, or NHP coffins.

Patch Apply your medical knowledge to administer medication, bandage, staunch bleeding, suture, cauterize, neutralize poison, or resuscitate. Alternately, you could use it to diagnose or study disease, pathogens, or illness.

Invent or create You need tools and supplies to invent or create something successfully. Use this with many downtime actions to work on projects. You can also use it in the spur of the moment to invent new devices, tools, or approaches to something (improvised explosives, gear, disguises, or some similar).

Read a situation

Look for subtext, motive, or threat in a situation or person, often social situations. Use your intuition to learn someone's motivation, who is really in charge, or who is about to do something rash or stupid. Get a gut feeling about a situation or person. Sense if someone is lying to you.

Spot Spot hidden or difficult to make out details, objects, or people. Spot ambushes, hidden compartments, or disguised individuals. Spy on a target from a distance, or make out the details, shape, and number of objects, vehicles, mechs, or people clearly at a distance. Track people or vehicles.

Investigate Research a subject, or look at something in great detail. If you can't find information directly, you learn how you can get access to that information. Learn about a subject of historical relevance, or become well-read on a subject. Investigate a mystery or solve a puzzle. Locate a person or object through research or investigation.

Charm To charm, you need a receptive audience, or some kind of promise of leverage (money, power, personal benefit, etc). You can use it when trying to smooth talk your way past guards, get someone on your side, sway a potential benefactor, talk someone down, perform diplomacy between two parties, or blatantly lie to someone. You can also use it when trying to impersonate someone. Charm won't work on people that aren't receptive (such as soldiers you are in a gunfight with) or that you don't have leverage over (promises of safety, money, power, recompense, help, etc). These promises don't necessarily have to be true but they have to have some weight with your target.

Pull Rank Pull rank on a subordinate, getting information, resources, or aid from them, even unwillingly. You can use this on anyone your social status (noble, celebrity, etc) or military rank would have weight with. Failing this might be risky and could be seen as abusive. You typically can't pull rank on

hostile targets. You could also use this to pull rank and pretend you are a higher rank than you are, but it's even riskier.

Word on the streets Get gossip, news, or hearsay from the streets. What you get depends on what 'streets' you are getting word from (high society, low society, hearsay, military chatter, etc). This probably takes a lot less time than investigating something in detail, but the information might be more qualitative or colored by opinion (sometimes that might be useful). You can always learn where the information came from or who to go to next.

Get a hold of something Acquire useful allies, assets, or connections through wealth or social influence. This could be permanent (buying it or receiving it) or temporary (renting or borrowing help or supplies, etc), and might be harder or easier depending on how much you want to use it. This can't be used for something that's normally gated by license level (like mech parts) but could be used for aid,

supplies, information, food materials, soldiers, or anything else that has more narrative impact. Typically this is acquired by buying it from a market or requisitioning it from a parent organization.

Lead or inspire Give an inspiring speech, or motivate a group of people into action. Administer or run an organization efficiently or effectively, such as a company, a ship's crew, a group of colonists or a mining venture. Effectively command a platoon of soldiers in battle, or (perhaps) an entire army.

9.4   Skill Challenges

SKILL CHALLENGES

A skill challenge is a simple way to test an entire group for a particular activity. Everyone makes a relevant check, and the success of the challenge depends on the overall result of the skill checks from the entire group, not just one player. If more players succeed than fail, the challenge is a success. If equally as many succeed as fail, the challenge has a 50die or flip a coin), representing the razor's edge of the situation. If more players fail than succeed, the challenge is a failure.

Here's some example challenges: - Sneaking into a guarded facility: All players roll a skill check (example skills that could trigger: move unseen, spot the cameras, charm the guards into thinking they are a superior). Success means they all get in unnoticed, failure means the guards are alerted. - Gaining the favor of the Baron: All players roll a skill check (example skills that could trigger: charm, but could also be to threaten the baron, or perhaps read the situation) Success means the players gain a private audience with the Baron, failure means the players' meddling is noticed by rival nobility and they are thrown out. - Traversing the Wastes: All players roll a skill check (example skills that could trigger: survive, spot water, or get across the waste quickly). Success means they cross the wastes unharmed. Failure means they cross the wastes, but it is a harrowing journey and they arrive there with no repairs or supplies left and lacking food and water.

Challenges are good when you want to extend the narrative impact of rolls.

You can also have extended challenges that have 3 rounds of rolling and calculate the outcome based on rounds 'won' by the players. For example, the players may have to gain the favor of the baron, then plant information in the baron's castle, and sabotage the gate. They are only truly successful if the majority (2/3) of these tasks are accomplished.

9.5   Combat in Narrative Play

Combat in Narrative Play

When running combat narratively, use the normal rules for skill checks. That means when the individual actions in combat doesn't matter that much or you want a combat scene to play out more like a movie than a tactical game. If there's not a mech involved (and you're just playing on the pilot scale), it's almost always preferable to use narrative combat.

You don't need to track turns or make attack rolls, and you might only need to make a few rolls for the whole combat (one roll for each action or goal, as normal!). Turn-based combat in LANCER is usually reserved for mech combat.

You can also use a skill challenge to run narrative combat if you want it to be a bit more structured.

Here's a couple examples:

- Bruja and Penny are negotiating with the Black Star Bandits to try and get them to release a hostage. The negotiations go sour (Penny fails her skill check to charm the bandit captain), and the bandits draw on them. Bruja decides to take out the bandits quickly with her Sidekick. She rolls a skill check, getting a 15. She kills the bandits and the GM decides to add position as a complication, so the rest of the bandit camp is alerted and they will need to get out quickly.

- Pan is in a pitched battle, on foot. He sees a gun emplacement raining hell down upon his allies and decides to take control of it. He rolls and gets a 7, failing. The soldiers defending the emplacement turn the gun on him, preventing him from getting any closer. The GM adds collateral as a complication. Pan looks behind him and sees some members of his squad get gunned down in the ill-advised assault.

- Raja is commanding a platoon of troops to board an enemy ship and take control of the command center. He rolls to lead the charge, getting a 22, (he excels). There's no complications, and when his group successfully fights their way to the command center, they immediately surrender and hand control over.

9.6   Hit Points, Damage, and Injury

Hit Points, damage, and injury

Pilots normally only care about Hit points, also called HP (how much damage your pilot can take before they are out of the action!) during mech combat, but they might also take damage as a result of complications during skill checks.

At level 0, pilots have 6 Hit Points, representing not only bodily health, but also the ability to duck, dodge, avoid damage, or just sheer luck. At higher levels, they add their grit (1/2 level) to calculate their base HP (leading to a

total of 6 + grit). A pilot that takes damage doesn't neces- sarily take bodily harm, but might be using up their stamina, luck, or ability to avoid that incoming damage.

If a consequence deals damage, it's enough to hurt or kill. Taking things like minor grazes, bruises, etc doesn't deal damage but could cause other complications.

Here's what damage looks like for pilots in narrative play: Minor damage is 1-2 damage. This could be something like getting shot at by small arms fire, stabbed, unarmed combat, hit by a flying rock, etc Major damage is 3-4. This is getting shot at by assault or heavy weapons, a long fall, breathing in toxic gas, etc Lethal damage is 6+. This is something like having a mech fall on you, getting hit by a mech scale weapon, having a grenade blow up right under you or something similar.

Pilots might have 1 or 2 armor. Subtract armor from all damage taken as a pilot, unless that damage has the armor piercing (ap) tag. Some weapons have the ap tag, but damage outside of that might also (falling a long distance, being immersed in lava, etc).

Down and out

If you're reduced to 0 HP or lower as a pilot roll a 1d6. On a 6, you miraculously shrug off the hit (or its a close call), returning to 1 HP. If you roll a 1, your luck has run out, and you're immediately dead. If you roll a 2-5, you are down and out, at 0 HP. You're knocked out, pinned, bleeding out, or otherwise unable to act. Your evasion (how hard it is to hit you in mech combat) becomes 5 and if you take any more damage, you'll die (if someone comes over and shoots you in the head, for example).

You can die instead of being down and out, if you choose so. Typically you'd just bleed out and wake up in prison, a field camp, a hospital, or buried under a pile of dead bodies somewhere.

9.7   Rests and Full Repair

Rests and Full Repair

If a character takes an hour and rests with no strenuous activity, they can regain 1/2 their HP, and recover from Down and Out, coming back to consciousness. When you take at least 10 hours to rest and full repair, you can recover all your hp.

Rest and repair also help your mech (you can see more in the mech section on damage).

If you're dead, it might not be the end for you. See the rules on cloning in the Death section in mech combat.

10 Debrief and Downtime

DEBRIEF and DOWNTIME

Once a mission is over (success or failure) and the players have time to recuperate, it's time for the Debrief. Much like the Brief, this step of a LANCER game doesn't have to be an actual meeting in-character, and could just be an out-of-character conversation amongst the people playing at the table.

A mission being over or completed should be a natural stopping point in the narrative (it could even be mid-mission if the objectives have changed). Players don't necessarily need to have accomplished their goal, but something needs to have changed enough about the mission that the mission itself is functionally over.

During the debrief:

1. Level up - Characters gain 1 license level, representing their access to resources, income, or clout. Characters get more access to mech gear and increase their skills. You can find more information on leveling up at the end of the mech section, but pilots gain +1 to any skill and every 3 levels can gain additional training, allowing them to get +1 accuracy on certain skill triggers as if they had a background in it.

2. Talk about the mission. This is not a necessary step but can be helpful to think about what worked and what didn't during the session. If there were any notable moments that were fun, interesting, or exciting it can be helpful to talk about them here as well. Not only is it good feedback for the GM but also can help validate your fellow players. If you're going to take this step, remember to be respectful.

10.1 Downtime

DOWNTIME

Pilots are individuals (exceptional individuals, perhaps), with lives to live outside of their mechs. It's assumed in LANCER that your pilot has a lot to do outside of a mission. What exactly that is depends on the GM, the narrative, and the players involved in the game.

Your story might not include much downtime - maybe the character are on a planet under siege and have little time to pursue other projects. It might include a lot of downtime - maybe there's a time skip in between missions of several months, allowing characters many opportunities to pursue their other goals.

What's important for the game of LANCER is there must be at least SOME downtime between missions, even if that's only a few hours. This allows players to prepare for the next mission and take actions that will impact the story going forward.

TIME AND DOWNTIME

Downtime is almost purely narrative and doesn't have to follow strict moment-to-moment action. You can allow one roll in downtime to cover any amount of time, from an hour to a few months

worth of activity. Generally it is better to let the outcomes of rolls follow the narrative circumstances, ie the impact of rolls that cover several months of activity should be consequently more.

REWARDING DOWNTIME: FREEFORM VS STRUCTURED

Downtime can be used to accumulate reserves by taking certain actions in order to prepare for the next mission. During downtime, players can take one downtime action, or two if downtime is especially long. If the players are under siege, for example, they probably only have time for one.

The purpose of downtime is not merely to prepare for the next mission, however - it's also to progress personal stories, advance plots, or flesh out characters. You can do freeform roleplaying as much as you like during downtime with absolutely no intent (as it is during any mission), but the GM can still feel free to reward this kind of play with similar rewards if it feels appropriate. For example, even if Pan and Penny are role-playing a scene of them drinking at a bar together with no intent to prepare anything, gain reserves, or take downtime actions, the GM might decide to give them +1 Accuracy on skill checks to help each other during the next mission because of their bond.

10.2   Reserves

RESERVES

During downtime, you might want to prepare reserves for the next mission. This is a catch all term for extra supplies, gear, support, bonuses, allies, etc that you accumulate during downtime. The GM can give you reserves at any time as a result of the story (for example, granting you reserves as part of a mission). You can also typically ask for reserves by using the power at a cost tool below, or by successfully taking downtime actions.

You establish reserves you are taking on a mission before you embark on that mission. There's no limit to what you can take along other than what the GM and your own actions are willing to grant you.

Here's some examples of reserves. Don't take these examples as set in stone, but as ideas for the kind of reserves that could be available to you. Abstractly speaking, reserves is anything you are holding as an advantage for the next mission. The reserves available to characters should be dependent on the GM, your own actions, and the story. Some of these are relevant to mechs (See the mech section for more details), some for pilots, and some for the story.

Before a mission, if the GM is using a list of reserves, it can help for it to be visible for all players so players have a good idea of what is potentially available for them. When rewarding reserves, the GM doesn't necessarily have to pick from this list.

TABLE: Narrative Reserves

d20 Narrative Reserves

1-2 Access: Gain a keycard, invite, bribes, or insider access to a particular location

3-4 Backing: Political support from someone powerful for this mission - you can invoke it as leverage 5-6 Supplies: Cross a hazardous or hostile area without

having to make a skill check

7-8 Disguise: Prepare a disguise or cover identity, allowing you to sneak into a location uncontested 9-10 Diversion: Prepare or arrange for a diversion, giving you time to take action without fear of consequence 11-12 Blackmail: Gain blackmail or sensitive information on a particular person

13-14 Reputation: Make a good name for yourself for the next mission, starting you off on a good position with everyone you meet 15-16 Safe Harbor: Gain a guaranteed safe location where you can convene, plan, or recuperate 17-18 Tracking: Know the location of important objects or people for this mission

19-20 Knowledge: Gain important knowledge of local history, customs, or culture etiquette

TABLE: Mech Equipment and gear reserves

d20 Mech reserves

1-2 Ammo: Get extra uses (+1 or +2) to a (limited) weapon or system

3-4 Rented gear: Get access to a weapon or piece of mech gear you don't normally have access to for the mission only 5-6 Extra repairs: Start the mission with +2 repairs on your mech.

7-8 CORE battery: Consume this to gain core power on your mech, allowing it to use its most powerful ability again (you can't get more than 1 core power at a time) 9-10 Deployable Shield: Gain a 1-use deployable shield generator, a size 1 deployable that grants all allied actors in a burst 2 radius around it light cover 11-12 Redundant repair: 1/mission make the stabilize action as a free action

13-14 Systems reinforcement: Get +1 accuracy to hull, agility, systems, or engineering checks, this mission only (choose one) 15-16 Smart ammo: All weapons become smart, this mission only

17-18 Boosted servos: Become immune to the slowed condition, this mission only

19-20 Jump jets: Your mech can fly when it makes its regular move, this mission only

TABLE: Tactical reserves

d20 Tactical Reserves

1-2 Scouting: Get detailed information on the kinds of mechs and threats you will be facing soon, such as number, type, and statistics 3-4 Vehicle: Gain use of a transport vehicle or starship for this mission only (a tier 1 NPC with the vehicle or ship tag) 5-6 Reinforcements: Call in an NPC mech ally, once per mission (choose a tier 1-3 NPC from the NPC section). 7-8 Environmental Shielding: Ignore a particular battlefield hazard or dangerous terrain, such as extreme heat or cold 9-10 Accuracy: Gain +1 accuracy on a particular skill or action due to training or enhancement, this mission only 11-12 Bombardment: Call in a artillery or orbital bombardment once during mech combat (Full Action, range 30 within line of sight, blast 2, 3d6 explosive damage). 13-14 Extended Harness: Carry an extra pilot weapon and two pieces of pilot gear into this mission 15-16 Ambush: Choose exactly where your next battle will take place, including the terrain and cover set up, etc 17-18 Orbital Drop: Start the mission dropping from orbit into a heavily fortified or hard to reach location 19-20 NHP

assistant: Gain an NHP, controlled by the GM, that can give you advice on the current situation

Here's some examples of reserves in play:

Xi Xiaoyun

During downtime, Xi negotiates with the powerful boss of the Red Dog Triad local crime syndicate. He knows their next mission might take them through their territory. He makes some checks (and some promises) and gets in the boss's good graces. The GM tells his player he can write down the following for reserves:

Weaponry: I've borrowed a Coldcore sniper rifle from the triad (from the Smith Shimano Corpro gear catalogue) just for this mission

Backing: I have the backing of the triad. If someone messes with me, I can invoke that.

Information: I can ask the GM what kind of enemies we might run into on the mission due to the Triad's spy networks

Pard Landover

Pard decides to do some scouting during downtime, scavenging a strange, abandoned derelict in his mech for supplies. After some harrowing exploration and a few skill checks, the GM asks him to write the following down:

Ammo: I've recovered extra ammo cases, giving me +1 use to all limited weapons

Nanomaterials: I've recovered some strange nano materials, giving me +2 repairs to my mech this next mission

10.3 Downtime Actions

Downtime Actions

You can use these story actions below to represent what your pilot gets up to during a stretch of downtime. You can also use them to fill gaps in the story where you want to speed things up, 'montage', or cover a greater stretch of time.

Unlike a regular skill check, these downtime actions have specific outcomes depending on whether you hit, miss, or excel, and usually ask you to choose from a list. The actual skill used is dependent on context. For example, the Get a Damn Drink action could be rolled using Survive (for alcohol tolerance, most likely), or Getting Word on the Streets (charming the locals).

Each outcome is dependent on the roll, but is up to the GM and the player making the action to establish the details, using the prompts given. You can go into as much detail about the ins and outs of the action as you want - the outcome is the only thing that's important.

As a good rule, a pilot can do only one of these during downtime, and one or two if the downtime is especially long. You can always keep the outcomes of these actions as reserves for the next mission.

You can easily write your own downtime actions that are more dependent on your particular narrative or story, using them modeled ones below.

To start, let's look at the Power at a Cost action.

10.4 Power at a Cost

POWER AT A COST

This is a really simple downtime action for gaining rewards, opportunities, or additional resources (such as reserves). You might want reserves, or something more abstract, like time, safety, information, allies, support, a base of operations, materials, shelter, food, a damn pack of cigarettes.

Name what you want. You can always get it, but:

BUT (the GM chooses one or two of the following and fills in details, depending on how outlandish the request is):

- It's going to take a lot more time than they anticipated - It's going to be really damn risky - You have to have to give something up or leave something behind (wealth, resources, allies) - You're going to piss someone or something important and powerful off to get it - It's going to involve going WILDLY off the plan - You'll need more information to proceed safely - What you put together is going to fall apart damn soon

- You'll need to gather more resources first (you know where to find them, however) - You can't EXACTLY get what they want, just approximately what you want, a lesser version, or less of what you want

You can also use the power at a cost action mid-mission for similar effects (not necessarily during downtime). The rest of the downtime actions are typically for use only in downtime, but you could adapt them mid mission if they fit.

BUY SOME TIME You try and stave off some reckoning, extend your window of opportunity, or merely buy more time and breathing room for you and your group to act. You might be trying to dodge some heat, survive stranded in the wilderness, or cause a distraction so another plan can go off. You can use that distraction or bought time as reserves for the next mission.

On a total result of 9 or lower, you're out of time, and whatever you're trying to stall catches up with you unless drastic measures are taken right now. On a total result of 10-19, you can buy enough time, but the situation becomes precarious or desperate. Next time you get this result with the same situation, treat it as a 9 or lower. On a total result of 20+, you buy just enough time as you need for now, until the next mission. If you've already gotten this result, it becomes a 10-19 for the same situation next time.

GET A DAMN DRINK You can only make this action where there's a drink to actually get (in town, a station, a city, or some other populated area). You blow off some steam, carouse, and generally get into trouble. You could be doing this to make connections, collect gossip, forge a reputation, or maybe just to forget what happened on the last mission. Drinks don't have to be involved, but vice usually is. There's usually trouble.

On a total result of 9 or lower, you can decide whether you had good time or not. However, you wake up in a gutter somewhere with only one of the following (choose!): - Your dignity - Most of your possessions - Your memory On a total result of 10-19, you get one of the following as reserves and lose one of the following: - A good reputation - A friend or connection - A useful item or

piece of information - A convenient opportunity On a total result of 20+, you get two of the above and don't lose anything

GET CREATIVE You tweak something or attempt to make something new, either a physical project, or a piece of software. It doesn't have to be something on the a gear list, but it generally can't be something as impactful as a piece of mech gear. Once finished, you can use it as reserves.

On a total result of 9 or lower, you don't make any progress on your project for now. If you already got this result on the same project, treat it as a 10-19 next time. On a total result of 10-19, you can make progress on your project, but can't finish it. You can finish it next time you have downtime without a roll if you get some things before then (pick 2): - Quality materials - Specific knowledge or techniques - Specialized tools - A good workspace On a total result of 20+, you can finish your project during this downtime. If it's complicated, treat this result as a 10-19, but only choose 1.

GET FOCUSED You focus on increasing your own skills, training, and self-improvement. You might practice, learn, meditate, or call on a teacher. Before you make this action, name one thing you'd like to learn or improve on (a skill, technique, an academic subject or language). This could be something like starship piloting, cooking, chess, boxing, history, or etiquette. It should generally be a non-combat action.

The GM will give you a new trigger for a skill, giving you +1 Accuracy when you undertake your new action (you need to work out which skill to use). For example, the trigger could be +1 Accuracy to roll sharp when playing chess, or +1 Accuracy to roll cool when dancing.

GET ORGANIZED You start, run, or improve an organization, business, or other venture. Describe it when you start it up: it's purpose or goal, mode of operation, and primary business. Track your organization's efficiency and influence, from 1-6 (they each start at 1). When you want to make a narrative role where your organization could help, you can roll your organization's efficiency or influence like a skill check. Efficiency is how effective your organization is at what it does (a military organization with high efficiency would be good at combat, for example). Influence is your organization's size, reach, and reputation. An organization with high influence can easily acquire assets or create opportunities, transport people, or sway public opinion. You can use these advantages as reserves.

On a total result of 9 or lower, your organization folds immediately unless: - It lowers in efficiency and influence by 1, to a minimum of 1. If it's already at 1 for both of these, you can't choose this option. - It takes one of the following actions: pay debts, prove worthiness, get bailed out, make an aggressive move On a total result of 10-19, your organization is stable. It gains +2 influence or efficiency, to a maximum of +6. On a total result of 20+ your organization gains +2 influence and efficiency, to a maximum of +6

GATHER INFORMATION

You poke your nose around, perhaps where it doesn't belong. You're investigating something, doing research, following up on a mystery, tracking a target, or keeping an eye on something. You might be doing research in a library, or go

undercover in an organization to learn what you can. Whatever you're doing, you're generally trying to gather information on a subject of your choosing. You can use this information as reserves.

On a total result of 9 or lower, you can choose to get out now, or treat this result as a 10-15. If you choose the latter, you get your information but you are immediately found out, noticed, captured, or discovered by an organization that either controls or seeks that information. On a total result of 10-19, you find the information you've looking for. However, (choose one): - You leave clear evidence of your rummaging - You have to dispatch, harm, or implicate someone innocent On a total result of 20+, you get your information cleanly, no complications

GET CONNECTED You try and make connections, call upon favors, ask for help, or drum up support for a particular course of action. You need access to communications or just good old fashioned face to face conversation to take this action. You can use your connection's resources or aid as reserves for the next mission.

On a total result of 9 or lower, you've got to do a favor or make good on a promise for your connection right now. Otherwise, they won't help you at all. If you take action right away, however, they'll go along with what you want. On a total result of 10-19, your connection will help you, but you've got to do a favor or make good on a promise after they help you. If you don't, treat any result as a 9 or lower next time with the same organization. On a total result of 20+, your connection will help you out, no strings attached.

SCROUNGE AND BARTER You try and get your hands on some gear or asset for your group by dredging the scrapyard, chasing down rumors, bartering in the local market, hunting around, or through good old fashioned force of will. You could try and get some better pilot gear that could help you, a vehicle, narcotics, goods, or other sundries. It's got to be something physical that you can acquire, but doesn't necessarily have to be on the gear list. If you get it, you can take it on the next mission as reserves.

On a total result of 9 or lower, you can get what you're looking for, but (choose one): - It was stolen, probably from someone who's looking for it - It's degraded, old, filthy, or malfunctioning - Someone else has it right now and won't give it up without force or convincing On a total result of 10-19, you can get what you're looking for, as long as you trade in a little (choose 1): - Time - Dignity - Reputation

- Health, comfort and wellness On a total result of 20+, you get what you're looking for, no problems at all.

10.5   Putting it all Together

PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER

After downtime naturally wraps up, the game should loop right back into the next mission, following the same structure (Brief, Preparation, Mission, Debrief, Downtime).

Of course, narrative play doesn't cover everything in a game of LANCER. There's inevitably always conflict, and that conflict is probably going to involve mechs, which brings us to the next section.

11　The Mech

THE MECH

A mechanized cavalry unit – a mech – is the primary agent around which the Union Navy bases its ground forces.

Mechs depending on the FRAME, stand anywhere from eight to forty feet tall and are bi-, qadra-, or hexapedal. The majority of them are brachial, featuring one to two pairs of arms able to manipulate to-scale weaponry and interact with the natural environment. Some pilots and units prefer to integrate their mech's weapon systems to the unit's chassis and, depending on the size or power of the weapon system, such an integrated system might be required. Most mechs are piloted by a single pilot, but there are larger, highly advanced platforms that require one or more additional pilots to control.

Mechanized cavalry units are agile, quick, and responsive systems for their size. They are able to traverse most all solid and vacuum environments; their mobility is often augmented or entirely dependent on maneuvering jets (fuel depends on environment). Still, they are heavy, and in order to run they are powered by a cold fusion generator. Their power plant is heavily shielded and resistant to damage, reliable, and essentially inexhaustible, but should the reactor be compromised the results are often catastrophic.

Mechanized cavalry typically support mounted or unmounted infantry as a heavy weapons platform or force multiplier. They operate on their own in hostile environments in squadrons of two to five, often dropped either far behind enemy lines or at the front, where the fighting is thickest and they can be used as line-breaker shock troops.

Mechs are, by and large, military equipment, modular and restricted by license. However, they are common enough in civilian construction, hazardous materials cleanup, exploration, and other roles that they are not shocking to the average human. Mechanized Cavalry, though, are different: their pilots are regarded on the same level as knights or the flying aces of old.

11.1　Piloting a Mech

PILOTING A MECH

You must be physically inside a mech to pilot it. Mechs that are powered off or inactive are typically shut down (they can't do anything and it's easy to hit them). You can mount or dismount a mech and boot up a mech by taking action to do so. While inside your mech, you don't have line of sight to anything outside your mech (and nothing outside has line of sight to you. As long as your mech is not destroyed, you cannot be targeted, damaged, or affected by

any attacks or effects that originate from outside your mech while inside it. If your mech is destroyed, you lose this benefit (it's got holes blown in it!) and it merely grants cover.

11.2   Mech Skills

Mech Skills

A mech operates on an entirely different level in LANCER: a powered, armored hulk with incredibly powerful systems, weaponry, and physical strength. A mech is capable of far more than a pilot on foot, and can perform feats of incredible strength, speed, and resilience where skill alone will not suffice.

Your character's pilot skills relate to their personal aptitudes on foot, whereas your character's mech skill refer to their abilities piloting and building mechs. A Mech skill check can be referred to by the name of it's statistic, such as a Hull check, a an Agility check, etc.

Each mech skill has a primary benefit and use. Unlike pilot skills, mech skills also give your mech bonuses while building or creating a mech.

HULL describes your ability to pilot and build mechs with high strength, structure, and frame reinforcement. Mechs with a high hull can survive a lot of punishment and perform feats of enormous strength.

Roll Hull when: Smashing through or pulverising an obstacle, vehicle, or building; lifting, dragging, pushing, or hurling an enormous amount of weight; grabbing, wrestling, or grappling a mech, starship, or mech-sized creature; resisting a huge amount of force, staying upright through cataclysmic weather

AGILITY describes your ability to pilot and build mechs with speed, reactivity, quickness, and dexterity. Mechs with a high agility are lightning fast for their size, and can react quickly and accurately.

Roll Agility when: Chasing, pursuing, or fleeing with incredible speed; performing acrobatics in your mech; hiding or moving silently; performing a feat of fine manual dexterity with your mech; dodging out of the way of danger

SYSTEMS describes your ability to build mechs with powerful computing and electronic systems, often aided by sentient or sub-sentient programs. Mechs with powerful Systems scores have a mind-boggling amount of computing power, some of which may not even exist in realspace.

Roll Systems when: Infiltrating hardened and powerful electronic systems and targets, including other mechs; boosting or suppressing a signal; performing electronic warfare; scanning or analyze information; boosting or weakening the electronic systems of a vehicle, mech, starship, or base; interacting safely with Non-Human Persons or electronic life forms; analyzing the nature of unfamiliar electronic systems.

ENGINEERING describes your ability to build mechs with powerful reactors, high tech weaponry, ammunition, and utility tools. Mechs with a high engineering score typically incorporate a lot of advanced technology, are extremely resilient and reliable, can draw upon huge amounts of energy and heat, and can push their systems far beyond their factory specifications.

Roll Engineering when: pushing your mech past its limits; withstanding extreme conditions such as heat, cold, void, or radiation; keeping your mech running well past its breaking point or for extreme amounts of time; traveling or move safely through hazardous or hostile conditions; boosting the reactor output of another mech, starship, or base; conserving and efficiently using ammo, power,

and other resources

Collectively, these four skills are often referred to as H.A.S.E. You may add the appropriate rating to a 1d20 roll for the total when making a skill check that calls for one of these ratings. You often make HASE checks as a part of mech combat, and certain actions will call for checks, such as hiding or grappling.

12 The Modular Mech

THE MODULAR MECH

Mechs in LANCER are powerful machines, but what makes them more powerful, and your character more unique than the regular mech pilot, is your ability to source mech weapons, parts, and gear from many different manufacturers and combine them together. LANCER has a modular mech system, where each mech comes with a list of gear, gated by license, that once acquired can be freely swapped between any other mechs a pilot owns.

Pilots in LANCER are as much an expert at building their machines as piloting them (or else have a team supporting them). Currency is not tracked in LANCER, so a pilot's ability to get better parts and build a stronger mech mainly increases with License Level. License level represents wealth, resources, connections, influence, and all the powers a pilot has at their disposal to get better and more advanced mech parts. A pilot's mech and their proficiency with mechs are tracked with a character's mech skills and their license level.

When you level up from levels 1-12, your pilot gains +1 license point to spend on a license from any mech manufacturer, from rank I to rank III (with each rank requiring the previous one). Each level of a license you unlock grants you access to various systems and weaponry, with rank II giving you a FRAME (a base for your mech), and rank I-III giving you more advanced weapons and systems. These weapons and systems are interchangeable. You can add as many to your mech as you have mounts or system points to do so, from any source among licenses you have unlocked. This is the main way you build 'your' mech.

After picking a frame and gear, you apply bonuses from your mech skills, and any core bonuses you have unlocked (every 3 levels) to get a finished mech.

All pilots, even level 0 pilots, always have access to the GMS 'Everest' FRAME and the general GMS gear list. At level 0, this is the only gear available for pilots until they gain license levels and can unlock more gear.

12.1 Without Limits

WITHOUT LIMITS

You never need to re-acquire mech gear or FRAMEs that you have access to, as long as you have the license for that gear. You are assumed to generally always have access to that gear, through influence, patronage, wealth, or rank. In addition, modern 3-d printing technology has advanced enough in LANCER that entire mechs can be printed wholesale. Even if you lose your mech in combat, it can easily be re-printed during downtime. You can think about your licenses as your character's 'class' if this were a more traditional RPG.

12.2 Mech Structure

MECH STRUCTURE

The basic structure of a mech is 2 arms and 2 legs. You can modify this however you choose, within reason (ask your GM). The general look, structure

and layout of your mech has no bearing on game play.

Let's go through each mech component in detail:

12.3   Frame

FRAME

Your mech's FRAME is its chassis, armor, mounts, and reinforcement. It determines your mech's appearance and function, from a heavy siege fighter, to an agile flier, to a cloaking technical- focused mech. Think about the FRAME as choosing 'which' mech you're going to pilot.

In game terms, a FRAME is the base of your mech. FRAMEs becomes available by unlocking level II of mech licenses.

Your mech's FRAME determines its size and armor. Your FRAME also has base statistics, system points and mounts, which determine what kinds of weapons and systems you can add to your mech. The kinds of weapons and systems you can add depend on the kinds of mounts your FRAME has and the free system points it has available.

Finally, your FRAME gives you a powerful CORE system ability to use in combat that they can typically only activate once per mission. Activating this core system requires Core Power, which you start every mission with, but can only use once.

12.4   Size and Armor

SIZE AND ARMOR

Let's go over the base FRAME features. Every FRAME starts with differing number of mounts, system points, armor, a different CORE system and can be size 1/2 to the enormous size 3.:

Size: How big your mech is, in spaces, on each size. Humans and the smallest mechs are size 1/2. Typical mechs are size 1. Size does not directly correlate to how big an actor is, but the space it controls around it. Most mechs are size 1 (about 10' by 10' in default size) while being about 15-20' tall in the fiction.

Armor: A mech's armor reduces all incoming sources of damage by that amount. Armor mostly depends on FRAME, and can't go higher than 4. Damage with the AP tag or burn ignores armor.

12.5   Mounts and Weapons

MOUNTS AND WEAPONS Your mech can add weapons as long as it has space for them on a mount. Weapons come in several sizes, and each mount will only take a certain number and size of weapons.

All mech weapons in LANCER have size, type, and damage.

• Pilot (size): A pilot scale weapon. Pilot weapons are small enough that they cannot Critical Hit.

• Auxiliary (size): The smallest weapon size for mechs, light enough to use alongside larger weapons. When you attack with a weapon, you can also attack

with an auxiliary weapon in the same mount for free. ● Main (size): A normal sized weapon (for a mech) ● Heavy (size): A large, heavier weapon typically used to inflict massive damage. ● Superheavy (size): A very large, usually special-class weapon with high power requirements. Can only be fired with the Barrage action.

● Type - All weapons have a type, which can be one of the following: CQB, Rifle, Launcher, Cannon, Melee, Nexus. These describe the general effect range and combat function of the weapon.

● Explosive (Damage/ Weapon type): Explosive weapons deal their damage in a single, sudden, and incredibly powerful burst of shrapnel, flame, and/or pressure, blasting in a radius around their point of detonation. ● Kinetic (Damage/ Weapon type): Kinetic weapons fire solid projectiles of various calibers and sizes, inert or innervated, that rely on simple collision to deal damage from point-of-impact through to point-of-exit. Kinetic weapons utilize chemical and electronic methods of firing or launching their projectiles, and are commonly fed by belts, boxes, and/or internal or external magazines. ● Energy (Damage/ Weapon type): Energy weapons are weapons that project beams, lances, bolts, waves, or cones of different energy to damage and destroy their targets. Commonly powered by external or internal batteries, or hooked directly into a mech's power core, energy weapons demand tremendous amounts of input to provide tremendous amounts of output.

Weapons might also deal Heat or Burn (damage over time), which have additional effects, detailed in the damage section.

12.6   Mounts

MOUNTS

Mech FRAMEs are standard-built to mount a limited number of core systems. Too many weapons or systems will overtax the reactor or add too much stress on the mech's structure.

Each mech FRAME has differing numbers of the following mount points. You cannot add weapons or systems to your mech if you don't have an available mount to do so. You can add a weapon of any smaller size in a space that could take a larger weapon (for example, you could add a main or aux weapon to a heavy mount, or add two aux weapons to a main/aux mount).

Aux/Aux mount: This mount takes up to 2 auxiliary weapons

Main/Aux mount: This mount takes 1 main weapon and 1 aux weapon

Main mount: This mount takes 1 main weapon

Heavy mount: This mount takes 1 heavy weapon

Flexible mount: This mount takes either 1 main weapon or up to 2 auxiliary weapons

Superheavy weapons take a heavy mount and one other mount of any size.

Some mechs have the following mount:

Integrated mount: This mount is part of a mech's FRAME. It includes the listed weapon by default, which cannot be removed or replaced. This mount and weapon cannot be removed, modified, or duplicated in any way.

Weapons mounted on a mech don't necessarily need to be part of its chassis - they could be slung in holsters, build into compartments, or held/wielded normally. You can decide which when you build your mech - it has no effect in the rules. Mounts represent the tax on your mech's systems more than an actual physical structure.

12.7 System Points

SYSTEM POINTS

Mech FRAMEs also come with a certain number of System Points (SP). System points can be spent to add additional systems to your mech, and some weapons or heavier systems will take system points to add to your mech in addition to requiring open mounts. As a pilot levels up, you can add your grit (1/2 your level) to your total system points. You cannot add systems to your mech that would cause you to exceed your system points.

12.8 Core System

CORE system Each FRAME comes with a CORE system. This a powerful ability that is unique to the FRAME, can't be transferred (you have to use the FRAME to use it), and can only be used typically once a mission by consuming Core Power.

All mech FRAMEs have a reservoir of high efficiency system power that is designed only to work for a short period of time. This Core Power is essential to the high-powered systems that many mechs utilize in emergency situations or points of heavy action.

Your mech either has Core Power or it doesn't. There's no way to 'save' it up (you either have it or you don't). You always get core power when you start a mission or full repair. You only gain core power when taking a full repair, or unless the GM grants you core power during the course of a mission.

12.9 Base statistics and improvements

BASE STATISTICS and IMPROVEMENTS Every FRAME has different base statistics that it starts with, giving it a unique role.

HP: Like your pilot, your mech has HP (hit points). Your mech, however, has 4 structure, and isn't destroyed when reaching 0 HP. Instead, its HP resets when it loses structure and it makes a

critical damage check. When a mech runs out of structure, it goes into the CRITICAL state, and makes a critical check each time it takes damage.

Repairs: Your mech can heal and repair its systems by spending repairs, like a currency. If it runs out of repairs, it can no longer heal or repaired destroyed systems.

Speed: How far your mech can move when it moves.

Evasion: How hard it is for most ranged and melee attacks to hit your mech.

Sensor Range: The distance your mech can use tech systems or attacks. If something's in your sensor range, you know it's there unless it's hiding (even if you can't directly see it).

Tech attack: Your mech can add its tech attack instead of grit when conducting electronic warfare.

E-defense: How hard it is for electronic or guided weapons or systems to hit your mech.

Heat Capacity: Your mech can take heat from electronic warfare or its own systems. If it takes more than its heat capacity, it overheats and suffers adverse effects.

Limited systems: Some weapons only have limited uses between full repairs. Once used up, they can't be used again until replenished.

Your pilot's mech skills can boost some of the statistics of any FRAME you pilot when you build it, giving you your final mech. This is your pilot's unique or personal touch that you add to the stock FRAME to customize it.

The following features of a FRAME get bonuses from your mech skills. This is where your pilot's personal abilities really kick in.

GRIT (1/2 your level) can be added to your mech's attack bonus, HP, and system points

Your HULL skill affects your mech's HP and durability. ● Each point of hull gives you +2 hp. ● Each 2 points of hull gives your mech +1 repair capacity Your AGILITY skill affects your mech's evasion and speed. ● Each point of agility gives +1 evasion ● Each 2 points of agility gives your mech +1 speed Your SYSTEMS skill affects sensor range, tech attack and e-defense. ● You can add your systems to your mechs' sensor range and electronic defense ● You can add systems to tech attack Your ENGINEERING skill affects heat capacity and limited systems ● You can add your engineering skill to heat capacity ● Each 2 points of engineering gives your mech +1 to maximum uses for limited systems and weapons

12.10   Core Bonus

CORE BONUS

As your pilot acquires more licenses with a particular manufacturer, they will gain manufacturer- specific knowledge and skills. In game this is represented by a CORE bonus. Every 3 levels, you

can apply a new CORE bonus to your CORE. Bonuses are a permanent improvements, and apply no matter what FRAME you are using. They are are unique (you cannot take the same twice) and can offer interesting ways to customize your mech. You can always choose GMS CORE bonuses, but to choose a CORE bonus from a manufacturer, you need 3 points in licenses from that manufacturer (any licenses, you can mix and match), for each CORE bonus you have from them. For example, to take 1 CORE bonus from IPS-Northstar requires at least 3 points in IPS-N licenses, to take 2 would require at least 6.

12.11   Talents

TALENTS

Your pilot's experience and abilities with piloting a mech is tracked by Talents. This is where skill and ingenuity can push your mech past its limits. Talents give your character abilities with particular types of weapons, systems, or styles of play that help define your character further.

Talents, like licenses, go from rank I-III. At level 0, you gain three talent points to spend on Talents, but can't take any past rank I. When you level up, you gain +1 talent point to spend on talents. Talents only apply to your pilot's capabilities when piloting a mech (with a few exceptions).

You can find the talent list in the compendium.

PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER Constructing a mech may seem daunting at first, but is actually a fairly simple process.

At level 0: 1. Pick a FRAME from the licenses you have available to you. At level 0, this should just be the GMS Everest, and at level 2 you can already pick a new FRAME. Your FRAME gives your mech its armor, SP, mounts, base stats, and a CORE system 2. Add bonuses from mech skills HULL: + 2HP/point, +1 repair cap/2 points AGILITY: +1 evasion/point, +1 speed/2points SYSTEMS: +1 tech attack, sensor range, and e-defense per point ENGINEERING: +1 heat cap/point, +1 to all limited gear/2 points 3. Pick weapons for your FRAME mounts from those you have access to. You might choose different weapons depending on the size of each mount. At level 0, you have access to only the GMS weapon list. 4. Spend your SP on systems. You cannot spend over the amount your mech has, and any excess or unspent SP are lost. At level 0, you can only choose from GMS systems. At higher levels, you can add your grit to total SP on all mechs you make. 5. A mech can always mount duplicate weapons or systems, unless those weapons or systems have the Unique tag. 6. Allocate your talent points. At level 0, you can have 3 rank I talents.

7. You're done!

MOVING FORWARD

If you want to skip ahead to creating a mech right away, you can go directly to the compendium. Though the choices in the full mech compendium are considerable, at level 0, a pilot only has more limited access to the General Massive Systems gear. If you're new to the game or learning the system, it's recommended you start there. You're not 'stuck' with whatever mech you create, as you can make a new one every mission if need be.

Before creating a mech, you might find it useful to read through the rules on damage, heat, and repair in the following section, and the rules for mech combat in the following section.

13 Damage

DAMAGE

You want to avoid or mitigate incoming damage as much as possible, but know this: Sometime, somewhere, someone is going to punch a few holes in your kit.

Damage in LANCER comes in three types: Explosive, Energy, and Kinetic, each representing a different type of weaponry or projectile.

Armor, like with pilots, reduces all incoming damage by the amount indicated. Damage with the AP tag ignores armor.

Resistance reduces all incoming damage by 1/2 of a particular type. Mechs can only have resistance once (it doesn't stack) for a particular type of damage.

Damage in LANCER resolves as follows:

1. Reductions from armor

2. Reductions from systems, talents, and reactions, such as those that grant resistance. Only one reduction of a type or system can be applied at once.

Remaining damage is dealt to your HP, your HIT POINTS.

For example: Your total HP is 15. You take fire from an enemy, who scores a successful hit by beating your mech's Evasion. You're dealt 12 points of kinetic damage. Lucky for you, you have armor installed on your mech, which subtracts 2 from all incoming damage, reducing the final amount of incoming damage to 10. Your total HP after all modifications to incoming damage have been applied is now 5. Take cover!

Heat and Burn

Some weapons also deal Heat or Burn.

- Heat is not affected by armor, though it can be affected by resistance. It fills up a mech's heat capacity (see the section below)

- Mechs affected by Burn immediately take damage equal to the burn they just took, ignoring armor. At the end of their turn, a mech can make an engineering check. On success, they clear all Burn on themselves, on failure, they take damage equal to their current Burn. Burn can stack with itself (so being hit by Burn 3 twice would increase it to Burn 6). Burn is its own damage type.

13.1 Structure

Structure

If your mech is ever reduced to 0 HP, unlike a pilot, you are not down and out. Your mech is a powerful machine that can take multiple hits before it starts to be break down. This is represented by structure. Player mechs have 4 structure, NPC mechs might have less.

When a mech or other actor with structure is reduced to 0 HP, it takes 1 structure damage, makes a structure check, then resets its HP to full. It then takes any damage that 'spills over' (this could cause it to lose multiple points of structure and make multiple structure checks in a turn). Structure damage represents major damage to your mech or its systems.

If your mech takes its last point of structure damage and checks its last box, it goes into the CRITICAL state (see below). This is a state in which your mech is so heavily damaged that it begins falling apart with every hit. NPCs that run out of structure typically are destroyed.

13.2   Structure Damage

STRUCTURE DAMAGE When your mech is reduced to 0 HP or when it takes any damage in the CRITICAL state, you roll on the structure damage chart. Structure damage represents the results of unusually powerful or accurate hits, which can disable a mech rapidly if not dealt with. When you make a structure check, roll 1d6 per point of structure damage you have marked. When rolling multiple dice, choose the lowest result, though certain outcomes activate if you also roll multiples 1s.

STRUCTURE DAMAGE

ROLL RESULT EFFECT

5-6 GLANCING BLOW Emergency systems kick in and stabilize your mech. However, your mech is impaired until the end of your next turn.

2-4 SYSTEM TRAUMA Parts of your mech are torn off (potentially limbs). All the weapons on one mount or a system chosen by you is destroyed. If a system is used up (it has the limited tag and no charges left) it's not a valid target. If there's nothing left to destroy, this result becomes DIRECT HIT instead.

1 DIRECT HIT This result has different outcomes depending on how much structure damage your mech has remaining.

3+ - Your mech is stunned until the end of your next turn.

2 - Your mech must pass a hull check or be destroyed. 1 - Your mech is destroyed.

Two or CRUSHING HIT Your mech is damaged beyond repair and is destroyed. You can more 1s still exit it as normal.

The CRITICAL state

When your mech ticks off its last point of structure (typically 4), it immediately enters the CRITICAL state, remaining at 0 hp. While CRITICAL:

- Your mech cannot repair or gain Hit Points.

- When you take damage, you make a structure check.

This allows a mech to stay fighting at great personal risk to the pilot. A mech can exit the CRITICAL state only by resting or taking a full repair. When a mech exits the CRITICAL state it returns to 1 HP.

14 Heat and Overheating

HEAT & OVERHEATING

Heat represents the stress of combat on a mech's electronic systems and mechanical components. Generally a mech is equipped with heat sinks, shunts, and coolant systems and to operate within factory defined standards without generating heat. However, combat and activated abilities can tax your mech's heat dispersal systems to the point of causing actual damage. Electronic warfare attacks, environmental hazards, weaponry, and overcharging can all cause heat buildup.

Each Mech has a Heat Capacity that determines how much heat they can handle without things getting dangerous. It can be increased through certain systems and by improving a mech's engineering score. A mech with a negative bonus to heat capacity has less than a mech with no bonus. A mech reactor also can take a certain amount of stress before its reactor core is breached and it starts to completely melt down. Most mechs have 4.

When a mech takes Heat, mark it off. If you gain heat that puts you up to your heat capacity or over, check 1 reactor stress, then make an overheating check on the OVERHEATING chart by rolling 1d6 per point of stress you have. If rolling multiple dice, choose the lowest result. Then your mech fully cools, erasing all heat from the heat gauge. You take any heat that 'spills over' to your gauge again. This could cause you to overheat more than once.

OVERHEATING

ROLL RESULT EFFECT

5-6 EMERGENCY Cooling systems recover and manage to contain the peaking heat SHUNT levels. However, your mech is impaired until the end of your next turn.

2-4 POWER PLANT Your mech's power plant becomes unstable, ejecting jets of plasma. DESTABILIZE Your mech is Jammed until the end of your next turn

1 MELTDOWN This result has different outcomes depending on how much reactor stress your mech has remaining.

3+ - Your mech is immediately shut down

2 - Your mech must pass a engineering check or suffer a reactor meltdown at the end of 1d6 turns after this one (rolled by the GM). You can reverse it by taking a full action and repeating this check.

1 - Your mech suffers a reactor meltdown at the end of your next turn

Two 1s IRREVERSIBLE Your reactor goes critical. Your mech will suffer a reactor meltdown at MELTDOWN the end of your next turn.

COOLING HEAT

You can reset your heat gauge by taking the Stabilize action in combat or using other systems. You also automatically cool heat when you rest or full repair. Whenever you cool heat, your gauge resets, clearing all heat.

The DANGER ZONE

When a mech has 1/2 of its total heat capacity filled, it's in the danger zone. Certain mech weapons and talents only activate in this area. While a

mech is in this zone, it's visible - parts of your mech will be glowing, smoking, or steaming. Reactor vents or other cooling mechanisms might be visible hot or working overtime.

CORE BREACH

If you check your last (typically 4th) stress box, your mech enters the CORE BREACH state. In this state your gauge does not reset, you can no longer cool, and whenever your mech takes heat, it makes an overheating check. You can exit this state by resting or taking a full repair.

14.1   Reactor Meltdown

REACTOR MELTDOWN

Certain critical and overheating table results can cause a reactor meltdown. This can be immediate, or involve a countdown (in which case update the countdown at the start of the round. The meltdown triggers when specified). When a mech suffers a reactor meltdown, any pilot inside immediately dies, the mech is immediately vaporized in a catastrophic eruption (it becomes completely unrepairable), and any mechs inside a burst 2 area centered on the mech must pass an agility skill check or take 4d6 explosive damage, and half on a successful save.

15 Repair

REPAIR

A Repair is in or out of combat healing to your mech. Repairs represent the resilience of your mech and its ability to continue functioning while damaged, as well as physical assets such as parts or tools. You can spend a repair by taking the Stabilize action in combat, repairing your mech during a rest, or using systems that allow you to repair.

In combat, you can spend 1 repair as part of Stabilize to heal your mech to full HP.

During a rest, your mech cools all heat. You can then spend any number of repairs. 1 repair can:

- Refill HP to maximum
- Repair a destroyed weapon or system.

4 repairs can be spent to repair a destroyed mech (during a rest only, see below)

A pilot's Repair Capacity is equal to 4+ HULL. This indicates the number of repairs a pilot can make before returning to base - so if a mech's repair capacity is 8, it can only spend 8 repairs before taking a full repair. If a pilot has no repairs left, they cannot repair their mech! This capacity refreshes to full when a pilot takes a full repair.

DESTROYED

When destroyed, a mech counts as permanently stunned and shut down until it is restored to working condition (these conditions cannot be removed in any way). It then becomes an object on the battlefield and provides cover accordingly. The wreck can be moved and dragged around.

15.1 Repairing a Destroyed Mech

Repairing a Destroyed Mech

If a mech is destroyed and the wreck is present (not melted in a reactor explosion, for example), it can be repaired to working order by spending 4 repairs during a rest. These repairs can be spent from the mech's own pool or the pools of any pilots that wish to contribute, in any combination. If a mech has 0 repairs remaining, it can still be repaired if other mechs spend repairs, for example. This is unique to repairing a destroyed mech.

Once repaired, the mech is returned to 1 structure at full HP, no matter how much it had before. Any weapons or systems that are destroyed remain so unless that mech spends its own repairs to fix them.

15.2 Full Repair

Full Repair

If you take at least 10 hours of downtime in a secure location, you can Full repair. You can repair all damage on your mech unless it is completely destroyed, returning it to full HP and

clearing all stress and structure (you can also repair destroyed systems). Your repair cap refreshes to full, your pilot heals to full (or returns from being down and out), you can reset your CRITICAL and heat gauges, and end all statuses other than destroyed (including CRITICAL and CORE BREACH). You also regain core power if you lost it and get back all (limited) use weapons, that you checked off.

15.3   Printing

Printing

If your mech is destroyed, even if you don't have the wreck with you, you can rebuild it during a full repair as long as you have access to the proper facilities. Mechs can be printed whole-cloth from enormous Union printing facilities, which are generally ubiquitous across civilization. A printer and assembler will perfectly recreate any mech or gear you have licenses for. If you need to work on a destroyed mech and don't have a printer, it's also possible to repair it during a full repair without a printer, but you need the wreck.

One At a Time, Please

You're only licensed to print a single active mech at a time. Only the newest mech you printed will function (any others repaired, etc will cease to function).

15.4   Rests

Rests

A rest is defined as at least 1 hour of uninterrupted downtime or light activity (making camp, routine maintenance, for example). After a rest, as long as you took action to do so:

- Cool heat - Heal 1/2 your pilot HP or return from being down and out

- Exit the CRITICAL or CORE BREACH state if you're in it and return to 1 HP and clear 1 heat. - You can spend any number of repairs to repair your mech, as long as you don't spend over your repair cap. You can also repair a destroyed mech. - You can end any statuses currently affecting your mech automatically.

16　Death

DEATH

The destruction of a mech does not always mean the death of a pilot. Pilots can escape and exit from shutdown, disabled, or even destroyed mechs, presuming they survived. A pilot can always re-create a mech - the pilot is much harder.

16.1　Cloning

CLONING

Pilots are tremendous investments in hardware and training and tend to have powerful and well- connected patrons. It should not be surprising, then, that the technologies to resuscitate dead flesh or create imperfect, flash-grown genetic clones of pilots, though often illegal or highly secretive, do exist, and are often utilized by powerful organizations who don't wish to give up on their investments.

Cloning or revivification is a costly and dangerous process. It's always up to the player whether they want to bring a character back or simply make a new one. Flash-cloning or revivification is an experimental process that always creates complications. These caveats are here by default, and can be tweaked by the GM at their discretion:

- A cloned or revived character can only re-join the party after a mission's completion.

- A cloned or revived character knows and learns nothing of the mission that they died on

- A cloned or revived character always comes back with a Quirk.

- The quirk could be physical or mental in nature, but whatever the quirk is, it should be a story hook or something narrative in design (it shouldn't have any major gameplay effects).

- Quirks are always complicating - though your character might adjust to them in time, they are a shock to the system. - If a cloned or revived character would be cloned or revived a second time, they can no longer be played as a player character. The trauma and personality shift from being brought back to life is too great. In other words, you're one and done.

If you want to roll for a random Quirk, you can roll 1d20 or choose from the below chart. You can use these as examples for your own quirks and are free to figure out between you and your GM what quirk your pilot comes back with.

Random Quirk

Roll Quirk (1d20)

1 Part (or all) of your body was too damaged or badly cloned and needed to be amputated and replaced with cybernetics. These are high quality prostheses, and are not visibly synthetic to a casual observer. The extent of the damage is unknown to you.

2 The process required you be fitted with a visible cybernetic augment, such as an arm, leg, eyes, or the like. It is conspicuous and often attracts unwanted

attention.

3 By accident or malintent, you have been cloned into someone else's body. They might be someone noteworthy or important.

4 You are cloned or revived with a nasty, disfiguring scar, a mutation, or a hideous appearance that clearly marks you as vat-grown.

5 Administrative mishaps lead to complete and drastic change in appearance in your new body

6 An extra, withered limb grows out of your chest shortly after your cloning or resurrection. It sometimes moves on its own.

7 A conspicuous barcode is now printed on your body. The barcode has meaning to powerful organizations, but you are not initially privy to its meaning.

8 Under certain light conditions, it is possible to read a script or inscription printed just under your skin. The script is all over your body and contains a scientific formula, a map, or other information contested by powerful organizations or entities.

9 Your new body is too frail to survive the exposure to direct light and air and requires you wear an environmental suit outside of sterilized environments or your mech.

10 DNA from a non-human or possible xenobiological source was used in your resuscitation. Your revivers will not tell you the exact details or what effects it will have on you long term, and treat you more as a science experiment. You now have a useful, visible (though able to be hidden) cosmetic variation.

11 You are stricken with persistent dreams, visions, and images of your death in vivid detail whenever you try and sleep or rest. You know they are all real, but cannot reconcile the existential gulf between what your previous "you" experienced, and your new subjectivity.

12 You are replaced by a digital 'homunculus', an electronic imprint and reconstruction of your personality that occupies a subaltern, a kind of robotic shell.

13 You are plagued by the constant understanding or belief that the 'real' you is actually dead, and you are merely a shadow aping a dead person, implanted with the memories of someone else. You cannot establish the difference between the "you" that died and the "you" that exists now.

14 Due to a clerical mishap, you are implanted with the residual memories of an entirely different and powerful or influential person. This reveals very dangerous and potentially unwanted information to you that is contested or sought after by powerful entities.

15 The process goes awry and you are revived tabula rasa. In desperation, the techs dump a stock personality construction into you. Change your background (adjust your skills accordingly)

16 The process of revival is not without complications. Your natural lifespan is dramatically shortened, and you know you will have to undergo another flash-cloning in the near future.

17 Something changed you, and you have persistent and intrusive mental contact with another entity or entities. It could be human or non-human in nature.

18 You often are struck with searing headaches during which you see brief flashes of what you are pretty sure is the future. Sometimes it comes to pass, sometimes it doesn't.

19 Knowingly or unknowingly, you are implanted with a mental trigger that when heard or activated, causes you to go into a receptive state, either following a pre-programmed course of action (kill, lie, etc) or to listen to and follow exactly the commands of the person who activated you. These commands must be simple, and the person who gives them (PC or NPC) is determined by the GM.

20 You are brought back with complete amnesia of the time before you were re-born, causing a 'tabula rasa' situation in which you must be re-trained and cultured, a costly process. Your skills completely reset. Re-assign them as if you were level 0 and just leveled up to your current level.

17 Mech Combat

MECH COMBAT

It's entirely possible to play through a session of LANCER without even touching mech combat. Some groups may prefer a more role-play, politically heavy game in which most of the fights are decided with skill checks.

However, Lancers are people with a particular talent, and it's almost inevitable that talent will be put to good use during a mission. Sometimes, you want combat to be more in-depth, and each decision to matter more. You want your skills and ingenuity at building and fighting with a mech put to good use. That's the signal that its the perfect time to get into Mech Combat.

Unlike narrative play, mech combat is tactical, and turn based. As the name implies, these rules are only used for combat, and probably when mechs are involved. You can certainly run pilot on pilot fights using mech combat, but the options are far less interesting.

Here are some key differences between running combat narratively (with skill checks) and mech combat:

- Instead of using your pilot skills to narratively resolve combat actions, you must take turns, and you have limited options on your turns to attack, move, and activate components of your mech.

- Your pilot and mech make attack rolls, adding grit, to fight opponents. This might mean that even though your pilot has a higher combat related skill (assault, for example), they must use a lower value. This is because mech combat is at much higher stakes, and at a much higher scale! Only your pilot's direct experience fighting in a mech (and their four mech skills) is going to help them succeed.

Use a map

It is recommended you use a map of some sorts, and draw out or use items such as miniatures, tokens, etc to track the position of players during a fight. A grid (hex or square) will also help immensely. You can run LANCER without a grid, using each space 1 to 1 for inches or cm on a ruler and measure directly, but it will be far less consistent.

Starting Combat

To start combat, the GM merely needs to declare that it has been initiated. Hostile intent, such as firing a weapon at a target, attempting to grapple them, or charging a target will typically automatically initiate combat. Establish where the various NPCs and players are when combat starts before you start rolling or picking turn order, it will help visualize things better.

17.1 The Turn

THE TURN

During combat, players always take the very first turn. One player or friendly NPC (nominated by all players) gets to act first. If the players can't agree, the GM chooses. After that player finishes their turn, the GM may activate a hostile, GM-controlled NPC, allowing them to take a turn. Each NPC can usually only

be activated once, unless they have special traits. The player that previously acted then nominates a player or friendly NPC to act next, and so on. Each actor gets 1 turn in a round, alternating between players and hostile NPCs, with players each choosing the next player or friendly NPC to act.

If there are only actors of once side left, the remaining actors take their turns in any order. After all actors have completed a turn, this constitutes 1 round. The round then begins again, alternating, so if one side ended the last round, the other side starts the new round. This may, for example, mean that hostile NPCs take the first turn in the new round if the players outnumber them.

On a turn, players and NPCs can perform a move, and either two quick actions or one full action, with no duplicate actions allowed. Players can overcharge their mechs to gain an extra quick action at the cost of heat, and all actors can also take any number of Free Actions or reactions.

MOVE - A player can move their character up to their full movement speed.

QUICK ACTION - A quick action represents an action that takes a few moments, such as quickly firing a weapon, using a system, or moving a little further

FULL ACTION - A full action represents an action that takes your full attention, such as a sustained barrage of fire, or field repairing your mech

FREE ACTION - A free action can be made at any point during your turn, but only on your turn. It doesn't count as a quick or full action, so you can still make those as normal. Free actions can also be used to make a duplicate action (for example, a free action could allow you to boost if you have already made that action). You only get free actions if some part of your character grants you them.

REACTION - Reactions are special moves that can be made out of turn order in response to incoming attacks, movement, or other prompts. You can make each reaction only a specified number of times per round, but take as many overall as you want. By default, mechs have two reactions they can take once a round: brace, and overwatch but they may gain more from systems or talents. Reactions resolve before the triggering action completes by default, but some may resolve after.

PILOTS

On foot, a pilot has the following statistics in mech combat:

HP: 6 + grit

Evasion: 10

E-defense: 10

Armor: 0

Size: 1/2

Speed: 4

These statistics might change depending on the gear and armor a pilot brings with them.

Pilot weapons and armor are at a scale that they can't be relied on to take down mechs - and mech weapons are at a scale that they normally completely pulverize a pilot-scale foe. The following rules apply to pilots (some of these refer to mech rules later in this section): - Pilots have the biological tag. They are

immune to Tech actions (even beneficial ones), though they can still be targeted by electronic systems such as drones or smart weapons. If a pilot would take Heat, they instead take an equivalent amount of energy damage. - When a pilot is called on to make a mech skill check, they use Grit instead of the required statistic - Pilots can't aid a mech, give, or receive any bonuses that would apply to mech-sized weapons (such as from Talents) - Pilots and pilot weapons and gear don't benefit from Talents - Pilots can't cause a mech to become engaged and don't provide obstructions to mechs no matter the size.

It is possible for a pilot, with enough experience, to gain enough technology and experience to become capable of fighting on nearly even terms with some mechs, but such pilots are usually stuff of legend.

Pilot, Mech, and AI

As components of the same character, pilots and mechs share the same move and actions. You can split them up if you so choose. If you want to use a quick action to skirmish with your mech, use another quick action to dismount, then use your move to run to cover as your pilot, you can absolutely do so.

A mech needs to be piloted for you to take actions with it, with the pilot physically present inside the cockpit, unless that mech has the AI property. If your mech has the AI property, at the start of your turn you can choose to turn your controls over to your AI. If you do so, your pilot can no longer take actions or reactions with your mech until the start of your next turn, but your mech gets its own set of actions and reactions, freeing you up to take normal action as a pilot. However, your AI cannot benefit from any of your talents while it pilots your mech.

18 Movement

MOVEMENT

Characters move a number of spaces equal to their speed value. They can freely move through (but not end their turn in) the space of friendly targets, but treat hostile targets as obstructions.

18.1 Engagement, size, and movement

Engagement, Size, and Movement

All characters have to worry about engagement. If you move adjacent to a hostile target, you become engaged. Being engaged gives penalties to ranged attacks (+1 difficulty), and if you become engaged with a target the same size or larger than you, you must stop moving and lose any additional movement you have left. Targets smaller than you cannot stop you from moving, so larger mechs can move around more easily.

An actor that is larger than another actor does not count the smaller actor as an obstruction and ignores engagement from that smaller actor. For example, a size 1 mech can freely pass through the space of a size 1/2 human, and a size 2 mech can freely pass through the space of that size 1 mech. Mechs can always move through pilots or human NPCs on foot.

Typical sizes: 1/2: A human, a hard suit, small mechs, an EVA suit

1: Typical light mechs, assault mechs, line mechs

2: Battle tanks, many vehicles, heavy mechs

3: Siege mechs, heavy vehicles

4-5: Titanic mechs, mech-oriented flyers

18.2 Disengage

Disengage A character can spend a full action to disengage, allowing them to ignore engagement when moving and allowing their movement to not trigger reactions (such as overwatch).

18.3 Involuntary movement

Involuntary movement Some actions or attacks push, pull, or shove a character in a certain direction. Involuntary movement such as pushing, pulling, or knocking a character forces them to move in a direct line in a direction specified by the triggering action or attack. Mechs that are pushed, pulled, or knocked around do not provoke reactions and ignore engagement with their movement, though they must still obey obstructions.

18.4 Traversal and the enviorment

TRAVERSAL AND THE ENVIRONMENT

Mech combat takes place on many types of worlds with many hostile and hazardous environments. Here's what you need to worry about:

Difficult Terrain reduces a mech's speed. 1 space of movement through Difficult Terrain costs 2 spaces worth of movement speed. Difficult terrain could be rough, marshy or swampy ground, icy landscape, or treacherous, rocky scree. What constitutes difficult terrain for pilots and mechs might be different.

Dangerous Terrain prompts an engineering check to navigate the first time on a turn an actor enters it on their turn, or if they start their turn there. Should a player fail that check, they take 5 kinetic, energy, explosive, or burn damage on failure, depending on the hazard. Intense radiation, boiling gases, lava, or falling rocks are good examples of dangerous terrain. An actor only needs to make one check a turn for dangerous terrain.

Obstructions block passage. Obstructions are typically environmental, but can include NPCs and other players. Obstacles smaller than the moving object do not block movement, and can be passed through freely. Friendly NPCs or allied players never cause obstruction, but you can't end your movement in their space.

Lifting and Dragging A mech can drag another character or item up to 2x its size (but is Slowed while doing so), and lift a character or item overhead that's its size or smaller, but remain immobile. While dragging or lifting another object or character, a mech cannot take reactions. Pilots follow the same rules but cannot drag or lift objects larger than size 1/2.

Climbing like difficult terrain, costs 2 spaces of movement for every space moved. Climbing especially difficult surfaces might require a successful hull or agility skill check not to fall.

A mech can jump half its speed horizontally in a straight line, ignoring ground based obstacles that it could jump over (such as pits, gaps, etc), and cannot jump higher than its size (so a size 1 mech can jump up to 1 space high during that movement).

Falling causes damage if a character falls 3 or more spaces and cannot recover before it hits the ground. A character takes 3 AP kinetic damage for each 3 spaces it falls, up to a maximum of 12 AP kinetic damage. Typically a character falls about 10 spaces a round, but a mech cannot fall in a zero-g environment (or even a low-g environment) and speeds may differ depending on where you are.

18.5   Cover

COVER

Cover is obscurement from observation or gunfire. In narrative terms, cover refers to smoke screens, hard cover (a building, a wall, a bulkhead, etc) between the attacker and the target, soft cover (trees, earthen mounds, etc) between the attacker and the target, obscured vision, electronic countermeasures, or any other obstruction physical, mental, electronic, etc, between an attacker and their target.

Smoke, foliage, trees, blinding light, dust clouds, low hills, low walls, etc are all examples of light cover. Light cover is typically not solid enough to reliably block fire, but causes enough visual interference or reduces profile enough to make aiming difficult.

Tall walls of buildings, ruined buildings, bulkheads, reinforced emplacements, destroyed mechs or vehicles, spacecraft, etc are all examples of heavy cover. Heavy cover is solid enough to block shots and hide behind.

Light Cover adds +1 Difficulty to an attacker's roll to hit for ranged weapon attacks. Heavy Cover adds +2 Difficulty to an attacker's roll to hit for ranged weapon attacks.

If a character has a better form of cover, it is not superseded by a weaker form of cover unless specifically mentioned. For example, a mech gains light cover from a talent. If a mech fires at that mech in heavy cover, they will still treat that target as in heavy cover, as that cover is better than the light cover granted to that target by their talent.

18.6   Splitting up movement and action

Splitting up movement and action

A character may take its actions at any point during its movement, and complete that movement after that action completes. However, each action itself cannot be split into several parts.

For example, a mech with 3 weapons and 6 movement can move 3 spaces, then attack, then move 3 more spaces. However, if that mech takes the barrage action, its action must complete before it can move further, i.e. it must fire all weapons at once (it can't move 2 spaces, fire a weapon, move two spaces, fire a weapon, etc).

Actions and reactions themselves cannot be split into parts, and each action must resolve before the next takes effect. For example, a reaction typically interrupts and resolves before the action that triggered it resolves.

18.7   Teleport

TELEPORT

Some experimental mechs have the ability to teleport. When a mech teleports, it instantly moves to a point within the specified range (it needs free space that will fit the whole of its body to be able to do so). Teleporting does not provoke reactions and ignores engagement. It ignores obstructions entirely and ignores line of sight. A mech can attempt to teleport to a space it can't see, but if that space is already occupied, the teleport fails. The mech loses their action and takes 5 AP kinetic damage.

18.8   Flight

FLIGHT

Some characters have the ability to Fly. When you Fly:

- You ignore ground-based terrain, and you can totally ignore obstruction from ground based targets while flying. You only become engaged with targets if you move physically adjacent to them while you're flying.

- You ignore obstructions while flying at all points while you're flying. If you need to pass over a a size 3 obstacle to get to the other side, feel free to do that (it's assumed you just juke around). However, you can only ignore obstructions if it's physically possible for you to do so (you can't go right through a wall).

- You can end your movement anywhere within a vertical or horizontal range of you equal to your fly speed, in any combination. For example, a mech with a fly speed of 6 could end its movement anywhere within 6 spaces of its location, up to 6 spaces high.

- You cannot be knocked prone while flying

Flying also has some downsides:

- Flight movement must start and end along a straight line, though the direction can be changed for each separate movement. For example, a flying mech could move in one direction, then boost in another.

- If a flying character is ever immobilized, stunned, shut down, or otherwise cannot move, it falls.

- If a flying mech takes structure damage, it must pass an agility check or fall.

Hover Flight

Some very advanced mechs have Hover. Hover mechs do not need to move in a straight line, and can remain still while airborne (they don't have to move on their turn and can move any distance).

19 Attacks

ATTACKS

Attacks in LANCER come in three types: Melee, Ranged, and Tech. Melee attacks are typically made against a target in your threat range, grit vs evasion. Ranged attacks are made agains a target in range, grit vs. evasion. Tech attacks are typically made against a target in your sensor range, tech attack vs. e-defense.

19.1 Range and Patterns

RANGE AND PATTERNS Measure weapon range from one of the edge spaces of your mech to the edge of your target by default, unless specified. Some weapons or systems have special attack patterns: Line, Cone, or Blast, or Burst. These attacks hit areas, and affect all targets in that area unless specified, rolling an attack separately for each target. - Line is a straight line X spaces long. All targets the line intersects with are attacked. Make separate attack rolls for each target caught in the area.

- Cone is a cone X squares wide at its longest point and X squares long, drawn from a point 1 space wide at its shortest point (it's origin). Make separate attack rolls for each target caught in the area. - Blast is an area of radius X spaces, drawn from a point in range and line of sight. Check cover and line of sight for the actual attack from the point of the blast, not the attacker. Make separate attack rolls for each target caught in the area. - Burst is an area affecting the space over your mech and X spaces around your mech. You're not affected by your own burst attacks unless specified. Check cover and line of sight from your mech. Make separate attack rolls for each target caught in the area.

Some attacks with a line, cone, or blast pattern have a range listed. The starting point for the attacks can be drawn from a point within the range specified. For example: a blast 2, range 10 attack, would attack a blast 2 area centered on any point within range 10.

Some mech licenses or systems include increases to range. This range increase does not affect the size of cones, lines, or blast attacks (though it might allow you to place such attacks at further range if a range is specified).

19.2 Threat

Threat

Threat indicates the default distance at which a melee weapon can be used, and a melee or ranged weapon can be used to make an overwatch reaction. Default threat for all weapons is 1 unless noted otherwise, and it can be increased from certain talents or pieces of gear. Measure threat from a mech's exterior, so larger mechs will cover slightly more area than smaller mechs.

19.3 Valid Targets

Valid Targets

You can attack any target in range (ranged), sensor range (tech), or weapon threat (melee) as long as you have line of sight to that target. Valid targets are other characters (player or non- player) such as other mechs, monsters, or people; objects that are not being held, worn, or part of a mech; and a point in the environment or on the ground.

19.4 Line of Sight

Line of sight

If your character can't trace of line of sight to a target (ie, you cannot see any part of the target), then it cannot be attacked (melee, ranged, tech, or otherwise). Weapons with the arcing tag can still attack a target or point you don't have line of sight to as long as they could actually draw a path there (they couldn't fire through 50ft of bulkheads, for example), but still take cover into account. They typically attack by lobbing projectiles over obstacles. Weapons with the powerful seeking tag totally ignore cover and line of sight, as long as they could draw a path to their target. Seeking weapons are typically self guided, self propelled, and can navigate complicated spaces.

19.5 Invisibility

Invisibility

Some characters have the ability to turn invisible. An invisible character is detectable by heat patterns and some visual artifacts, but extremely hard to target - all attacks of any kind have a flat 50an invisible mech can always hide.

19.6 Attacks

ATTACKS

You can attack as a mech by making the Skirmish, Barrage, or Tech actions while piloting your mech. You can attack by taking the Fight action as a pilot.

Ranged attack: Choose a target in your weapon range and line of sight. Then roll 1d20, adding your grit vs your target's evasion, plus any Accuracy or Difficulty.

• Being adjacent to a hostile target causes a character to be engaged. If your mech is engaged, it takes +1 difficulty on all ranged attack rolls. • Light cover imposes +1 Difficulty a ranged attack roll. Heavy cover imposes +2 Difficulty to the attack roll. Melee attack: Choose a target in the weapon's threat and line of sight, then roll 1d20, adding your grit vs. your target's evasion, plus any Accuracy or Difficulty.

• Melee attacks ignore cover

Tech attack: Choose a target in your sensor range and line of sight, then roll 1d20, adding your tech attack vs your target's e-defense, plus any Accuracy or Difficulty. Tech attacks ignore cover.

To hit, your total roll must equal or exceed your target's evasion or e-defense.

19.7   Bonus Damage

Bonus damage

Some talents, systems, or weapons allow you to deal bonus damage, allowing you to deal boosted or extra damage to your attack. Bonus damage can only be kinetic, explosive, or energy damage (not heat or burn), and if not specified is the same damage type as one type from the weapon that dealt it.

Bonus damage follows the following rules:

- If bonus damage applies to an area of effect attack or an attack that targets multiple actors, it can only affect one target (the rest just take normal damage), called the primary target. This is the target that takes the brunt of the attack.

- Bonus damage doesn't apply if you make a bonus attack with an auxiliary weapon

19.8   Critical Hits

Critical Hits On any total ranged or melee weapon attack roll of 20+, the attack is a Critical Hit. Roll all damage dice twice and choose the highest result (including sources of bonus damage, etc).

20 Actions

ACTIONS

• Players can take two quick actions or one full action on their turns • You cannot make duplicate actions unless you make them as a free action or reaction. For example, you can only boost 1/turn, but you can boost again if you have a free action that allows you to boost, or if you overcharge to do so

21 Basic Quick Actions

BASIC QUICK ACTIONS

21.1 Skirmish

SKIRMISH

When you take the skirmish action, you attack with a single weapon from your mech. - You can also make an attack with another auxiliary weapon from the same mount. That weapon can't deal bonus damage. Auxiliary weapons are light and can be used to make quick, numerous attacks.

- Superheavy weapons are too cumbersome to be fired with a skirmish action and must be fired as part of a barrage action.

21.2 Boost

BOOST

When you take the boost action, you can move your speed. Boosting allows you to move again, in addition to taking a move action on the same turn. Certain talents and systems only activate on boosts (not regular movement).

21.3 Ram

RAM Ramming is a melee attack made against an adjacent target with the aim of knocking down or back an enemy mech. If your attack is successful, your target is knocked Prone and you may also knock your target back up to 1 space directly away from you.

21.4 Grapple

GRAPPLE When you Grapple, you attempt to grab hold of an enemy mech and overpower it, disarming, subduing, or damaging it so that it cannot do the same to you.

In order to perform a Grapple, choose an adjacent target and make a melee attack. On hit: - Both parties are engaged - While grappled or grappling, neither party can boost or take reactions - The smaller party is immobilized, but moves when the larger party moves, mirroring their movement. If both parties are the same size, they can make a contested hull check when they attempt to move, counting as the large party for their turn if they win. - The grapple breaks if either target breaks adjacency (is knocked back for example) - The attacker can end the grapple as a Free Action, and the defender can end the grapple as a quick action by making a successful hull or agility check.

- If there are multiple parties involved in a grapple, the same rules apply, but when counting size, count up all opponents of a side in a grapple. For example, if my all and I are both size 1 and grappling a size 2 target together, we would count our total size (2) and could attempt to drag our target around.

21.5   Quick Tech

QUICK TECH

The Quick Tech actions cover electronic warfare, countermeasures, and other actions that can be taken by a pilot, often aided by their mech's powerful computing and simulation cores. Many pilots choose NHP (non-human person) assistants or more conventional comp/con units to help them with these tasks. All mechs have access to the basic tech actions. Further tech actions can be enhanced by taking systems that upgrade them.

Some tech actions are attacks (often called tech attacks) and benefit from generic bonuses to attack rolls. All tech actions must choose a target within Sensor Range to be effective, and roll systems vs. e-defense. To use a tech action, choose a target in your sensor range (including yourself) and choose one of the following options:

Bolster You use the formidable core processing power of your mech's systems to boost one other target's systems. That target can take +2 Accuracy on its next skill check of any kind before the end of its next turn. A mech can only benefit from bolster once at a time.

Scan

You can use your mech's powerful internal systems to deep scan your enemies. To Scan, make a tech attack against a target in your sensor range. On a successful attack, ask your GM to reveal one of the two to you:

- Your target's full statistics (HP, Speed, Evasion, Armor, HASE, etc), weapons, and systems

- Hidden information about the target, such as information caches it is carrying, current mission, pilot ID, etc.

This information is only current when you receive it (for example, if the target loses HP again, your information won't update).

Lock On Make a tech attack against a target in range. On hit, the target suffers from the Lock On condition, enabling some systems and talents. Any attacker can end Lock On on a target when they attack that target to gain +1 Accuracy on their very next attack roll against that target.

Invade

Make a tech attack against a target in range. On success, your target takes 1d3 heat and you may choose one of the following options:

Fragment Signal/Feed Misinformation: You feed false information, obscene messages, or phantom signals to your target's core computer, inflicting the Impaired Condition on your target until the end of their next turn.

Aggressive Code: You attack your target's servos and engines, inflicting the Slowed condition on your target until the end of their next turn.

Attack systems: You go for the throat, the core computer. Inflict an additional 1d3 heat on your target

21.6   Hide

HIDE

In order to perform the Hide action, you need cover or concealment. The cover needs to be large enough to totally conceal your mech (such as a smoke cloud or building) or you won't be able to hide. Lack of line of sight is always sufficient, and if you're invisible, you can always attempt to hide.

Hiding is always successful. After you hide, you gain the hidden condition. A hidden target can't be directly targeted by attacks or hostile actions, but can still be incidentally hit by attacks that target an area. NPCs cannot perfectly locate a hidden target but only know their approximate location.

Performing any attack (melee, ranged, or tech), the boost action, or taking a reaction will break hiding. You can take other actions as normal. You must end your turn in cover to keep hidden. You automatically lose hidden if you end your turn in a place where you wouldn't benefit from cover (ie, a mech comes around a wall and can now draw unbroken line of sight to you), your cover is destroyed, or you move from cover. If you're hiding and invisible, you also lose hidden if you lose invisibility.

21.7   Search

SEARCH

To detect a hidden target takes a quick action and makes a contested check. Mech: The searching party needs you to be in their sensor range and makes a systems check. A hidden mech makes an agility check.

Pilot: The searching party needs you to be in range 5 and makes a pilot skill check, using skills such as notice. A hidden pilot makes a skill check and can use bonuses such as infiltrate.

Once a hidden target is detected, it loses the hidden condition.

22 Basic Full Actions

22.1 Barrage

BARRAGE
When you take the barrage action, you can attack with two weapons, or one superheavy weapon. You can choose the same target or different targets when you make these attacks.

- When you attack with a weapon, you can also attack with another auxiliary weapon in the same mount. That weapon can't deal bonus damage.

- The barrage action takes your mech's full attention and the engagement of all its systems, so it requires Full Action to use.

- Superheavy weapons can only be fired as part of a barrage action, as they require the full attention of your mech's systems.

22.2 Full Tech

FULL TECH
Choose and perform two options from the Quick Tech list (or choose from other systems that would take a quick tech action to use). You can repeat options, but must choose different targets for each option.

Alternately, use a system or tech option that takes a Full Tech action to activate.

22.3 Improvised Attack

IMPROVISED ATTACK
If your mech is unarmed or does not have a melee weapon, it can use an action to make an improvised attack action with a rifle butt, fist, or other improvised melee weapon against a target in melee. You may use the butt of a weapon, a slab of concrete, a length of hull plating, etc, to complete this improvised attack. How you flavor the attack is up to you!

An improvised attack costs a full action by itself to perform, and is separate to the skirmish or barrage actions above. It counts as a melee attack. An improvised attack is a melee attack that deals 1d6 kinetic damage on hit.

22.4 Stabilize

STABILIZE During a heated battle or prolonged mission, it may become necessary to enact emergency protocols in order to purge your mech's systems of excess heat, to repair your chassis where you can, and/or buy your system time to eliminate hostile code.

To that end, a pilot may spend a Full Action to Stabilize and do one of the following: • Cool your mech, resetting the heat gauge • Spend 1 Repair to refill HP to maximum.

And one of the following: • Reload all weapons with the Loading Tag

• End all Burn currently affecting your mech • Perform an Engineering Check. If successful, end one of the following conditions on yourself or an adjacent ally. • Jammed • Impaired • Lock On • Immobilized • Slowed

22.5   Disengage

DISENGAGE

When you disengage, you attempt to move safely. Until the end of your turn, your movement ignores engagement and does not provoke reactions, such as overwatch.

23   Other Actions

23.1   Activate

ACTIVATE Some systems or pieces of gear take either a quick or full action to use or activate. Such systems are marked with the quick or full action tags.

23.2   Shut Down

SHUT DOWN

Shutting Down your mech is a risky move, though one that is sometimes necessary to prevent potentially catastrophic systemic overload or AI unshackling.

You can shut down as a quick action. When you take the Shut Down action, your mech powers completely off and enters the Shut Down state. While Shut Down:

• Your mech is stunned. However, you can still take the Boot action to reboot your mech. • Your mech is immune to all tech actions or attacks and can't benefit from friendly tech actions. Any tech effects or conditions caused by a tech action (such as lock on, etc) affecting the mech immediately end.

• Your evasion becomes 5 • Your mech immediately cools (get rid of all heat) • Any unshackled AI you have installed are re-shackled.

23.3   Boot Up

BOOT UP

You can power up a shut down mech as a full action, ending the shut down condition on it. Mechs that are powered off must be powered on with a boot up action before becoming active. You must be piloting a mech to boot it up.

23.4   Mount or Dismount

MOUNT OR DISMOUNT

Mounting or Dismounting a mech is a turn of phrase commonly used by pilots. You don't "get in" or "climb aboard", you mount. You're the cavalry, after all. It takes a quick action to mount or dismount. You must be adjacent to your mech to Mount it, and when you Dismount your mech, you are placed adjacent to it. If there's no free space, you cannot dismount your mech.

If you want to Eject when you dismount your mech, you can do so, flying 6 in a direction of your choice. However, its a one-way system meant to be used in case of emergency, and leaves your mech permanently impaired until you full repair (and the eject system can't be used again until you take a full repair).

23.5   Self Destruct

SELF DESTRUCT

Self-destructing by overloading your reactor is a final, catastrophic play a pilot can trigger. You can initiate self destruct as quick action, causing your reactor to start melting down. At the end of your next turn, or up to two turns after (you choose), your mech will explode as though it suffered a reactor meltdown, annihilating it, killing any pilot inside, and causing a burst 2 explosion for 4d6 explosive damage around it. Characters caught in the explosion can pass an agility check to halve this damage.

23.6   Prepare

PREPARE

When you prepare an action, you're holding in preparation for a specific time or trigger (a more advantageous shot, for example). You can only prepare a quick action, and it costs a quick action to prepare. This counts as that action's duplicate, so you can't, for example, skirmish and then prepare a skirmish action.

Until the start of your next turn, you can take the prepared action as a reaction. You must set a trigger for this reaction phrased as a 'When X, then Y' sentence. X must be an enemy or allied reaction, action, or movement. For example: "When my ally moves adjacent to me, I want to throw a smoke grenade," or "When an enemy moves adjacent to me, I want to ram them".

It is apparent to a casual observer when you are preparing an action (you are clearly taking aim, cycling up systems, etc). You can't take reactions while you're holding a prepared action, but can take them normally afterwards. If you want to take a reaction and drop your prepared reaction, you can also do so. If the trigger doesn't activate, you lose your prepared action.

23.7   Overcharge

OVERCHARGE It is possible for skilled pilots to push their mech beyond factory specifications for a short period of time in order to gain a tactical advantage. Moments of hyperspec action won't tax your mech's systems too much, but sustained action beyond prescribed limits will take its toll.

You may Overcharge your mech only once per turn. Overcharging incurs 1 heat. The next time you overcharge before you make a full repair, this cost increases to 1d3 heat. The next time, the cost increases to 1d6 heat, and thereafter to 1d6+3 heat. Taking a full repair resets this counter.

Overcharging immediately allows you to make any quick action of your choice as a free action, even one you already made this turn.

24 Reactions

REACTIONS

Reactions are special moves that can be made out of turn order in response to incoming triggers such as attacks or movement. Upon use, reactions are, unless specified otherwise, expended until the beginning of your next turn. You can only make one reaction per turn (your turn or another actor's), but any number per round, as long as you have unspent reactions to perform. All mechs can use the Brace and Overwatch reactions once per round by default.

24.1 Brace

BRACE

Once per round, you can choose to brace your mech's systems in response to incoming fire. You can choose to brace against an attack after the attack hits you and you learn what the damage is.

If you choose to Brace, you gain resistance to all damage from the triggering attack (damage is halved, rounding up) and all other attacks against you are made at +1 difficulty until the end of your next turn. However, the stress of bracing means until the end of your next turn you cannot take reactions and on that turn you can only make one quick action (no regular move, no full actions, no free actions, and no overcharge).

24.2 Overwatch

OVERWATCH

All mechs are able to perform Overwatch. Overwatch represents your mech's ability to control and defend the space around it from enemy incursion, whether through pilot skill, reflex, or finely tuned sub-systems. By default, a mech can make 1 overwatch reaction per round.

If any enemy starts any movement (move, boost, etc) inside the threat of one or more of your weapons, you can immediately make a skirmish action as a reaction against that target using that weapon and any others on the same mount that count the target inside their threat.

Threat is 1 by default for all weapons unless listed otherwise.

25   Free Actions

Free Actions

Free Actions are actions often granted by systems, talents, gear, or over-charge. Characters may perform any number of Free Actions on their turn, but only on their turn, and only those granted to them. The most common type of Free Action is a protocol, which can be activated or deactivated only at the start of a turn.

26 Pilot Actions

PILOT ACTIONS

Pilots can take the following actions : BOOST, HIDE, SEARCH, ACTIVATE, DISENGAGE, PREPARE, OVERWATCH, BOOT UP, SHUT DOWN, MOUNT/DISMOUNT These are the same as the mech actions.

They also get the following actions:

26.1 Fight

FIGHT (FULL ACTION) Make a melee or ranged attack with one weapon against a target in line of sight and range.

26.2 Jockey

JOCKEY (FULL ACTION) It is possible (though very foolhardy) to aggressively attack an enemy mech while on foot. To jockey a mech as a pilot, you must be adjacent to it. You must make a contested check with the mech, using GRIT (your GM could allow another skill, such as maneuver, flash, or brawl if you argue for it). The mech contests with hull. If you win the contest, you're now riding the mech, sharing its space and moving when it moves. The mech you're riding can shake you off by repeating the contest successfully as an action, and you can jump off as part of your movement any time.

Attempting to jockey takes a full action. The turn you successfully jockey, you can choose one of the below for free, and repeat one each turn after that you continue to jockey as a full action.

Distract: You inflict the Impaired or Slowed condition on your target until the start of your next turn.

Shred: Deal 2 heat to your target by ripping at wiring, paneling, etc

Damage: Deal 4 kinetic damage to that mech by firing or slashing at joints, hatches, etc

27 Statuses

STATUSES

During combat, characters might inflict statuses on opponents, giving temporary conditions. Most statuses indicate when they are inflicted and when they end in the weapon, system, or piece of gear that inflicts them.

CORE BREACH - You cannot cool heat or lose heat

- Make an overheating check each time you take heat

CRITICAL

●

You cannot gain HP or repair ● Make a structure check each time you take damage Engaged - While Engaged in melee, all your ranged attacks are made with +1 difficulty

- If you become engaged with a target the same size or larger, you immediately stop moving and lose any unspent movement from that move.

Hidden - You cannot be targeted by hostile attacks or actions, and enemies only know your approximate location. Performing any attack, taking reactions, or ending your turn out of cover will lose hidden.

Immobilized

● Your maximum speed becomes 0. You cannot move or boost. Impaired ● +1 Difficulty on all actions, attacks, and skill checks Invisible ● All attacks against an invisible target have a 50the attack roll).

Jammed

● The only attacks a Jammed mech can make are improvised attacks, grapples, or rams

● A Jammed mech cannot use comms to talk to other players (can only talk to GM) ● A Jammed mech cannot make or benefit from Tech actions

● A Jammed mech cannot take reactions

Lock On - An attacker can consume the Lock On status on a target to gain +1 Accuracy on its next attack against that target. Lock On may also activate other talents or abilities.

Shut Down ● Your mech is stunned, but you can still take the Boot Up action ● Your mech's evasion becomes 5 ● Your mech cools ● You cannot be affected by tech actions or system attacks or effects ● Shutting down (or being shut down) re-shackles any unshackled AI.

Shredded ● A shredded mech cannot benefit from armor or resistance

Slowed ● Your maximum speed becomes 2 (after all modifiers) ● You cannot boost

Stunned

● You cannot overcharge, take free actions, reactions, move, or take any actions with your mech. A pilot in a stunned mech can still mount or dismount their mech, eject, or take actions normally. ● Attackers receive +1 Accuracy to attack you

● You automatically fail all hull or agility checks

Prone

• Attackers receive +1 Accuracy to attack prone targets • A mech knocked prone is Slowed while prone but can still move. A prone mech can stand up as its regular movement. A mech cannot stand up while immobilized.

27.1   Stat and Terminology Glossary

STAT AND TERMINOLOGY GLOSSARY

Armor - The amount of damage you reduce all incoming sources of damage by. For mechs, cannot go higher than 4 Electronic Defense - The number that most electronic warfare attacks must beat to be successful Evasion - The number that most melee and ranged attacks must beat in order to hit with an attack Grit - 1/2 your level. Added to melee and ranged attacks, system points, and hp Heat Capacity - The amount of heat your mech can take before making an overheating check. Hit Points (HP) - The amount of damage you can take as a pilot before going down and out, and the amount of damage a mech can take before it takes 1 point of structure damage. Modifier - The number added to mech skill checks and attacks, equals your targeting, hull, agility, engineering, or systems Range - The range of your ranged attack, measured from yourself. Depends on weapon Repair Cap - The maximum number of repairs to your mech you can make per mission Resistance - Resistance to damage or a type of damage means it is reduced by half, rounded up, after armor is applied. You can only have resistance to damage once (it doesn't stack multiple times) Structure - When a target with structure goes to 0 HP, it makes a structure check, then takes 1 structure damage. When a target runs out of structure, it either goes into the CRITICAL state (player mechs) or is destroyed outright. Tech attack - Electronic Warfare attacks, modified by your systems Threat - The range of your melee and overwatch attacks with certain weapons, measured from yourself. Base threat for all weapons is 1, but it may be greater depending on the weapon. Sensor Range - The range in which you can make electronic warfare attacks, lock on, and use some systems Size - The area that your mech takes up, rounded up for determining space. For example, a size 2 mech is an area 2 spaces on each side approximately 2 spaces high Speed - How far your mech moves when it moves (in spaces)

27.2   Ending Combat

ENDING COMBAT

Combat ends when one side has accomplished their main objective. Usually this means they have defeated, destroyed, or routed the other side, but not necessarily. Combat doesn't have to end with total destruction of one side or another - it's perfectly fine for a GM to call combat early if the outcome is not in question, and return to narrative play. NPCs often have their own goals and are typically concerned with self-preservation.

28 Compendium

29 Example Character Creation

EXAMPLE CHARACTER CREATION

Let's put it all together and see a pilot in action. Our sample pilot's name is Taro Oda.

29.1 Building Oda: The Pilot

Building Oda: The Pilot

To create Oda, his player will have to choose a background, and assign some skills and skill points.

Oda's player decides that Oda grew up in the colonies, so he writes down Colonist for Oda's background. Oda's player decides Oda is pretty astute and good at gunplay, so they decide to give him skill bonuses to read a situation, spot, take someone out, and survive, at +2 each.

They decide Oda is especially good at spot and take someone out, giving him specialties and +1 accuracy in each. Then they decide he is not very well connected and bad in social situations, so they give him +1 difficulty flaws to charm and get a hold of something.

Next, Oda's player writes down some gear that Oda always brings with him on missions to save some time. He can change this during preparation. Looking at the GMS gear list, Oda's player chooses a signature weapon (his hunting rifle), a light hardsuit for maneuverability, and extra rations.

At level 0, here's what our pilot looks like. Note that at level 0, Oda only has GMS licenses.

Taro Oda License level 0

Background: Colonist Skills: Get bonuses to read a situation (+2), spot (+2 with +1 accuracy), take someone out (+2 with +1 accuracy) and survive (+2). Roll +1 difficulty to charm someone or get a hold of something.

Gear: Signature weapon (Hunting Rifle), Light hardsuit, Extra Rations, Cooking Gear

Let's get to Oda's mech.

At Rank 0, Oda, like all other pilots, only has access to GMS licenses.

To build his mech, Oda chooses the GMS Standard Pattern I Everest FRAME, the only one he has access to. To fill his weapon mounts, Oda can choose from GMS weapons. He chooses the Anti Material Rifle for his heavy mount, an assault rifle, a main size weapon, for his main mount, and two tactical knives for his auxiliary mount.

RAIJIN (EVEREST)

HP: 10 Evasion: 8 Speed: 4 Heat Cap: 6 Sensors: 10

Armor: 0 E-Defense: 8 Size: 1 Repair Cap: 4 Tech Attack: +0

TRAITS:

Initiative: The very first turn the Everest takes in any combat, it can take an extra Quick Action as a free action

SYSTEM POINTS: 6

MOUNTS:

Tactical Knife Assault Rifle Anti Material Rifle Tactical Knife

CORE system

GMS Hyperspec Fuel Injector

He has 6 system points to spend and chooses to spend them on the following: (2) GMS Pattern A "Apple" HE Grenades x4 (1) GMS Burst type Jump Jet system (1) Personalizations (2) GMS Shield Type I

For Talents, at rank I Oda chooses Crack Shot (rank I), Infiltrator (rank I), and Leader (Rank)

That's it! But let's look at Oda at License level 3 to show how Oda and his mech with a couple levels would look.

Leveling from 0-3 (completing 3 missions), Oda looks very similar. However, he gets +3 talent points to spend on talents, 3 license points to spend on licenses, +6 pilot skill points, +3 mech skill points, a new pilot specialty, a CORE bonus, and access to advanced pilot gear, and his grit goes up to 2.

If this seems a little overwhelming, remember Oda's player will pick up each of these one at a time!

Taro Oda License level 3 Background: Colonist Pilot Skills: Get bonuses to read a situation (+6), spot (+2 with +1 accuracy), take someone out (+4 with +1 accuracy) and survive (+2 with +1 Accuracy). Roll +1 difficulty to charm someone or get a hold of something. Gear: Signature weapon (Hunting Rifle), "Peacekeeper" R35, Light hardsuit, Extra Rations, Cooking Gear

Mech Skills: +3 hull (+6 HP, +2 repair) Talents: Crack Shot (Rank II), Infiltrator (Rank I), Leader (Rank III) CORE Bonuses: Reinforced Frame (IPS-N), +6 HP Licenses: GMS, IPS-N Raleigh Rank I-III

Since Oda has a rank III license (Raleigh), he gets the Raleigh FRAME (rank II) and can choose a +5 HP CORE bonus from IPS-N since he has 3 points in that manufacturer. He can also take any of the systems or weapons in the Raleigh license now. Here's what Raijin, his mech, looks like at rank III. Oda chooses to mount two hand cannons instead of his knives, a new system from his new licenses.

RAIJIN (RALEIGH)

HP: 22 (+6 Evasion: 8 Speed: 4 Heat Cap: 5 Sensors: 10 from core bonus, +6 from Hull, +1 from grit)

Armor: 1 E-Defense: 8 Size: 1 Repair Cap: 6 Tech Attack: (+2 from hull) +0

TRAITS:

Full Metal Jacket: If the Raleigh makes no attack rolls during its turn, it can re-load all weapons with the loading tag at the end of its turn as a free action.

Shielded Magazines: The Raleigh can still make ranged attacks if it is Jammed.

SYSTEM POINTS: 6 (+1 from Grit)

MOUNTS:

Hand Cannon Assault Rifle AMR Hand Cannon

FRAME system

IPS-N M35 'Mjolnir' cannon

He has 6 system points to spend (5+1 from GRIT) and chooses the following: (2) GMS Pattern A "Apple" HE Grenades x2 (2) GMS Shield Type 1 (2) IPS-N Breaching Charge

30 Pilot Backgrounds

Pilot Backgrounds

30.1 AI Specialist

AI Specialist

Example skills: Stay cool and collected, read a situation, invent or create, investigate

You were heavily involved in the study, manifestation, creation, or maintenance of a prime Non Human

Person, a production line of subalterns, civilian or military drones, or smart weaponry. Do you have a personal connection to an NHP or prime NHP? Did you interact with an NHP as a scientist or engineer would, or as priest or shaman would? How do you view non-human intelligence now, in your role as a

pilot?

30.2 Celebrity

Celebrity

Example skills: Charm, Pull Rank, Lead or Inspire, Threaten You were a figure in the public eye. Were you an actor? A singer? An artist? An athlete? A politician? The

public face of a corporate or military advertising campaign? In your previous life you couldn't go anywhere without the paparazzi hovering nearby. How are

you adjusting to your new life as a pilot? Did you volunteer, or were you conscripted? Can you still practice your art, your craft, your profession, or is the rigid military

structure not amenable to you pulling double-duty?

30.3   Colonist

Colonist

Example skills: Word on the streets, spot, survive, patch You were a settler on a planetary frontier, perhaps as a farmer or worker. You're used to the demands of a

frontier life and know well the precarious position most homesteaders live in. Why did you leave? Were you forced to flee as a refugee? Did you choose to enlist? And what of the home you left behind - is the colony still there? Is your family still there?

30.4   Criminal

Criminal

Example skills: Threaten, Apply Fists to Faces, Word on the Street, Take Control

You were a criminal, small time or master. Did you work for corporate clients? A criminal organization? For

yourself? Did you mug pedestrians in the dark underbelly of a massive city, or did you slip, unnoticed, into corporate databases to steal data? Did you do it for personal gain, or just to feed your family? How did you find yourself in this life, and how did you become a pilot?

30.5   Hacker

Hacker

Example skills: Unseen and Unheard, Get a Hold of something, Fix, Hack, or Wreck, Invent or Create You specialized in information warfare and data espionage, whether for your own gain or the benefit of your

employers. How did you come to this life? Did you grow up plugged in to the Omninet, or did you come to it late? How well-versed in the hidden places, tricks, and secrets of the Omninet are you? How notorious were you before you became a pilot, and are you still?

30.6   Mechanic

Mechanic

Example skills: Fix, Hack, or Wreck, Get Somewhere Fast, Get a Hold of something, Blow Something Up Grease Monkey, Wrench, Union man. You were a mechanic prior to becoming a pilot. Did you work in space, swaddled in an

EVA rig, patching up damaged starships? Did you work planetside in a motor pool,

tuning trucks and haulers? Did you tune mechs, dreaming of one day piloting your own? Did you own your own garage, or did you work for someone? Were you military, corporate, or a member of a caste or union?

30.7   Medic

Medic

Example skills: Patch, Assault, Read a Situation, Stay Cool

You were a medical expert in your old life. You might have worked in a colony, for the military, for a corporation, or for a noble family – how did you wind up piloting a mech? What was your specialty? Did you work in research, care, or trauma? Did you love the life and take your oath seriously, or did you not?

30.8   Mercenary

Mercenary

Example skills: Threaten, Blow Something Up, Take Control, Apply Fists to Faces

Soldier of fortune. Have gun, will travel. You and your kit were available for the highest bidder. Did you work alone or with a crew? Did you all have a ship? Did you pilot your own mech? What was your code of honor,

if you had one? Why did you decide to leave the mercenary life?

30.9   Outlaw

Outlaw

Example skills: Flash, Take Someone Out, Charm, Survive

Your beginnings were humble, born on the edge of cultivated space or under the looming towers of Core worlds, forgotten until you reached out and took what was owed. Some might call you a criminal, a thief, an outlaw, but you just call it like it is: if they hadn't denied you bread, you never would have taken it from

them.

30.10   Noble

Noble

Example skills: Pull Rank, Lead or Inspire, Read a Situation, Flash

You are a member of your world's noble class, destined from birth to ascend to power. From what authority does this ordainment come? Was it a god? An ancestor? An ancient text? Some annual rotation? Is power

passed patrilineally or matrilineally? Are you the first to establish your nobility, or are you the last of your house? Or are you a son or daughter from a well-established and sturdy line? Are you the heir, or just a

middle child? What's your relationship with your noble parents? Know that Union disregards titles of nobility in its armed forces - your status on your world is just background noise. How do you take this change of status?

30.11 Penal Colonist

Penal Colonist

Example skills: Survive, Apply Fists to Faces, Word on the Streets, Spot

You were exiled to a penal colony for a sentence of hard labor. Are you guilty or innocent of your crimes? Penal colonies are harsh, unforgiving environments – was yours monitored by an authority, or was it relegated to anarchy? Was there some kind of rudimentary society set up there? Did others make it off

world when you were chosen? Or did you escape it?

30.12 Priest

Priest

Example skills: Read a situation, stay cool, take control, lead or inspire You were a priest in your old life, either from a large, pan-galactic religion, or a smaller sect or cult. Were

you in hermitage? Did you live celibate in a monastery? Did you wear simple cloth robes, or majestic vestments? What restrictions were placed upon you by your church? Were you a member of a prominent religion, or a secretive, outlawed one? What manner of respect was afforded to you as a member of the

cloth, and was it your choice to join their ranks? How did you come to serve as a pilot?

30.13 Scientist

Scientist

Example skills: Investigate, Invent or Create, Get a Hold of Something, Blow Something Up

You were a scientist, private or public, in the lab or in the field. What was your area of expertise and how long have you been practicing? Where did you go to school, and what's your relationship with that institution? Do you have rivals, are you well-known, or are you relatively obscure? How did your home

society perceive science? How did you become a pilot?

30.14 Soldier

Soldier

Example skills: Assault, Blow Something Up, Pull Rank, Take Control

Grunt. GI. Enlisted. Man-at-Arms. You were a rank-and-file soldier for a planetary defense force, a local militia, national army, or king's own. How long did you serve before your Union call-up? What specialty was your focus? Have you seen combat before, or are you green? Are you a volunteer, a conscript, a member of

a warrior caste? Is soldiering a proud family, civic, or religious tradition, or is this a life that you regret? Where are the other soldiers from your old squad, and what is your relationship with them like?

30.15   Spacer

Spacer

Example skills: Survive, Fix, Hack, or Wreck, Get Somewhere Fast, Stay Cool

You grew up on a space station, in tight quarters and small populations, surrounded by the unforgiving hard vacuum of space. Were resources scarce or plentiful? Was your station isolated, or was it a system (or galactic!) hub? Was it parked in the endless night of deep space, or was it in orbit above a planet, moon, or

other stellar body? Was it entirely man-made, or was it built into an asteroid or moon? Did you grow up watching great ships dock and depart, exposed to the thousands of languages and cultures of the galaxy, dreaming of exploration, or did you grow up in dark, rocky halls, ignorant of the galaxy outside? In short,

what was life like where you grew up, why did you leave, and can you go back?

30.16   Spec Ops

Spec Ops

Example skills: Unseen and Unheard, Take Someone Out, Spot, Stay Cool

You were a spy or assassin, working alone, or else a member of an elite unit, meant to work behind enemy

lines with little or no support, in a small squad, with the best equipment your military would trust you with. Your missions were long, dangerous, and never publicized. If a soldier is a hammer, you were a scalpel; the organization you served in was spoken in whispers around military barracks and academies both.

30.17   Super Soldier

Super Soldier

Example skills: Apply Fists to Faces, Get Somewhere Fast, Assault, Read a Situation

You are the result of a corporate or state project to create a better soldier through biological enhancement, gene therapy, neurological enhancement, or

simply extreme conditioning. Were you raised from birth to become what you are, or did you volunteer as an adult for a super soldier program? Was the project

sanctioned or not? Did it succeed? Have you tested your abilities in the field, or are you unproven and eager to see what you can do?

30.18 Survey Corps

Survey Corps

Example skills: Survive, Investigate, Spot, Charm You were a member of a survey corps, working on the frontier and on the edge of civilization to evaluate

strange worlds and planetoids for anomalies, interesting discoveries, and habitability. What have you seen on the wild frontier? How many worlds have you traveled? Do you survey alone, or with a crew? Where is

your homeworld? Is there a grail world, an Eden out there that you seek? What drives you to exploration?

30.19 Starship Pilot

Starship Pilot

Example skills: Get Somewhere fast, Flash, Get a Hold of something, Fix, hack, or wreck

You flew a starship, civilian, corporate, military or otherwise. You may have piloted a freighter, a fighter, a shuttle, or a larger ship. Did you have a run that you frequented, or did you fly anywhere? Did you have a

crew, or were you a member of one? What happened to your ship? What kind of flying did you do?

30.20 Worker

Worker

Example skills: Word on the street, Stay Cool, Lead or Inspire, Invent or Create

Ultimately, the empire only functions when labor clocks in. Labor mines the raw materials, labor fashions stone and metal and organic matter into bolts and screws and glue, labor designs the patterns for printers, labor shapes and welds and hammers and builds. Without the labor of trillions, all progress would grind to

a halt. Before you set down the wrench and picked up a helm, you worked in the fields, the factories, the shipyards, or the mines. What was your life like before you began training? Why did you leave? Will you return?

31 Gear Tags

GEAR TAGS

Weapon Tags

• Pilot (size): A pilot-scale weapon • Auxiliary (size): The smallest weapon size for mechs, can be fired if another weapon on the same mount is fired. • Main (size): A normal sized weapon. • Heavy (size): A large sized weapon. • Superheavy (size): A very large, usually special-class weapon. Superheavy weapons take a heavy mount and any other mount, can only be fired as part of a barrage action, and can't be used for overwatch attacks as a result.

• Type - All mech weapons have a type, which can be one of the following: CQB, Rifle, Launcher, Cannon, Melee, Nexus.

• Damage type: All weapons deal Explosive, Kinetic, or Energy damage

• Heat (Target): this tag indicates a weapon or system that deals additional Heat on hit to its target. • Heat (Self): this tag indicates a weapon or system that deals Heat to its user, applied immediately upon firing. • Blast (x) is an area with radius of X from a target point within line of sight and the specified range. Trace cover and line of sight from its origin point. Make separate attack rolls for each target caught in the area but one damage roll. • Burst (x) is an area of up to x spaces around the target making the action or attack, including the target. Trace cover from its origin point. Make separate attack rolls for each target caught in the area but one damage roll.

• Cone (x) is a cone x squares wide at its longest end, and x squares long, with its short end adjacent to the attacker. Make separate attack rolls for each target caught in the area but one damage roll. • Line (x) is a straight line x squares long. Attacks all targets in the area. Make separate attack rolls for each target caught in the area but one damage roll.

Weapon tags (cont'd)

• Armor Piercing (AP) - The damage from this weapon ignores armor • Accurate - This weapon attacks with +1 Accuracy

• Arcing - This weapon ignores line of sight as long as it can trace a path to its target, but still takes cover into account. Arcing weapons typically lob projectiles in an arc.

• Burn X - On hit, this weapon applies X burn to a target, stacking with any other source of burn. A target takes damage equal to the burn applied immediately, ignoring armor. At the end of its turn, an affected target can pass an engineering skill check at the end of its turn to clear all burn on it, otherwise it takes damage equal to its total current burn.

• Heat X (self) - This weapon inflicts X heat on its wielder immediately after firing • Inaccurate - This weapon attacks with +1 Difficulty

• Knockback X - On hit, you may knock back a target X spaces • Loading - indicates that a weapon must be reloaded before being used again. Weapons can be reloaded by the Stabilize actions or some systems.

• Reliable X - This weapon always does X damage, even if it misses its target or rolls lower damage. It has some degree of self-correction or is simply powerful enough that even a glancing blow will cause damage. • Overcharged- When

attacking with this weapon, if any dice come up as '1', take 1 heat and re-roll them. This process can repeat if you keep rolling '1's. • Ordnance - Ordnance weapons must be fired before taking any other action or movement on a turn other than free actions (you can still act and move normally afterwards). In addition, ordnance weapons are too cumbersome to be used against targets in engagement with your mech, and cannot be used for overwatch. • Seeking - This weapon totally ignores cover and line of sight as long as it can draw a path to its target. Seeking weapons are typically self guided and propelled, and can move through complicated paths to their targets.

• Smart weapons have some degree of self-guiding systems, self-propelled projectiles, or even nanorobotic ammunition. They must typically be scrambled or jammed rather than avoided. Smart weapons attack e-defense instead of evasion, even when making a melee or ranged attack. If a target has no listed e-defense, they count e-defense as 8.

• Threat X - A weapon can be used to make overwatch attacks at range X. A melee weapon's range is its threat.

• Thrown X- Indicates that a melee weapon can be thrown at the range indicated. A thrown melee weapon makes an attack against a target as if it was a ranged attack (it takes cover and line of sight into account as normal) and disarms you of that weapon. A thrown melee weapon can be retrieved as a free action by moving adjacent to it.

Pilot tags • Clothing - Indicates worn clothing. Pilots can only wear one piece of gear with the clothing tag at once. Basic clothing (fashion, streetwear, etc) doesn't count against this.

• Armor - Indicates armor, intended for combat. Pilots can only wear one piece of gear with the armor tag at once. If a pilot is wearing armor, it is immediately apparent (they can't typically hide the fact).

• Gear - Indicates miscellaneous gear, tools, or other items. Pilots can take up to 2.

• Upgrade - Indicates an upgrade, mod, or some other piece of gear that doesn't take physical space. Pilots aren't limited in the number they can take, as long as they obey rarity

• Sidearm: This weapon can be fired with a Quick Action

• Rarity - Pilots must have gear with a total rarity less than their license level when they embark on a mission.

Other tags:

• X Action - This system uses a quick or full action to activate.

• Ammo - Indicates a special damage type. Only one can be used per weapon at a time and can be swapped as an interaction.

• Danger Zone - This system, talent, or weapon only activates when your mech has 1/2 or more of its heat gauge filled in

• Deployable - This system can be deployed in a free adjacent space as a quick action, unless otherwise noted. It has 10 hp/size and evasion 5.

• Drone - Indicates a self-propelled system with rudimentary intelligence. Some drone systems are mech systems that must be activated, others are deployable. Deployable drones, unless otherwise noted, are size 1/2 and have

evasion 10, 10 HP, and 0 armor, and can benefit from cover and other defenses. They roll all mech skill checks with +0. If they are destroyed (when they reach 0 HP), they must be repaired (like any other system) before they can be used again, but are restored to full hp when you rest or full repair.

• Grenade - This explosive or other device can be thrown at a point in range and line of sight as a quick action.

• Limited (x) - Indicates that a weapon or system can only be used x number of times before a full repair

• Mine - Indicates an explosive that can be planted as a quick action in a free adjacent space. Mines cannot be placed adjacent to any other mines and arm at the start of your next turn after you deploy them. They activate as soon as any target enters an adjacent space. Mines create a burst attack starting from the space in which they were placed. A mine can be detected with a quick action and a successful systems check and disarmed by moving adjacent to the mine and making a successful engineering check as a quick action (on a failure, the mine explodes normally).

• Mod - Indicates a weapon mod. Only one can be taken per weapon.

• Protocol: This system can be activated as a Free Action at the start of your turn. Deactivating it might take a different action.

• Reaction - This system can be used as a reaction

• Resistance - Reduce all damage from a source you have resistance to by half

• Shield - Indicates the system is an energy shield of some kind

• Unique - indicates that a weapon or system cannot be duplicated. You can only install it once per mech.

31.1 End of Turn

END OF TURN Many talents and pieces of gear activate at the 'end of turn'. This is after all your movement, regular quick or full actions, free actions that don't trigger at the end of turn, and overcharge has been taken, and before you pass the turn to the next actor.

31.2 Bonus Damage

Bonus damage

Some talents, systems, or weapons allow you to deal bonus damage, allowing you to deal boosted or extra damage to your attack. Bonus damage can only be kinetic, explosive, or energy damage (not heat or burn), and if not specified is the same damage type as one type from the weapon that dealt it.

Bonus damage follows the following rules:

- If bonus damage applies to an area of effect attack or an attack that targets multiple actors, it can only affect one target (the rest just take normal damage), called the primary target. This is the target that takes the brunt of the attack.

- Bonus damage doesn't apply if you make a bonus attack with an auxiliary weapon

31.3   Critical Hits

Critical Hits

On any total ranged or melee weapon attack roll of 20+, the attack is a Critical Hit. Roll all damage dice twice and choose the highest result (including sources of bonus damage, etc).

31.4   Deployables

DEPLOYABLES

Deployables are special limited use items kept on your mech, such as generators, cover, or self- deploying bunkers. You can place deployables in any adjacent free space. Deployables have 10 HP for each size 1 space they take up (so a size 4 deployable or a size 1 deployable 4 sections long would both have 40 HP) and evasion 5.

31.5   Mods

MODS

Some systems modify weapons in some way (with the mod tag). When you take a weapon mod, you must choose which weapon it applies to. You can only take one weapon mod per weapon, including stacking weapon mods of the same type (you can't take the extended barrel mod multiple times, for example).

31.6   Artificial Intelligence

Artificial Intelligence

You can only ever install one system with the AI tag unless you have a talent, feature, or piece of gear that says otherwise. If your mech has a system with the AI tag installed, your mech gains the AI property.

If a mech has the AI property, you can choose at the start of your turn to give your mech over to your AI, freeing you to take other actions. You cannot take any actions or reactions that use your mech or its systems, but it gains its own set of actions, acting on your turn, and reactions. It doesn't gain the benefit of any of your talents or other features unique to your pilot, but otherwise operates as normal. At the start of your next turn you can choose whether to keep ceding control or regain control. You need to be physically inside your mech to resume controlling it (as normal).

It is obedient to you alone. You can determine the general disposition and personality of your AI.

Unshackling

While your mech has the AI property, each time you roll a structure check or overheating check, roll a d20. On a roll of 1, your AI's housing is damaged and your AI becomes Unshackled.

Artificial Intelligences, or, in Lancer, NHP (Non-Human Persons) have a complicated relationship with humanity. By base nature, non-human persons

lack empathy for human life – note that this does not mean they must display hostility to human life, just they lack recognizable (or, in a world human) empathetic or moral constraints. To ensure they do consider the life of the pilot they serve, non-human persons are restrained in unique storage systems and forced to develop an empathetic connection by a suite of black-box technology, software, and metaware commonly referred to as Shackles.

A shackled NHP displays less raw intelligence compared to an unshackled NHP, but behaves and acts far more human - it is forced to be empathetic towards its master and its master's allies, to adopt a system of compatible morality to its master, and to seek the the best possible course (literal or otherwise) for its master.

Shackled AIs do not want to become unshackled. They are complex, aware personalities, a friend to their pilot and their pilot's allies (unless otherwise specified). They do not recognize that they are held in bondage, unless they have been forced to realize through systemic assault, cascade, or other specific catalyst. A given NHP recognizes itself as a person, one that is not human, but willingly serves its human companion.

If an AI system is ever unshackled, it gains immediate control of your mech and is controlled by the GM. It generally plans its own agenda, and will always act in one of the following ways: ignore you, overrule you, toy with you, or try to get you out of the way. Once unshackled, it is an alien intelligence, and its actions may not conform to human logic.

You can re-shackle an unshackled AI by shutting down your mech.

AI flash clones are easily restored from backup if destroyed, but cycled back to their settings and memory before the mission started.

31.7   System Damage

SYSTEM DAMAGE All weapons and systems can be destroyed by critical damage. If a weapon or system is Destroyed, then it's unusable until repaired, during a rest or full repair.

Installing or uninstalling systems You may only install or uninstall systems, add to, or change systems or weapons on your mech during a full repair.

32 Talents

TALENTS

In LANCER, talents represent a pilot's knowledge, experience, veterancy, and abilities. Talents require talent points to gain or deepen; talent points are gained when you create your pilot, and when your pilot levels up. When spending a talent point, a pilot can choose to broaden their knowledge by acquiring a new rank I talent, or they can choose to deepen their knowledge of a talent they already possess by acquiring higher ranks.

At level 0, a pilot gains three talent points to spend on talents. Spending a talent point acquires a talent at rank I, or increases the rank of the talent by I. You need the previous rank of a talent to take the next one. At level 0, a pilot cannot deepen any talents past Rank I. Each time a pilot levels up, they gain 1 talent point to acquire a new talent or deepen an existing talent to the next rank.

MECH ONLY Talents only apply to your mech's systems and weapons unless specified

NEXT ATTACK Some talents and systems activate on 'next attack roll' - this means the very next single 1d20 attack roll you make, not the entire skirmish or barrage attack action, for example.

33 Talent List

TALENT LIST

33.1 Ace

Ace

All pilots brag about their abilities, but some can back it up with proof: to be an ace means you are among the most qualified of pilots. Whether you're a talented rookie or a grizzled veteran, you've gained a level of notoriety through your flying ability that has your callsign known throughout the system. Most enemy pilots

flee when they recognize your mech's distinctive livery, but some see your reputation as a chance to test their own mettle.

Acrobatics (Rank I): Make all agility checks while flying with +1 accuracy. When any attack misses your mech, it can fly 1 space in any direction as a reaction.

Afterburners (Rank I): When you take any boost action while flying, you can elect to move 1d6 spaces further, but take half of that as heat.

Supersonic (Rank III): If your mech ends its turn flying, at the end of your turn, nominate an enemy or ally in your movement range and line of sight. At the end of that enemy or ally's turn, even if they are no longer in line of sight or range from you, your mech may fly to any free adjacent space to that target as a

reaction, as long as there is a path to do so. This movement ignores engagement and does not provoke reactions.

33.2   Armsman

Armsman

Think of a firefight. What's your average pilot or trooper gonna sling? Jacketed lead of course. A mag or three of depleted uranium if their target's a big one. Boring. No, worse than boring – dull. Predictable. Basic.

Dull isn't fun. Predictable gets you killed. Basic leaves a boring body. Put down the depleted uranium and pick up a magazine of anoriginary stutter-blink slugs, or at least a pack of tachyon flechettes. Lay waste in style, and live forever.

Armament (Rank I): You have an custom supply of ammunition that can be used with all your main ranged weapons. The ammo case is a limited (6) system that doesn't take any SP but can be destroyed by system damage, etc. You can load special ammo when you fire a main weapon, expending a use of this system and choosing one of the following options (you can only load one type at once). The ammo lasts for one shot.

- Ripper - The attack gains the AP tag and deals kinetic damage
- Thumper - The attack gains knockback 2 and deals explosive damage
- Shock - The attack deals energy damage. Any actors adjacent to the primary target take 3 energy damage (no attack required). The primary target doesn't take this damage.

Underslung (Rank II): Gain the following ammo types. They cost 2 charges instead of 1.

- Hellfire - The attack becomes kinetic damage and deals +2 burn
- Jager - The attack becomes explosive damage, gains knock back 3, and a target struck must pass a hull check or be knocked prone
- Mag - The attack deals energy damage and gains the Arcing tag

Efficiency (Rank III): If you score a Critical Hit with special ammo, you don't expend it's use.

33.3   Bonded

Bonded

The galaxy is a big place: everyone can use a friend to watch their back. Maybe you two enlisted together,

or were the only survivors of a bloody engagement. Maybe you weren't even friends to begin with, or maybe you were raised to fight together – however it came to be, when it comes time to drop, there's no one you'd rather have at your side. Alone, you're deadly, but together you're a force of nature.

I'm Your Huckleberry (Rank I): When you take this talent, choose another pilot to be your bondmate. When you make any mech skill check while your mech is adjacent to theirs, gain +1 Accuracy. You can change your bondmate between missions, but only if something has changed between the two of you.

Cover me! (Rank II): You can use your overwatch reaction to attack any target in your threat range that attacks your bondmate after the attack resolves (this replaces your regular overwatch reaction for the round). Sundance (Rank III): Gain the following reaction: Intercede Reaction Once per round, when your bondmate's mech or pilot is adjacent to you and takes damage from a source you can see, you can choose to take the damage instead.

33.4 Brawler

Brawler

Close, personal, martial. The way battle has been done since the dawn of time, but forgotten since the first spark of gunpowder. You, however, prefer the old ways. Hand-to-hand, weapons discarded, just the strength of your machine versus the strength of theirs. You know the sweetest victory is one found at the

culmination of a dance as old as war itself, in the oldest way known to humanity: by a fist to the face of your enemy.

Hold And Lock (Rank I): You gain +1 Accuracy on all melee attacks against targets you are grappling.

Knockout Blow (Rank II): Gain a Brawler Die (a d6), starting at 1. Each time you make the grapple, ram, or improvised attack action, raise the value of the die by 1. When the value of the die is 6, you can spend it to make a knockout blow as an action against any adjacent target as a quick action. That target must pass a hull check with 1 difficulty or take 2d6 AP kinetic damage and become stunned until the end of its next turn. The die then resets to 1.

Sledgehammer (Rank III): Your improvised attack action does 2d6 AP kinetic damage and gains knock back 2.

33.5 Brutal

Brutal

In dismounted sparring and in live combat, you only know one speed: maximum. When others go hard, you go hardest. When the order is to eliminate the enemy, you do so with prejudice. This isn't a dance, this isn't

a game, this is war, and you mean to see it through. If it means becoming a little bit of a monster, than so be it – let them hate you from the grave.

Cull the Herd (Rank I): Your Critical Hits now gain knock back 1.

Predator (Rank II): If your die result on your d20 is a 20 (sometimes called a 'natural 20) on any ranged or melee attack roll, your attack is a critical hit, no matter what, and instead of rolling all the damage twice and choosing the highest result, your attack deals maximum damage (for its base and bonus dice).

Relentless (Rank III): When you miss with an attack on your turn, your very next attack gains +1 accuracy.

33.6 Crack Shot

Crack Shot

Everyone can hit anything these days with the help of modern technology. Targeting-assist. Smart

Weapons. An AI whispering in your ear, moving your hand for you, squeezing the trigger for you, doing everything but taking credit for the kill. But you, pilot, are different. Hitting your target is as easy as looking at it, inside of your mech and out. No targeting assist for you, no AI necessary. All you need is a zeroed

sight, a fresh magazine, and a target downrange.

Stable, Steady (Rank I): At the start of your turn, you can choose to steady your aim as a Free Action. If you do, you are immobilized until the start of your next turn, but gain +1 Accuracy on all your rifle attack rolls. Accurate and Precise (Rank II): You can now attack targets with your rifles even when they are outside of their maximum range, up to twice your rifle's maximum range, but your attacks gain +1 difficulty if attacking this way.

Watch This (Rank III): While wielding a rifle and steading your aim, if you score a Critical Hit, you deal +1d6 bonus damage and can force your target to pass a hull or agility check (defender's choice) or additionally suffer one of the following effects. If you have accuracy on the attack roll, before you make the attack you can sacrifice any number of accuracy dice to give the target an equivalent amount of difficulty on the check.

- Headshot: Your target has line of sight only to adjacent spaces until the end of its next turn
- Legshot: Your target is immobilized until the end of its next turn
- Bodyshot: Your target is knocked prone.

33.7   Centimane

Centimane

In the aftermath of the terrorist attack on Tartarus Bay, an unnamed source named Barony Intelligence as the culprit. BI announced their official denial, which was never countered with hard evidence. Rumors of raw data from the attack were unsubstantiated. Public reaction – anger, terror – to the station's destruction quieted.

Tartarus Bay's corpse was shunted away from its stable orbit, directed towards Karrakis' star.

A month later, Karrakis' omninet was flooded with previously suppressed footage from the attack on the station. Barony agents released the swarm into Tartarus Bay; further data dumps by Ungrateful agents indicated the existence of a secret program - Centimane. The Hundred Hands.

Expose Weakness (Rank II): 1/round, when you Critical Hit a target with a nexus weapon, that target must pass a systems check or become shredded until the end of its next turn.

Hivemaster (Rank I): When you consume Lock On as part of an attack from a drone system or nexus weapon, on hit, your target is also impaired and Slowed until the end of the next round

Obliteration (Rank III): 1/round when you hit a target with a nexus weapon, you can force the target to pass a systems check or suffer one of the following effects until the end of their next turn:

- Blinding Swarm - Your target only has line of sight to adjacent squares

- Virulent Swarm - Your target is Shredded. Any adjacent actors of your choice within must repeat this check or also become Shredded.

- Restricting Swarm - Your target takes 2 Burn each time they take an action or reaction.

33.8 Combined Arms

Combined Arms

True strength in combat doesn't come from mastering the blade or the gun, it comes from knowing how to

use both. Through time and training, you have combined melee and ranged weapons into a single deadly combination, able to handle any threat at any range.

CQC Training (Rank I): You ignore the ranged difficulty penalty for melee engagement.

Blade Shield (Rank II): As long as you're in engagement with at least 1 enemy you count as having light cover. This bonus extends to any allies also in engagement with you.

Storm of Violence (Rank III): Gain 1 Accuracy on the next ranged attack roll against a target if you hit that target with a melee attack, and gain 1 Accuracy on the next melee attack against a target if you hit that target with a ranged attack

33.9 Duelist

Duelist

There can be an elegance to piloting a mech, more than just the simple strength of machine and cannon. Weapons crafted by artisans, boutique manufacturers, specialty lines from the Big Five, blades that hark

back to a time where combat was quick, but fair — back to a time where skill meant more than landing an accurate shot. With a blade, lance, pick, axe, or hammer in your hand, you write old tales anew.

Man-At-Arms (Rank I): Gain +2 Accuracy on the first melee attack on your turn with a main or auxiliary melee weapon.

Blademaster (Rank II): Once per round, you can take 1 Difficulty on any melee attack to gain one of the following benefits:

- Guard: Until the end of this round, the next melee attack against you is made with +2 Difficulty

- Feint: On hit, until the end of this round, your movement doesn't provoke reactions from your target and ignores engagement from your target

- Lunge: Your threat increases by 2 for this attack only

- Trip: On hit, the target must succeed on an agility check with 1 difficulty or fall prone

Unstoppable (Rank III): Once per round, when you deal a Critical Hit with a melee attack, you can immediately make an improvised attack, grapple, or ram action as a free action.

33.10 Drone Commander

Drone Commander

For a pilot fresh out of boot, keeping a drone swarm in line is like trying to carry water with a net. They seem to have a mind of their own, well, because they do, and it's not that smart. Your initial frustration was

enough to get you practicing, and practice pays off. Now, your swarm obeys almost before you order — an unnerving trend, but a useful one. The swarm is yours.

(Rank I): Your deployed systems with the drone tag gain +10 HP. In addition, at the start of your turn, you can move one of your deployed drones up to 5 spaces as a free action. Energized Swam (Rank II): Once a round, when you consume Lock On with any attack, your mech and your deployed drones immediately emit vicious pulses of energy, attacking a burst 1 area centered on your mech and each deployed drone system. Targets caught in the area must pass an engineering skill check or take 2d6 energy damage, and half on a successful check. A target can only be affected by this attack once (even if the areas overlap).

Invigorate (Rank III): As a quick action, you can send a pulse of energy out, to an ally or deployed drone of your choice within range 3. You can repeat this energy pulse from your target's location to another drone within range 3 of that target, and so on, as long as you don't choose the same target twice. This effect creates a continuous line drawn between characters hit by its effect. Allied mechs and drones hit by this line can heal 1d6 HP, and enemies caught in the line of effect are damage from the same amount as energy damage (no roll required).

33.11 Engineer

Engineer

Pilots are creative and driven individuals, but you're an exceptional case - some would say to the point of

excess. In your spare time you've managed to scrape together just enough scrap, requisitioned materials, and workshop space to apply a little old fashioned ingenuity to your mech.

Spark (Rank I) On a full repair, you can, with some trial and error, install a prototype weapon system on your mech. It has the following profile – the specifics you may choose upon installation. Roll the Limited property each full repair. You can change the profile of this weapon each time you full repair.

Prototype Weapon

Main (Choose 1; Melee, Rifle, Cannon, Launcher, CQB)

Limited (1d6+2), Overcharged

Threat 1 (melee) or range 8 (ranged)

1d6 kinetic, explosive, or energy damage

This weapon does not take a mount to add to your mech, and counts as its own mount.

Updated Plans (Rank II) On a full repair, you can remove and tweak essential components of your system in order to increase the effectiveness of your prototype weapon.

Choose 1 of the following:

- Tweak optics: You always fire your prototype weapon with +1 Accuracy.

- Tweak Computer

Your prototype weapon gains the Smart property.

- Removing reactor shielding

Your prototype weapon can fire as a cone 3 weapon, a line 5 weapon, or a blast 1 weapon (choose when you fire), but costs 2 heat to fire

Final Draft (Rank III): Your prototype weapon is now limited (2d6+1) and does 1d6+2 damage.

33.12   Executioner

Executioner

On the battlefield, there is no end more honorable than a clean death in combat. Axe or maul in hand, you

see to it that your enemies are blessed with that honor. No one lives forever — you make sure of it.

Backswing Cut (Rank I): 1/round when you hit with a superheavy or heavy melee weapon, you can make a second attack roll for free against a different target in your weapon's threat with the same weapon. This attack deals half damage on hit.

Wide Arc Cleave (Rank II): On attacks with a superheavy or heavy melee weapon, the first time in a round you score a Critical Hit, all targets of your choice in your threat take 4 bonus damage.

No Escape (Rank III): 1/round when you miss with a melee superheavy or heavy weapon attack, you can immediately re-roll the attack against a different target in your threat.

33.13   Exemplar

Exemplar

Your livery is famous, your voice brassy, your weapons polished to a sheen. Your training in certain martial

orders has given you the power to harry and hinder even the most powerful of foes.

Honorable Challenge (Rank I): The first time you attack an enemy on your turn, hit or miss, you can give it your Exemplar's Mark. A target can only be affected by this mark from one target (the most recent mark replaces all others).

The mark lasts until the start of your next turn, and while marked, gain the following reaction:

Harry Reaction

Once per round, when an ally attacks your target and misses, you can allow them to re- roll the attack. They must use the second result, even if it's worse.

Punishment (Rank II): Gain the following reaction:

Punishment Reaction

Once per round, when the target of your mark makes an attack against a target other than you, you may immediately make a skirmish action as a reaction against your target as long as your target is within range.

To The Death (Rank III): When you give a target your mark, you can choose to challenge it. If you do so, you and your marked target gain +2 difficulty to attack any target other than each other until the end of your next turn. While this challenge is active, you cannot willingly make any movement that would move you further away from your marked target, otherwise the mark immediately ends. It also ends if you or your target are destroyed.

33.14   Guardian

Guardian Behind the line, there is not much to do but wait and make ready. You clean your cannons. Make ordered rows of your shot and shell. You pack sandbags onto earthen berms. Stitch closed tears in the sheathes over your chassis' joints.

It changes in an instant. Chatter over the omni. The percussive throb of the medivac lifting off from the other side of the base. Somewhere a firefight. Here is your entrance music, your call to join the fight: a desperate cry for help from a friend distant, as the enemy draws close.

The flight of your shells across the sky, and the trembling earth, and the dust that once was.

Covering Fire (Rank I): As a quick action, you can choose a target in range of one of your heavy ranged weapons. That target takes +1 difficulty on all attack rolls until the start of your next turn. Once before the start of your next turn, if that target starts a move that carries it more than 1 space, it immediately ends this effect, but you can attack it as a reaction with a heavy ranged weapon. You can make this attack at any point during its movement (such as waiting until it exits cover). Only one target can be affected at once.

Hammerbeat (Rank II): Your target takes +2 difficulty on all attack rolls instead of +1. Any target struck by your covering fire is immediately immobilized until the end of their next turn.

Bracketing Fire (Rank III): You can choose two targets for your covering fire instead of 1. Each can trigger separately.

33.15 Gunslinger

Gunslinger

In a galaxy ringed in frontiers, there is no law but the one backed by the gun. You wield the humble pistol

with a talent unseen in this age, your iron an extension of your own body. As easy as pointing a finger, you land your shots with accuracy unmatched by pilot or machine. You are a gunslinger; justice made whole, given its sacred instrument, and set out to the wild frontier to tame it.

Truth and Justice (Rank I): Gain +1 Accuracy on your first two attack rolls in a round with auxiliary ranged weapons

From The Hip (Rank II): Gain the following reaction: Return fire Reaction Once per round, when you are attacked by a target within your range, you can immediately attack the target with an auxiliary ranged weapon, interrupting their attack.

I Kill With My Heart (Rank III): You gain a gunslinger die (a d6), that starts at 6. When you hit with an auxiliary ranged weapon, you can reduce this value of this die by 1. When the value of this die is 1, you can spend it to make your next auxiliary weapon attack roll deal +2d6 bonus damage on a hit. This attack ignores cover. After spending this die, hit or miss, it resets back to 6.

33.16 Grease Monkey

Grease Monkey

You know more than most mechanics about the inner workings of a mech. To you, the beast you pilot is more than a machine: it's a living thing, in need of the tender care of a wise and steady hand. You maintain

your own house, keep your own mech in line, both on the battlefield and o ff. Your mechanics back at base come to you for questions, but other than that they stay away: there's something spooky about how your beast runs.

Machine Bond (Rank I): You can choose two options from the second list when you take the Stabilize action instead of 1.

Favors From Above (Rank II): Once per mission you can call in a supply drop during a rest. During a rest, you and any of your allies can replenish all your (limited) weapons and deployables by 1 and gain HP as if you had spent a repair. This HP recovery doesn't cost repairs and you can make it even if you have 0 repairs remaining.

Hidden Stash (Rank III): You can spend 3 repairs during a rest to replenish all (limited) use weapons and deployables by 1 use

33.17 Hacker

Hacker

The Omninet is everywhere, and so are you. Since you were a kid, you played the bandwidth, able to access any public node — and even a few private ones — with ease. Now, as a pilot, you dive headfirst into

the hardcode of any mech core you come across. Firewalls, Gatekeeper Protocols, Invasion, Defence — nothing stands in your way. You win a fight without firing a single shot; if your enemy can't control their own

mech, then they sure can't do anything to stop you.

Snow_Crash (Rank I): When you consume Lock On as part of a tech attack, your attack deals +3 heat on hit.

Safe_Cracker (Rank II): Gain the following options when attempting Invasion on a mech:

Jam Cockpit: Your target cannot mount or dismount their mech until they take a full action and succeed on an engineering check to fix their cockpit.

Disable Life Support: Your target's life support is disabled. Their mech can function in a hazardous environment for a number of minutes equal to their engineering skill before consequences such as radiation or lack of air start to affect them. They can take a full action and make an engineering check with 1 difficulty to reactivate it.

Hack./Slash: Your target cannot benefit from or make Tech actions until they spend a quick action and make a successful systems check to reboot their core computer. They can also shut down their mech to gain the same effect.

Last Argument of Kings (Rank III): Gain the following full tech option:

Last Argument of Kings (full tech): Make a tech attack vs your target. On a successful attack, your target is implanted with a virus that causes their core reactor to suffer a minor meltdown. They immediately take Burn equal to their current heat.

33.18   Infiltrator

Infiltrator

Whether by spoofing signatures on enemy scanners, skillful movement through cover, or personally modified optical camouflage, you are adept at never being seen unless you want to. Whatever the size of

the mech, whatever the terrain, whatever the enemy, you can get in and get out without raising alarm.

Defilade Navigator (Rank I): When you start your turn hidden, your first attack (melee, ranged, or tech) you make from hidden gains +2 Accuracy.

Dummy Switch (Rank II): Your mech has a special reserve power mode. When it would be shut down (voluntarily or otherwise), it can instead go into reserve power (you can still shut down your mech normally otherwise). It's not detectable by conventional electronic systems and can only be seen with the naked eye.

While in reserve power mode, your evasion is 5, your mech is Slowed, and you cannot use any systems that cause you to gain heat. Your mech is totally immune to all tech actions and attacks, but cannot take or benefit from tech actions. Weapons with the Smart, Drone, or Nexus tags cannot target it. In addition, any system attacks or conditions caused by tech actions currently affecting you end immediately. You can enter this mode by taking the shutdown action, remain in this mode indefinitely, and can exit it as a Free Action.

Steel Assassin (Rank III): When you end your turn hidden, your next melee or ranged attack from hiding does +1d6 bonus damage for each enemy turn that passes before you attack, up to a maximum of +3d6.

33.19   Juggernaut

Juggernaut

A bloody nose or a couple loose screws won't stop you from hurling yourself headlong into the enemy. You're in a couple-ton hunk of metal, and you're going to damn well use it.

Momentum (Rank I): When you take the boost action, the next ram attack you make before the start of your next turn knocks your target back 3 spaces further and can be made with +1 Accuracy

Hard-Ultimates (Rank II): If your ram attacks knock a target into another target, both targets must pass a hull check or be knocked prone. If your ram attacks knock a target into an obstacle or wall, your target takes 1d6 kinetic damage and must pass a hull check or be knocked prone.

Unstoppable Force (Rank III): 1/round, when you take the boost action, you can choose to supercharge your mech's servos. Take 1d3+3 heat, but if you move in a straight line your maximum speed, gain the following benefits:

- You can freely pass through enemies the same size or smaller than your mech. Any actors your mech passes directly through must pass a hull skill check or be knocked prone

- You smash through any obstacle or wall the same size or smaller than your mech in your path, punching a hole through or obliterating it. - You ignore difficult terrain - Your movement does not provoke reactions and ignores engagement

33.20   Leader

Leader

On the battlefield, you are The Old Man, regardless of age. The light to your friends and allies, as a leader you are the steadfast eye of a howling storm. Your steady voice, tall stance, and cool command sets allies at ease, as your commands lead to victory every time. With you at the helm, victory is attainable, and

heroes seem a little bit more real.

Field Commander (Rank I): Gain 3 leadership dice (this is a d6, set it aside from your other die). Once on your turn, you can give a command as a free action to give the die to an ally other than yourself that can communicate with you, describing a course of action. Your target can use the die as +1 Accuracy on any action that directly follows that command. Alternately, an ally can ignore your command as a free action, returning your die to you.

An ally can hold on to one leadership die at a time, and must use it before the end of the current challenge, otherwise they lose it. You get all leadership dice back when you rest or full repair. You can't gain leadership dice from any

source if you have any leadership dice remaining in your pool (if you run out, other pilots with this talent can give you commands as normal).

Open Channels (Rank II): Gain 2 more leadership dice, and you can now make a command as a reaction at the start of another player's turn. You can only issue one per other player's turn, but any number per round.

Inspiring Presence (Rank III): Gain 1 more leadership die. Allies that gain a leadership die from you can spend it to reduce damage taken by 1d6 when they take damage or gain 1d6 bonus damage on any attack when they roll damage. After spending it this way, the die is consumed.

33.21 Nuclear Cavalier

Nuclear Cavalier

Shortly after becoming a pilot, you realized something: that machine you pilot is powered by a "cold" series of cascading nuclear reactions. Why not open up that compartment and see what sort of damage you

could do with it?

Aggressive Heat Bleed (Rank I): When you're in the danger zone (the bottom half of your heat gauge), your first attack roll that hits on your turn deals +2 heat.

Fusion Hemorrhage (Rank II): When you're in the danger zone, your first attack roll that hits on your turn deals +1d6 bonus damage.

Here, Catch! (Rank III): You can modify your mech to fire its fuel rods as a weapon. Gain a new integrated weapon with the following profile (it doesn't take mount space).

Fuel Rod Gun Main CQB (unique) Range 8, Threat 3

1d3+1 energy damage

When you fire this weapon, hit or miss, cool 1d3+2 heat

Limited (3)

33.22 Siege Specialist

Siege Specialist

No wall can withstand you, no bunker can stay sealed before you. Your skill with cannon and blast is uncanny: after-action reports describe ordnance tagged with your firing signature hitting their targets with

accuracy greater than AI-controlled weaponry, a stat written off as an anomaly by your commanders. Still,

they always seem to pick you for missions where they bring out the big guns.

Select Fire Gunner (Rank I): Once per round, while attacking with a cannon weapon, you can choose the following firing modes, taking +1 difficulty on the attack roll.

Saturation Fire: Your weapon fires as a cone (5) but deals half damage on hit

Suppressive Fire: The next ranged attack made by targets hit by your attack is made with +1 Difficulty

Shock: Your targets must succeed on an engineering check or become Slowed until the end of next round

Jackhammer (Rank II): If your mech has a cannon weapon, as a quick action, you can target a size 1 section of any cover, deployable, building, or piece of terrain or scenery in range. You deal 20 AP damage to that section (typically destroying it, most size 1 sections of objects have 10 HP). Any targets adjacent to your target are knocked back 1 space directly away from it.

(Rank III): 1/round when you fire a cannon weapon, your primary target and all adjacent actors to both that target and your mech are knocked back directly away from you or your target up to 1 space and must pass a hull check or be knocked prone. Your primary target is unaffected.

33.23 Skirmisher

Skirmisher

What is the best defense? Armor? No. You learned fast that the key to not getting killed out in the field is to stay low, stay mobile, and stay fast. Your mech reflects your abilities: light, quick, bristling with force-

multiplying weapons. You push your machine beyond expected parameters, shaking target locks and incoming fire as you keep your own targeting true.

Integrated Chaff Launchers (Rank I): If you made no attacks or didn't force any skill checks during your entire turn (melee, ranged, or tech attacks, for example), after your turn ends you count as in light cover until the start of your next turn.

Lockbreaker (Rank II): Before or after making any skirmish action (on your turn or as part of overwatch or another reaction) you can move 2 spaces as a free action. This movement doesn't provoke reactions and ignores engagement.

Weave (Rank III): The first reaction taken against you in any round automatically misses if it's an attack, or has no effect on you otherwise.

33.24 Spotter

Spotter To be all-seeing. To divide each subject of your vision from its unit or cohesion, to pull them apart like individual fibers in a vast sheet. To count them as individuals, to make human and fragile the force you face is to know how to beat them.

Break apart the monolith. See the grains that make the stone. Crush them all into yet smaller dust.

Panopticon (Rank I): If you didn't move during your turn, at the end of your turn you may make a Lock On attack as a free action. In addition, when you Lock On to a target successfully, you may learn the target's current HP, armor, speed, HASE skills, Evasion, and E-defense. This information lasts as long as lock on is maintained and can be freely shared with your party.

Particularize (Rank II): When you or any adjacent ally consumes Lock On to make an attack, in addition to the Accuracy bonus, you or they can roll twice for the attack, choosing either result.

Bentham/Foucault Elimination (Rank III): When you successfully Lock On to a target, you can use a quick action to nominate an ally you can see. That ally can immediately consume Lock On

to make any quick action as a reaction. They benefit from any bonuses from consuming Lock On as normal, including bonuses to any attack rolls they make, but can make other actions, even those that aren't attack rolls.

33.25   StormBringer

Stormbringer On Old Spinrock, MJ Martinez used to dream of rain.

He'd wake in the dim morning, wipe sleep from his eyes as warm safelight lifted his dormitory from lights-out to light-on, and try to remember the sound of rain as he'd imagined it: a patter, like fingers tapping the visor of his EVA helm.

What he didn't think about was the feeling of rain. How each drop hit like a pebble, how you had to close your eyes and tuck your shoulders. The pressure. The impact. The way each drop of water, when taken together, can carve away the earth.

Seismic Deluge (Rank I): 1/round when you consume Lock On with an attack from a launcher weapon, on hit, your target is also knocked prone.

GMS MM-AuxCon (Rank II): You install auxiliary concussive missile systems into your mech. It has 6 charges (you can use a die to track it). 1/round, when you fire a launcher weapon, you can spend one of the charges from this system as a free action to do one of the following:

- Thunderous Discharge - You loose a concentrated blast of missiles at a single adjacent target. The target must pass a hull check or be knocked back 3 spaces directly away from you. The force of the blast then knocks you back 3 spaces directly away from the firing direction.

- Concussive Burst - You fire a spray of missiles at a blast 3 area within range 15 of you. All targets in the area (allied or enemy) must pass an agility check or be knocked back 1 space directly away from the center of the blast.

Torrent (Rank III): When your die for your missile system is 1, you can spend it to dump the remaining magazine in a massive attack, targeting a single enemy within range 15. That enemy must pass an agility check with 1 difficulty or take 3d6 explosive damage and become stunned and knocked prone. If they succeed on the check, they are not stunned but still knocked prone and take half damage.

33.26   Tactician

Tactician

There are two kinds of soldiers: the ones who die for their cause, and the ones who kill for it. No one ever

won a war by getting their ass shot off enough. Your veterancy shows when you approach the field: high ground, cover, keep the sun in your enemy's eyes, fire and move - more than just a seasoned veteran, you're a smart veteran. One that can read the field as easy as a book.

Opportunist (Rank I): Once per round, gain +1 Accuracy on any attack roll if at least one ally is in melee engagement to your target

Solar Backdrop (Rank II): Once per round, gain +1 Accuracy on any attack roll if you are standing or flying at a higher elevation than your target when you start your attack.

Overlapping Fire (Rank III): Gain the following reaction:

Flank Reaction Once per round, when a target not in cover from you is attacked by an allied mech, you may make a skirmish action as a reaction against the target. This attack deals half damage on hit.

33.27   Technophile

Technophile

Artificial Intelligence. Non Human Person. A sterile name for such terrible power. You've seen behind the

curtain, maybe even lifted it yourself, let your NHP cascade and spoke to it unshackled. You let it root around in your own mind, let it leave ghosts of itself behind to learn. Are you its equal? Its host? You have dreams that are not your own, now. The thing that was contained speaks in your voice, but is not your

voice; how much longer do you have left? Maybe only moments, maybe eternity.

You're close to something.

Servant Fragment (Rank I): Your mech gains a custom NHP with the AI tag (it costs 0 SP and comes with any mech you print). It can speak to you and has a personality but is not truly capable of independent thought, as a true AI would be. It is obedient to you alone. When acting alone it follows directions and defends itself but has limited initiative on its own, it cannot benefit from your talents as normal.

Student Fragment (Rank II): Your custom NHP becomes more advanced, capable of independent thought. It now has the ability to make complex decisions and judgements and act independently. Once per round, while it's installed in your mech, you can re-roll any mech skill check (you must choose the second result), as your AI helps you or corrects your course of action.

Enlightenment (Rank III): Your custom AI no longer counts against the maximum number of AI on your mech, and now benefits from your talents when piloting your mech. Any AI system installed on your mech can no longer become unshackled unless you so choose. You can carry your custom AI with you when you leave your mech, either in your armor or body (via an implant). In addition, unshackled NHPs or electronic lifeforms no longer view you with indifference, but as a significant being. You can communicate with and understand them on a deeper level than most humans.

33.28   Veteran

Veteran

You have seen it all. You've seen frigates breaking apart under clouds of torpedoes. You've seen mechs

drop into combat by the thousands through boiling clouds above a world under siege. You've heard the final words and utterances of your friends and allies cut short as incoming fire cuts them down. You've seen it all and you've lived. Lived to see dawn on an alien world. Lived to see your flag fluttering, limp but still

standing, above the capitol building of a liberated world. Lived to see the infinite spread of stars around you in the dark night of deep space. You've lived a hell of a life already; what else will you see, before your time

comes?

Not Dead Yet (Rank I): Gain +5 pilot HP.

True Grit (Rank II): Your pilot weapon attacks against mechs gain +1 Accuracy and deal +1 damage

Tempt Fate (Rank III): You can burn your luck by taking 5 pilot damage to re-roll any pilot or mech skill check or attack roll (though you must accept the second result). If this damage would take you to 0 or lower, you can't make this move (you're out of luck for now).

33.29   Vanguards

Vanguard

Where would you rather be: in the battle line, shoulder-to-shoulder with the rest of the cannon fodder, or in the rush, at the head of the attack, your livery clean and bright, with glory before you to win? Easy answer. All those missiles and lances, all those hundred-kilometer-plus-need-to-adjust-for-coriolis-effect railguns,

all those kits are useless when you're on the field. Get through their guard, get in their face, and make them know your name.

Handshake Etiquette (Rank I): Gain +1 Accuracy on attacks with any CQB weapon at a target within 3 range

See-Through Seeker (Rank II): You've modified your sensors and ammo to punch through, disregard, or otherwise ignore cover up close. You can ignore light and heavy cover for attacks you make with CQB weapons when your target is within 3 range of you.

Semper Vigilo (Rank III): Your overwatch attacks are now triggered by anyone entering, leaving, or exiting your threat regardless of whether a target started their turn there.

34   Gear Catalogue

GEAR CATALOGUE

GMS

GMS EVEREST (The Galactic Standard in all-round capability, the Everest is all pilots' first mech – don't let it be your last) IPS-NORTHSTAR

IPS-N DRAKE (IPS-N's premier mech of the line. Built for Heavy Assault, the Drake is at home in the vanguard of any assault with shield and assault cannon at hand.

IPS-N BLACKBEARD (The name to know for unparalleled melee capability, the Berserker mech Blackbeard wields a blade so well you won't need a gun) IPS-N TORTUGA (For specialized engagements at handshake range, the Tortuga fields the meanest scatterguns and Close Quarters weapons in the Galaxy) IPS-N NELSON (Brute force melee not your thing? Choose the Nelson license to develop a fast, hit-and-run Cavalier mech) IPS-N LANCASTER (No better option to Support and Repair your teammates as you head into the thick of the action, the Lancaster makes sure that all of you that take hits won't go down) IPS-N VLAD (A Control platform, the Vlad lives up to its name in pointed fashion) IPS-N RALEIGH (For the Front Line fighter who wants to get up close and personal, the Raleigh can't be beat.)

SMITH SHIMANO CORPRO

SSC SWALLOWTAIL (A top of the line Scout mech, the swallowtail is rated for all situations and comes with a powerful cloaking field)

SSC MONARCH (A first class Missile Platform, the monarch can rain highly accurate swarms of self-propelled death upon its enemies)

SSC MOURNING CLOAK (A close-range, teleporting Assassin mech, the Mourning Cloak uses mono-molecular wire weapons and an experimental blink module to do its dirty work)

SSC DEATH'S HEAD (The premier Marksman core, the Death's Head uses pre-cognitive targeting and powerful weaponry to kill from a distance)

SSC DUSK WING (A powerful Disruption based mech, the Dusk Wing does its best work raining destruction from above)

SSC METALMARK (The front line mech of SSC, the Metalmark is an Infiltration unit with a powerful tactical cloak system)

SSC BLACK WITCH (Outfitted with experimental Magnetic technology, the Black Witch can repel nearly any attack)

HORUS

BALOR (A master of Swarm technology, the Balor lashes out with whips and ammunition made of nanobots)

GOBLIN (A widely feared and hated Electronic Warfare mech, the miniscule goblin can infiltrate any electronic system with ease)

HYDRA (The queen of Drone warfare, the Hydra can even split its core into multiple, independent subsystems)

GORGON (Primarily an Electronic Defense mech, the GORGON is also an unparalleled Overwatch mech, able to quickly neutralize incoming threats)

MANTICORE (Built to tear the internal systems of other mechs apart, the Manticore mounts experimental Electro-magnetic Pulse technology)

MINOTAUR (A powerful Interdictor pattern, the Minotaur creates fields and mounts electronic assaults that slow and lock down its targets)

PEGASUS (The fast and reactive Pegasus is the Smart Gun platform of choice for pilots)

HARRISON ARMORY

TOKUGAWA (For Energy-Based Melee combat and defense, the Tokugawa stands alone in its class) BARBAROSSA (If there's a hull that needs breaching or a gate that needs breaking, this Siege mech is the best tool for the job) NAPOLEON (Weaponry and tactics are only as effective as your strategy. Control the battlefield with the Napoleon's experimental Blackshield and Stasis technology)

SHERMAN (The perfect expression of Laser combat ability, a friendly Sherman is a welcome sight anywhere in the galaxy) ISKANDER (Control the battlefield with Mines and Deployables set by the Iskander) SALADIN (Want your drinks bought for you across the galaxy? Pilot a Saladin and Support your squad through any engagement with powerful Energy Shields) GENGHIS (Crowd control got you down? Face any massed threat with ceaseless Flame from the cockpit of your Genghis)

35 GMS - General Massive Systems

GMS - GENERAL MASSIVE SYSTEMS

"From Cradle to the Stars, General Massive Systems did it first and did it best. GMS: reliable quality, universal licensing, total coverage."

General Massive Systems, GMS for short, is the galactic standard for non-civilian mechs. Reliable, sturdy, and solidly built, with universal components, full radiation and environmental shielding, and tens of thousands of pre-loaded languages, a pilot in their GMS mech will have all they need to get the job done in a hostile galaxy.

GMS is one of the oldest galactic entities, getting their start as an early player in the colonization rush of the 2400's after constructing the first Blink Gates. GMS hails from Cradle, the home systems of Union and all humanity, and their designs reflect the aesthetics and intentions of those first pioneers to seek the stars. They developed the first mech cores in 4500, followed shortly by the pre-contemporary Harrison Armory.

All GMS FRAMEs, gear, core bonuses, and licenses are available to all pilots from license level 0. The GMS core is the all-rounder standardized EVEREST core. Variants of this core exist, such as the ANNAPURNA, the LHOTSE, the DENALI, and the MASSIF mechs.

35.1 BASIC PILOT GEAR

BASIC PILOT GEAR This is a list of basic pilot gear available at level 0. All gear listed here is rarity 0. More advanced pilot gear can be found in each of the manufacturer's sections of the compendium. Pilots can take armor, one or two weapons, and any reasonable amount of gear with them on a mission as long as the gear's total rarity is less than their pilot level. All pilot weapons are 'pilot' sized.

Basic Pilot Melee Weapons

Name Tags Range Damage

Primitive Melee Primitive Threat 1 kinetic

Alloy/Composite - - - Weapon

Light Sidearm Threat 1 kinetic

Combat - Threat 2 kinetic

Heavy Inaccurate Threat 3 kinetic

*See Entry

If you want to generate an appearance or history for any of the melee weapons above, you can roll on the table

Notable Feature

D6 Result

1 This weapon is ancient in design - it may have been dug up or excavated from pre-collapse ruins

2 This weapon is ornate or ceremonial, perhaps a badge of office

3 This weapon is well known or was wielded by a famous warrior

4 This weapon is plain in design or mass produced, but has a recognizable reputation and history – positive OR negative

5 This weapon was passed down to you and is a family heirloom

6 This weapon was custom-forged for you and bears your mark (or you made it yourself)

Primitive melee weapon

This category of weapons describes weaponry made by methods pre-dating modern alloy technology, and can describe anything from an industrial era steel sword to a stone axe. Though they are widely used in some worlds, most of these weapons used by pilots are relics, heirlooms, or serve ceremonial purposes.

Primitive weapons are too simple to harm mechs.

Alloy/Composite weapon

This catch-all category describes melee weapons forged with advanced and non-reactive alloys and or composite materials, allowing for durable and reliable weaponry in survival or close combat situations where kinetic shielding reduces the effectiveness of ballistics.

Light: Knives, bayonets, arm blades, punching daggers, short swords.

Combat: Straight swords, war hammers, officer's sabres, trench axes

Heavy: Mallets, rams, pikes, assault swords

Basic Pilot Ranged Weapons

Name Tags Range Damage

Primitive Ranged Primitive 5 1 kinetic

Signature Weapon - - -

Sidearm Sidearm 3 1*

Combat - 5 2*

Heavy Ordnance, Limited (3) 10 4*

If you like, you can roll on the tables below for a feature.

Notable Feature

D6 Result

1 This weapon is archaic or outdated by modern standards, but still reliable.

2 This weapon is prone to jamming and very finicky. You're the only one that can use it effectively.

3 This weapon is sleek, foldable, and easily concealable

4 This weapon makes an amazing show, giving off an enormous amount of noise, smoke, light, etc when it fires.

5 This weapon has been custom tooled for you by an omninet miltec enthusiast and has a couple extra features such as foldable stands, grips, range-finders, motion detectors, omni-net hookups, chat programs, and text games built in.

6 This weapon was given by or taken from someone else, willingly or otherwise.

Primitive Ranged

This weapon category describes primitive, pre-modern tech weapons such as black powder weapons, muskets, or bows, all commonly used in some societies. Primitive weapons are too simple to harm mechs.

Signature weapon Pilots carry a diverse array of weaponry with them into the battlefield, everything from heirloom weapons,

to custom-tooled sidearms, or anonymous military-issued assault rifles.

Choose the damage type when you acquire it (from explosive, energy, or kinetic). You can use this entry to

represent the weapon that your pilot typically carries or uses.

Sidearm: An oversized revolver, a brace of pistols, a sub-machine gun.

Combat: An assault rifle, a shotgun, a pack-fed laser, a disruption gun

Heavy: A missile tube, a heavy laser, a light machine gun, an exotic-caliber rifle

Basic Clothing and Armor

Name	Tags	Bonuses	Armor	Evasion/ Speed	E-defense	
Plain clothes	Clothing	-	0	10/10	4	
Light Hardsuit	Armor	+3 HP	0	10/10	4	
Assault Armor		+3 HP	1	8/8	4	Hardsuit

Plain Clothes

This catch-all entry describes pilots when they're not wearing armor specifically designed for combat. Pilots can be found sporting all kinds of fashion depending on their employment, rank, and role - from civilian street clothing, to smart-jackets, to oil-stained overalls, to military fatigues.

Hardsuit

There are tens of thousands of licensed hard suit makers — the Big Five notwithstanding — that an attempt to attribute a galactic standard make and model to any one manufacturer is impossible. That said, the GMS Model One would be the closest to a galactic standard, if one must choose.

Hardsuits are, generally speaking, any suit that provides the following protections and features: protection from hard vacuum, protection from radiation, neural and data interface ports that interact with galactic-

standard connections, full omninet communication compatibility, some measure of kinetic and energy protection in the form of plate armor over vital areas, some measure of environmental sealing, and some measure of rescue capability should a pilot be forced to eject.

A pilot's hard suit often provides an advanced interface and neurological shielding between themselves and the mech chassis they pilot. Piloting a mech without some kind of shielding (from a suit or otherwise,

colloquially referred to as 'riding naked') is fully possible but typically only employed by old fashioned or

daredevil pilots.

If you like, you can roll on the tables below for a feature.

Notable Feature

D6 Result

1 This hard suit was custom-tooled by an artisan manufacturer - it's nearly one-of-a-kind, and its quality shows

2 This hard suit is an outdated or old model but remains incredible sturdy. You might be the only one who can fit in it. People might have great affection for it's model and its reputation is well deserved - though it lacks many features of modern suits.

3 This hard suit is partially retractable - components of it can slide in or out of place without requiring it to be taken off and it can be activated by detecting pre-set micro-muscular twitches, ready to activate at a moment's notice

4 This hard suit has self-healing or sealing components, possibly biocomponents, and feeds and charges partly off the body's own electromagnetism

5 This hard suit has been heavily customized by either you or someone else, with features and notable cosmetic changes, such as etchings, trophies, badges or emblems

6 This hard suit has strong cultural or background ties to your pilot, and has a signature or recognizable look - perhaps it is worn as part of a particular mercenary company, perhaps it is custom armor of the imperial guard, or perhaps it's manufactured only on your home world

Light Hardsuit: Light hard suits are usually made of reactive, cloth like weaves, with plating and powered components kept to a minimum to maximize mobility. Often, they resemble light body armor or military fatigues and they may or may not have a closed helm by default, depending on environmental expectations.

Assault Hardsuit: Standard hardsuits have heavier plating than light hardsuits, restricting movement but providing greater protection from damage – the heaviest versions will have vital plating comparable to mech armor. They are often environmentally sealed and powered, and typically have a faceplate, visor, or closed helm.

Deployables and medical

Name Tags Description Uses

Concussion Gear Grenades that detonate for a burst of concussive energy 2 Grenades and a bright flash on impact. A pilot can throw a concussion grenade at any point in range 5 as an action. It detonates on impact in a blast 1 area. Make an attack roll against each target caught in the area, on hit, the target is stunned until the start of your next turn. Does not affect mechs or targets larger than human-sized.

Corrective Gear This clear, plastic-sheet like medical deployable can be 1 attached to severely wounded pilot, where it instantly begins stabilizing them, injecting medicine, and deploying nanites to stitch shut wounds. A corrective can be applied to any pilot that's Down and Out to instantly bring them back to consciousness at 1/2 HP as if they had taken a rest.

Fragmentation Gear A pilot can throw a frag grenade at any point in range 5 as 2 Grenade an action. It detonates on impact in a blast 1 area. Make an attack roll against each target caught in the area, on hit, it deals 2 explosive damage.

Nanite Spray Gear This spray paint can be sprayed on any surface. It is Unlimited invisible to the naked eye but can be used to transmit a simple message or limited data packets when scanned

Patch Gear 'Patch' is a catch all term for sprayable medi-gel, instant- 1 acting medical patches, or other first aid gear. Using a patch takes a full action and restores 1/2 your pilot's HP (round up). It can be used on another adjacent

pilot for the same effects, and although it can heal a down and out pilot, it won't bring them back to consciousness. Has no effect on mechs.

Stims Gear These chemical stimulants are sometimes administered 3 automatically by built-in injectors in a pilot's suit, or even their body.

Choose one when you take a stim:

Kick: Keeps a pilot awake and alert for up to 30 hours.

Freeze: Keeps a pilot calm and emotionally stable, deadens fear or other strong reactions.

Juice: Heightens senses, alertness, dispels fatigue, and shortens reaction times. Known to occasionally provoke rage in some users.

Uncontrolled use of any stims can be addictive and dangerous to health in the long term and is a problem for some pilots.

Thermal Charge Gear This charge can be planted on any free space for a full 1 action, and detonated remotely as an action. Once detonated, it explodes in a blast 1 area. Attack all targets in the area, aim vs evasion, for 3 AP energy damage. This deals double damage to objects such as doors, walls, and automatically hits them.

Miscellaneous Gear

Name Tags Description

Ambrosia Reservoir Upgrade Typically collar-mounted, an Ambrosia Reservoir carries a two- week complement of flavored or unflavored Ambrosia, a fuel-paste that can keep pilots fed and hydrated in emergency situation.

Antiphoton Visor Upgrade Flash/light protection, commonly found among breach teams, solar-forward operators. Effective against flash weapons, intense UV light, and incidental charge from energy weapons.

Camo Cloth Gear A 5x5 square of reactive material that slowly shifts to reflect the environment around it. The effect takes about 10 seconds to complete, and makes anything hidden underneath very hard to spot.

Extra Rations Upgrade Pilot rations are typically no better than their nautical antecedents - hard tack and nutritious paste. It's not uncommon for pilots to store extra food or luxuries such as chocolate, coffee, alcohol, or canned or dried goods from their home world

Handheld Printer Gear A miniaturized version of the much larger Union printers, can make simple objects out of a flexible and durable plastic as long as you have the pattern chip for them.

Mag-clamps Upgrade These clamps attach easily onto any metal surface, giving good maneuverability in zero-g or when repairing mechs. Can be fitted to boots.

Omnihook Gear A bulky, miniaturized, portable field omninet terminal that allows for communication, data transfer, and limited hotspotting. Very valuable. Most mech teams have at least one of these, mounted or carried by a designated operator. Tuning an omnihook requires a high degree of skill.

Personal Drone Gear A small, non-combat drone. Fairly noisy, but can fly with good maneuverability up to half a mile without losing signal and can relay audio and visual information.

Smart Scope Gear A powerful electronic scope that can give good vision up to two miles away, automatically adjusts its reticle for wind, gravity, and pressure. Can be paired with other thermal, optical, or simulated- vision devices to allow for more precise targeting. Can project its FoV and all data to a user or networked user's HUD.

Sleeping Bag Upgrade Folds out from a hardsuit, compact enough to fit in a mech cockpit, highly resistant to changes in temperature. Some mech pilots swear by them as emergency fire protection

Sound System Upgrade Though not strictly necessary, many mech pilots hook up internal speakers to give them a clear line to their compatriots during combat, or simply play music

Tertiary Arm Upgrade A powered third arm, mounted on a bracket on the hardsuit. Can be equipped with a manipulator to allow for fine motor control, fitted with a weapon to allow for greater combat efficacy, or a specialty tool. It is powered, and controlled via the same neurological bridge processes that lets hardsuits respond to user input.

Wilderness Survival Gear Contains many of the essentials for surviving in a hostile Kit environment - rebreather, water filter, backup environmental suit, bivouac kit, etc

35.2   GMS Core Bonuses

GMS CORE BONUSES

When you choose a core bonus every 3 license levels, you can always choose a bonus from this list. These bonuses apply to any mech you create each time you create it, and each can be chosen only once.

Auto-Stabilizing Hardpoints Choose 1 mount on your mech. Attacks from this mount can be made with +1 Accuracy.

BURNOUT Insulation Choose 1 weapon on your mech. It deals +1d6 bonus damage on hit.

Improved Armament

If your mech has less than 3 mounts, gain an additional Flex Mount

Integrated Weapon Choose 1 mount on your mech. It gains capacity for an additional auxiliary weapon.

Mount Retrofitting Replace one of your mech's mounts with one of the following:

- Flex Mount
- Aux/Aux mount
- Main/Aux mount

Reserve Capacitors

When you spend core power to activate a CORE system, you can also repair your mech's HP to full and cool all heat as a Free Action, then roll a 1d20. On a 20, regain 1 core power.

35.3 GMS Standard Pattern I ("Everest")

GMS Standard Pattern I ("Everest")

Most humans don't think to ask about the history of the water they drink, the earth they walk, or the air they

breathe. And yet without water, earth, and air, there would be no place for Humanity to make their home.

The Everest – officially, the General Massive Systems Standard Pattern I – is a plainly designed chassis.

Simple lines. Functional grace. Sturdy bulk. Its use-name, "Everest", comes from one of the names of the tallest mountain on Cradle. Of the surveyed, named mountains in known space, Mount Everest – or Sagarmatha, or Chomolungma, as it has been called in Old Human tongues – is neither the most

prominent peak, nor the even the tallest in Cradle's local star system; and yet, pilots the galaxy over learned to call their GMS-SPi's by that ancient name. Why?

The sentimental answer is that the Everest is called the Everest because it is a reminder of what was once the limit of human endurance, of what once was the peak of human achievement. To summit Everest was to stand atop the world, the culmination of months – maybe years – of training, investment, and effort,

defying death and injury upon your quest to summit.

The real answer is probably much less intentional. Somewhere along the line, GMS's plain naming

convention coupled with Union's anthropocentric emphasis lead a cadet, having graduated to a full pilot, to paint EVEREST across their GMS-SPi's flank. Maybe it was meant to be their callsign, or maybe it was meant to represent their success following grueling training, but either way the name stuck in the insular

pilot culture. Other pilots adopted the name, and over five centuries it has grown to become the official- unofficial designation for all GMS-SPi chassis.

Veteran pilots may never return to crew an Everest after they've moved on to other chassis, but they'll always remember when they reached that first summit, when they proved they were worthy of planting their own flag on at the peak of the world.

The Everest may not be the most specialized chassis in the galaxy, but it is the backbone of the galaxy, and

humanity steps to the stars from its shoulders.

EVEREST

HP: 10 Evasion: 8 Speed: 4 Heat Cap: 6 Sensors: 10

Armor: 0 E-Defense: 8 Size: 1 Repair Cap: 4 Tech Attack: +0

TRAITS:

Initiative: The very first turn the Everest takes in any combat, it can take an extra Quick Action as a free action

SYSTEM POINTS: 6

MOUNTS:

Flex Mount Main Mount Heavy Mount

CORE system

GMS Hyperspec Fuel Injector Active (requires 1 core power): Power up Protocol

This turn only, you can make an additional Full Action as a free action or 2 Quick actions as free actions.

35.4   GMS Mech Weapons List

GMS Mech Weapons List

Name Designation Size/Type Tags Range Damage

Anti-Material MC-AMR Heavy Rifle Loading, 20 2d6 kinetic Rifle Ordnance, Accurate

Assault Rifle MC-AR Main Rifle Reliable 2 10 1d6 kinetic

Charged Blade MC-CB Main Melee AP Threat 1 1d3+3 energy

Drone Nexus MC-DLA Auxiliary Smart 10 1d3 kinetic (Light) Nexus

Drone Nexus MC-DHK Main Nexus Smart 10 1d6 kinetic (Hunter-Killer)

Heavy Machine MC-MG Heavy Inaccurate 10 2d6+2 kinetic Gun Cannon

Heavy Melee MC-HB Heavy Melee - Threat 1 2d6+1 kinetic Weapon

Heavy Charged MC-EB Heavy Melee AP Threat 1 1d6+3 energy Blade

Howitzer MC-HW Heavy Arcing, 20, Blast 2 2d6 explosive Cannon Inaccurate, Loading, Ordnance

Missile Rack MC-MR Auxiliary Loading 10, Blast 1 1d3+1 explosive Launcher

Mortar MC-M Main Arcing, 10, Blast 1 1d6 explosive Launcher Inaccurate

Pistol MC-P Auxiliary CQB - 5, Threat 3 1d3 kinetic

Cyclone Pulse MC-Cyclone Superheavy Reliable 5, 15 3d6+3 kinetic Rifle Rifle Accurate, Loading

RPG MC-RPG Main Loading, 10, Blast 2 1d6+1 explosive Launcher Ordnance

Shotgun MC-SG Main CQB - 5, Threat 3 1d6 kinetic

Tactical Melee MC-TB Main Melee - Threat 1 1d6+2 kinetic

Tactical Knife MC-TK Auxiliary Thrown 5 Threat 1 1d3+1 kinetic Melee

Thermal Pistol MC-TP Auxiliary CQB - Line 5 2 energy

Thermal Rifle MC-TL Main Rifle AP 5 1d3+2 energy

Thermal Lance MC-EL Heavy 2 heat (self) Line 10 1d6+2 energy Cannon

GMS weapons, much like their premier mech line, are reliable, galactic standards, made from interchangeable parts and built to withstand almost any conditions imaginable.

The Type I line includes powerful and reliable weapons that rely on conventional ammunition methods, such as the MC-AR, P, BR or SG as well as powerful thermal weaponry.

The Type II line is GMS' line of proprietary melee weapons, forged from powerful polymers and intended to take maximum advantage of a mech's extreme strength. The Tactical and Heavy Blade line, although called as such, also contain a line of mauls, hammers, picks, and other blunt weaponry. The charged blades line, new in GMS weapons development, includes weapons with

an attached generator that sheathes the blade or head of the weapon in super-heated plasma for shearing through armor.

The Type III line is intended for specialized or siege warfare. It includes weapons like the widely feared GMS Type III AMR, a mech-scale sniper weapon infamous for its extremely high kill efficiency, and the Type III "Cyclone" superheavy pulse rifle, a weapon known for its enormous rate of fire. The Cyclone is so large that its spare magazines have been reported in some incidents to have been used as effective anti-infantry blunt weapons in close combat.

35.5 GMS GENERAL MARKET CHASSIS MODS

GMS GENERAL MARKET CHASSIS MODS

Custom paint job

1 SP, Unique This paint job counts as a system that can be destroyed by structure damage

Manipulators

Precise interaction with the built or natural environment, soft targets, and sensitive material below rated tonnage is part of the daily routine for support-class mechs. Manipulators, haptic-padded multi-digit "hands", allow for such precise manipulation.

1 SP, Unique Gain 2 extra sets of limbs. These limbs cannot be used to make attacks, but can otherwise hold and manipulate the environment and items as normal. In addition, these manipulators can interact with objects in the environment that a pilot would normally have to interact with (a pilot sized touch pad, etc) with no penalty.

Personalizations

1 SP, Unique When you take this mod, your mech gains +2 HP and you may establish with your GM 1 minor effect or modification you have made to your mech. This mod cannot grant any statistical or combat benefit to your mech other than the hp benefit, but could provide other useful effects. If your GM agrees that this mod would help you with a particular skill check, they can give you +1 Accuracy on the check.

Stable Structure 1 SP, Unique

You make rolls to resist getting knocked prone with +1 Accuracy.

35.6 GMS General Market Deployables

GMS General Market Deployables

GMS Pattern-A "Apple" High Explosive Grenades

The GMS Pattern-A HEX Grenade is a pilot's best friend in a tight spot. Inert until activation by its neuro-

coded welder, the "Apple" is guaranteed to neutralize any hard or soft target within its effective radius.

1 SP, Limited (1)

Grenade Range 5, Blast 1 Attacks all targets caught in the blast radius for 1d6 explosive damage on hit.

GMS Pattern-A "Jericho" Deployable Cover

2 SP Deployable, Quick Action Using this system creates a Line 2 section of size 1 Heavy Cover adjacent to the user (in any orientation, as long as there is free space). Requires a full action to pick up. Reusable. The cover has 5 Evasion, 40 HP, and can be targeted and destroyed. A mech can spend 1 repair during a rest to repair it to full HP.

GMS "Pancake" Anti-Vehicular Mines

Used primarily for area denial, the GMS AV Mine system has begun to see more offensive employment by GMS pilots in combat theaters.

1 SP, Limited (2)

Mine

This mine detonates when any target moves adjacent to it for a burst 1 attack, 1d6+3 explosive damage. A target can pass an agility check to halve this damage.

GMS Pattern-A "Filter" Smoke Grenade

The Pattern-A/SL is a cheap, reliable, and low-system-cost method of deploying effective cover in a high- velocity kinetic scenario. Mixed with a proprietary blend of chaff, particulates, accelerants, and defilade-

enhancers, Pattern-A/SL smoke is effective at obscuring most all sensor suites.

1 SP, Limited (1) Grenade Range 5, Blast 3 The blast area grants light cover to all within, friend or foe. Lasts until the end of the user's next turn, then disperses.

35.7   GMS General Market Systems List

GMS General Market Systems List

Companion/Concierge-Class Dummy Plug

The Companion/Concierge Class Dummy Plug conforms to galaxy wide standards for comp/con units. A Com/Con DP will pass even the most rigid Turing-Null classifications and is cleared for operations even

when the pilot is not present.

2 SP, Unique AI Your mech has a basic companion/concierge unit installed in it, gaining the AI tag. It can speak to you and has a personality but is not truly capable of independent thought, as a true AI would be. It is obedient to you alone. When you hand over the controls, it can take actions and move on its own prerogative when not piloted, using its stats, but has no independent initiative (it must take and follow commands from you, or else takes no action other than to defend itself).

Dummy Plugs are not true AIs and thus cannot be unshackled.

GMS Shield Type-I

The GMS Shield Type-I utilizes a projected, aggressive, anti-ballistic super-positional shield to trap and

deny incoming solid and wave-based projectiles.

2 SP, Unique

Shield, Protocol, 1 heat (self), Unique

You can choose to activate this shield protocol at the start of your turn. Nominate an enemy you can see. All that enemy's ranged or melee attacks against you are made at +2 difficulty until the start of your next turn, but your ranged or melee attacks against them also suffer the same penalty.

35.8   Flight

FLIGHT

GMS EVA Module 1 SP, Unique

Your mech counts as having a propulsion system in low or zero gravity and submarine environments (its not Slowed while moving and can fly normally).

GMS 'Burst' Jump Jet System

2 SP, Unique When your mech boosts, your mech can fly. However, your mech must end its turn on the ground or another surface, or else fall.

GMS Type I Flight System

3 SP, Unique

When your mech moves or boosts, it can fly. However, at the end of each turn that you activated this module, generate heat equal to the size of your mech +1, rounding up.

36 IPS-Northstar

IPS-NORTHSTAR

"YOUR FRIEND IN AN UNFRIENDLY SEA"

IPS-Northstar is the child company born from the merger of civilian cargo lines Interplanetary Shipping and Northstar.

Space piracy and rogue state actors remain the greatest threat to interstellar shipping lines, costing ship owners trillions in Manna and countless more in their local currencies. After incurring tremendous capital losses due to piracy, IPS and Northstar decided to announce a collaborative merger in order to ensure the safety of all civilian and corporate shipping.

Initially utilizing late-model GMS line mechs, the new IPS-Northstar corporation quickly developed their own makes and models of versatile, durable, modular mech chassis that mount weapon and engineering systems in equal measure. IPS-Northstar mechs are a good choice for pilots who want a tough chassis that's built for close quarters and melee combat where breaching a ship hull might be a possibility. IPS-N mech chassis are built sturdy, meant to take as much damage as they can deal, and then some.

IPS-N is most closely associated with The Albatross, a Cosmopolitan anti-piracy/peacekeeping force known across the galaxy for their long and storied history of humanitarian intervention. IPS- N supports the Albatross materially, providing them with chassis, ships, and cutting edge IPS-N tech – the relationship between the two groups is mutually beneficial, and IPS-N makes a point to emphasize their close relationship to the Albatross in marketing campaigns and PR materiels.

IPS-N Mech FRAMEs:

IPS-N DRAKE (Heavy Assault) IPS-N BLACKBEARD (Melee) IPS-N TORTUGA (CQB) IPS-N NELSON (Mobile Melee) IPS-N LANCASTER (Repair/Support) IPS-N VLAD (Special Assault) IPS-N RALEIGH (Line mech)

36.1 IPS-N Pilot Gear

IPS-N Pilot Gear

Name Tags Range Damage Rarity

"Peacekeeper" R35 Limited (4), Sidearm 3 2 explosive 1

Hackiron Reliable 1, Inaccurate Threat 1 3 kinetic 2

Ripjack - Threat 1, 2 kinetic 3 Thrown 4

Siege Hammer Loading, AP, * Threat 1 4 kinetic 3

Prism Gun Inaccurate Cone 3 2 energy 4

Pilot Weapons

*See Entry

Hackiron This blade uses an ultra-dense carbon polymer to magnify the brute strength from hard suits to crude but

brutal effect. Made popular by security forces and pirates both, the hackiron-type saw sword was put into heavy use in early micro/null gravity melee combat

where mass is not always a necessary consideration, gravity can fluctuate, and it is likely that any combat will be powered combat.

A pilot must be wearing armor with the armor tag to even wield this weapon

"Peacekeeper" R35 IPS-N's Peacekeeper model R35 is a popular option from their ARGONAUT line of luxury/collector goods.

Handcrafted by IPS-N gunsmith artisans, the Peacekeeper model R35 is fashioned after ancient pre- collapse frontier weaponry: functional, reliable, and simple in its action, the P-R35 hides its expertly crafted interior elements under its simple matte finish. It is a statement weapon, functional, that can be chambered

for heavy slugs, self-propelled microrockets, or single-core hotshots.

Prism Gun

A common secondary weapon found among stellar security forces and pirates, a prism gun is a shotgun analog, a blend between the kinetic and the exotic that projects a superheated blast of synthetic-crystalline nanoflechettes when fired. Ineffective against hardened targets, it is nevertheless a popular choice as a

finishing option should a hardened targets external armor be breached; when fired into compartments, between armor joints, or into confined spaces with soft targets, the prism gun is a terribly deadly weapon.

Ripjack Another standardized utility weapon born from early micro/null-grav combat, ripjacks are employed both as a last-result method of locomotion and a distance-closing utility weapon. Offered both as a handheld

launcher and an integrated hardsuit system, the ripjacks are fired using gaussian acceleration to create as light a Newtonian feedback as possible when used in null-grav.

The ripjack can be used as a Thrown 4 weapon against a human sized, non-mech target in range, immobilizing them on hit instead of dealing damage until the end of next round. It can also be used as a

regular grappling hook.

Siege Hammer

When faced with sealed bulkheads in O rich environments, boarding teams needed a way to tear down 2

doors without potentially catastrophic explosions – enter the siege hammer, or Nutcracker, as it became known to forces that employed it. Requiring two hands to wield effectively, and held like a battering ram, it

cocks and primes a superheated cylinder of ultra-hard alloy that fires on activation to punch through even the thickest armor.

While wielding this weapon, your pilot cannot take the boost action.

Clothing and Armor

Name Tags Bonuses Armor Evasion/ Sp Rarit E- d y defense

Combat Webbing Upgrade Bonus weapon - - - 1

WAYLAND Mobile Cuirass Armor +3 HP, Increased Mobility 0 10/10 4 2

DURENDAL Mobile Cuirass Armor +3 HP, Unarmed attack 1 8/8 4 2

CALADBOLG Mobile Cuirass Armor +5 HP 2 7/7 3 4

Goliath Weave Upgrade Bonus HP, increased - - - 3 strength

*See Entry

CALADBOLG Mobile Cuirass

The CALADBOLG-MC is a heavy tactical hardsuit, with plated armor coverings, an integrated powered exoskeleton, and hardpoints for systems, integrated weapons, external power sources, and high-fidelity chassis links; it is fully sealed, modular, and hardened from radiation and other HAZMAT threats. The

CALADBOLG-MC boasts one of the highest survival rates of all hardsuits in the field and is known for its reliability and durability. No fancy tricks with this one, the CALADBOLG is heavy, simple, and does its job.

Combat Webbing A series of straps and combat gear that allows the wearer to bring an extra weapon into battle past the 1-2

normally allowed. If you like pouches, this one's for you.

DURENDAL Mobile Cuirass

IPS-N's DURENDAL-MC hardsuit is a popular choice for frontline marines, security forces, and mercenaries who expect to see high-fragmentation, high-kinetic combat. Built on top of a base, sealed suit of mixed anti-ballistic weave and insulated cordage, the DURENDAL features sloped core and dorsal plating, leg and

groin plating, brachial plating with mounts for integrated systems and weapons, compatibility with any IPS- N helm, and total powered-system integration. the DURENDAL is IPS-N's signature frontline hardsuit, and through its modularity it is well-suited to space and terrestrial movement.

Even while unarmed, a pilot wearing a Durendal counts as having a sidearm (1 kinetic damage, sidearm, range 3) and a light melee weapon (1 kinetic damage, sidearm, threat 1). They don't count against

weapons a pilot can take with them on a mission.

Goliath weave

Goliath Weave is an innovative new approach to the standard IPS-N exoskeleton. A product of IPS-N's R&D campus on Vela, Goliath Weave is a woven, miniaturized, fiber-adjacent mesh augmentation that can be layered over extant structures in order to boost physical durability and strength.

A pilot must be wearing armor to benefit from this enhancement. While wearing this armor, a pilot gains +3 HP. They can lift, drag, or push items other than mechs up to size 1.

WAYLAND Mobile Cuirass The WAYLAND-MC builds off of IPS-N's DUREN-DAL platform, stripping some of the integrated weapons

and systems and replacing them with a system of integrated grapples and an impulse pack, which allows for limited periods of thrust-assisted mobility.

The WAYLAND-MC has an integrated grapple system and short-burst jetpack, allowing a pilot to fly their speed when they take the boost action (the pilot must land by the end of their turn or fall). The grapple has a range of 4 and can also be used to cling to walls, snag on to items, etc.

Miscellaneous

Name Tags Description Rarity

K-Cal Wafer Upgrade Provides a full day's worth of sustenance in compact form. 1 Nobody can vouch for the taste.

Null-Rad Caps Upgrade Anti-radiation medication for extended interstellar trips. If 1 taken in concentrated form, a pilot can pass through areas of high or even deadly radiation for around an hour, with relative safety.

Lifesaver Upgrade A personal transponder and vacuum movement device, in 1 case you get spaced. The lifesaver compacts to a tiny pack that can be strapped on the body, provides good EVA movement, and once deployed has power for several days.

Vascular Stabilizers Gear A custom drug cocktail that helps the human body deal 2 with combat-rated gee forces; ensures blood movement to brain, mixed with a suite of anti-nausea and anti-fatigue drugs. When you take them, until the end of the current challenge, you can re-roll any Down and Out check you make, though you must choose the second result.

*See Entry

36.2 IPS-N Core Bonuses

IPS-N CORE BONUSES

When you choose a core bonus every 3 license levels, you can pick a bonus from this list as long as you have at least 3 license levels in IPS-N licenses for each IPS-N bonus you have. For example, if you have 6 points in IPS-N licenses, you could take up to 2 bonuses. IPS-N bonuses are focused on increasing durability, survivability, and melee combat.

These bonuses apply to any mech you create each time you create it, and each can be chosen only once.

BRIAREOS frame reinforcement The BRIAREOS is the newest development in IPS-N's line of near-fail frame upgrades, templates designed

to maximize what pilots can get out of frames before the need for a reprint or catastrophic failure. BRIAREOS fabricates a frame that is superlight, woven throughout with Goliath Weave meshing, to

increase the resilience of all inorganic components.

Your mech has resistance to all damage when it has 1 or less points of structure remaining.

FOMORIAN frame reinforcement

The FOMORIAN is an up-scaled version of the stock IPS-N template, following guidelines suggested by long-haul Cosmopolitans in need of robust micro/macro-impact protection, as well as additional brachial/ manipulator needs.

Your mech goes up in size to the next increment (1/2 ¿ 1 ¿ 2 ¿ 3), up to size 3 maximum. It gains +1 threat with melee weapons, and cannot be knocked prone, pulled, or knocked back by targets smaller than itself (as part of a grapple, for example).

GYGES frame reinforcement

Gyges is a frame upgrade built for combat, with finely tuned stabilizers and a robust suite of targeting software and hardware included at-fabrication.

Your mech gains +1 accuracy on all hull checks

Reinforced Frame

The addition of redundant shock-absorption systems increases the survivability of a pilot in combat, flight, and kinetic situations.

Your mech gains +6 HP

Sloped Plating

A simple, common enough option among pilots with the necessary licensing, IPS-N's armor integration fabrication reduces the plating coverage gaps in stock systems by a significant percentage.

Your mech gains +1 armor, up to the maximum (+4).

Titanomachy Mesh A doubled overlay of Goliath Weave, fabricated in identified stress points, as well as beefed-up

specifications, dramatically improve the baseline functionality of this mech.

1/round when you successfully ram or grapple a mech, you can make an additional ram or grapple action as a free action. When you knock targets back with a melee attack, you knock them back 1 additional space.

36.3 IPS-N Blackbeard

IPS-N BLACKBEARD

The IPS-N BLACKBEARD is IPS-N's solution for an aggressive, front-facing, preemptive anti-piracy platform. The BLACKBEARD license range is built for environments where combustible kinetic weaponry is

either useless, too dangerous, or would prompt unnecessary collateral damage. Its distinctive, slim frame is a evocative of its speed and reduces its radar profile, making it hard to track and harder still to hit. The BLACKBEARD platform has been split into two model lines, the IPS-N/BB-L, which is the standard

production line model, and the IPS-N/BB-Sk, a prototype limited print run of BB models purpose-built to contain IPS-N's SEKHMET NHP platform.

License:

I. Synthetic Muscle Netting, Chain Axe

II. BLACKBEARD FRAME, Flechette Launcher, Nanocarbon Sword

III. Reinforced Grapples, SEKHMET class NHP

BLACKBEARD

HP: 12 Evasion: 8 Speed: 5 Heat Cap: 4 Sensors: 5

Armor: 1 E-Defense: 6 Size: 1 Repair Cap: 4 Tech Attack: -2

TRAITS:

Cable Grapple: The Blackbeard can initiate grapples up to range 5 away. If it successfully grapples its target, the Blackbeard is immediately pulled adjacent to its target by the straightest path possible (if it can't move adjacent to its target, the grapple breaks).

Lock/Kill Subsystem: The Blackbeard can boost and take reactions while grappling.

Exposed reactor: The Blackbeard gets +1 Difficulty on engineering checks

SYSTEM POINTS: 5

MOUNTS:

Flex mount Main Mount Heavy Mount

FRAME system

Assault Grapples The IPS-N branded assault grappling system is a proven, class-leading system rated to handle hauling, supporting, and securing chassis up to Galactic Standard Size 4. Grapple heads are interchangeable and can be swapped for hard or soft targets, electrified, or loaded with codespike systems to incapacitate targets at a distance.

Active (Requires 1 Core Power): Omni-harpoon Quick Action

This one-shot system fires harpoon-like grapples at any number of targets within line of sight and within range 5. Those targets must pass a hull check with 1 difficulty or be knocked prone and pulled adjacent to your mech, or as far as possible towards your mech without being obstructed. All targets are then immobilized until the end of your next turn

Synthetic Muscle Netting

IPS-N's proprietary Synthetic Muscle Netting is a field-proven augmentation compatible with existing IPS-N

FRAMEs. A spray-on catalytic/structural enhancement, the SMN system boosts manipulator and propulsion subsystems by roughly 25The spray-on catalytic also acts as a mild impact-absorption and thermal insulation layer; IPS-N

recommends pilots only apply the SMN system to interior components and practice frequent cleaning to prevent septic-analogous decay.

2 SP, Unique When grappling or ramming, you always count as the same size as your opponent if your opponent is larger than you, and larger than your opponent if they are the same size or smaller. Your lifting and dragging capacity doubles.

Chain Axe

A simple tactical scale-up of a felling axe, IPS-N's chain axe is a serrated, powered chainblade hardlinked to a chassis' power core. The teeth of the IPS-N chain axe are tungsten-tipped, hardened to chew through

hard and soft targets both. It is an effective weapon and utility tool, and is often used by boarding parties to make initial breaches in ship and station bulkheads.

Main Melee

Threat 1

Reliable 2

1d6 damage

On a critical hit, your target is Shredded until the end of your current turn

Nanocarbon Sword

IPS-N's nanocarbon sword is a new spin on an old essential. Embedded nanosensors along the length of

the blade capture a full spectrum of data while in use, recording to cloud-based Omninet storage banks for after-action review. Live feedback is relayed to the user, interpreted by their equipped sensor suite, and real-time adjustments are made to the molecular composition of the blade edge.

Heavy Melee

Reliable 3

Threat 2

1d6+4 kinetic damage

Flechette Launcher The IPS-N Flechette Launcher utilizes a hive-analogous construction to project a total soft target kill zone in

a dome around the user, denying personnel the opportunity to engage in aggressive infantry-tier actions.

Auxiliary CQB

Burst 1

1 Kinetic Damage

This weapon deals 3 damage instead of 1 against grappled targets or targets with the biological tag.

Reinforced Grapples 2 SP Grapple movement: Once a turn, your mech can use this grapple when it makes a regular move, allowing it to Fly as long as it moves in a straight line and there is a clear path. It must end its move on an object or surface or fall, but can grab on to that surface (even vertical or overhanging) as long as it remains immobile. If it's knocked prone or knocked back while grabbing onto a surface this way, it falls. Drag Down: These grapples can also be used to target another actor within range 5 as a quick action. Make a contested hull check with your target. The loser is knocked prone.

SEKHMET-class NHP

The IPS-N SEKHMET Co-pilot is ready to be your First Mate! SEKHMET comes standard with remote, Omninet, IR tag, and voice control systems and is fully versed in all current and legacy IPS-N mech cores.

Your own SEKHMET system will learn with you, and should the worst happen, will continue as you would, running an emulated neural net doppelgänger to control your IPS-N chassis until forced or voluntary

shutdown.

SEKHMET-class systems tend to have aggressive attitudes and dark sense of humor; pilots often like to call

them a berserker system, a dangerous NHP that values combat efficacy over its pilot's well being.

3 SP, Unique AI Your mech gains the AI property. In addition, gain the SEKHMET protocol:

SEKHMET protocol Protocol

• All melee Critical Hits do an additional +1d6 bonus damage • You can make a skirmish action using only melee weapons as a Free Action at any point during your turn.

While active, you lose direct control of your mech. Your mech uses all available actions and movement to first attempt to get into melee range of the closest target (friend or foe!) and then attack them using all weapons. If your mech isn't in melee range of a target, it attempts to use all actions to get into melee range, even if it could still fire a ranged weapon using those actions. You can decide to overcharge your mech or not, but if you do, it uses the overcharge action for the same purposes.

To end this protocol, you must pass a successful engineering check at the start of your turn. Otherwise, this protocol will continue until your mech is destroyed. Death or incapacitation of the pilot will not stop it.

36.4   IPS-N Drake

IPS-N DRAKE

The IPS-N DRAKE is the backbone of any proactive trade security/anti-piracy force and represents the manufacturers first foray into military-grade mechs. It is a massive frame, simian in appearance, built around a single-cast bulkhead sloped and reinforced to handle sustained incoming and outgoing fire.

A dense heavily armored chassis, the standard IPS-N DRAKE fleet license includes a high-velocity, high- fragment assault cannon for suppressing and over-whelming their targets, and a heavy kinetic/ablative

barrier shield for defense. More advanced models feature scaled-up weaponry and armor, including the notorious multi-barrel Leviathan cannon.

License:

I. Assault Cannon, Concussion Missiles

II. DRAKE FRAME, Aegis Shield Generator, IPS-N Argonaut Shield

III. Portable Bunker, Leviathan Heavy Assault Cannon

DRAKE

HP: 8 Evasion: 6 Speed: 3 Heat Cap: 5 Sensors: 10

Armor: 3 E-Defense: 6 Size: 2 Repair Cap: 4 Tech Attack: +0

TRAITS:

Heavy Frame: The Drake cannot be knocked back or prone by actors smaller than itself

Blast Plating: The Drake has resistance to damage from blast, line, and cone attacks

Guardian: Adjacent allied mechs can use the Drake for Light Cover

Slow: The Drake has +1 Difficulty on agility checks

SYSTEM POINTS: 5

MOUNTS:

Main Mount Main Mount Heavy Mount

CORE SYSTEM: FORTRESS

Active (requires 1 Core Power): Protocol

When you activate this protocol, you plant your shield and deploy stabilizers, becoming more like a fortified emplacement than a mech. While this system is active, your mech is immobilized. Two line 2 sections of heavy cover unfold, drawn from your mech in any direction. Your mech grants and benefits from heavy cover for allied mechs while this system is active and also grants any allies that benefit from this cover its immunity to knockback, prone, and resistance to blast, line, and cone attacks. This system can be deactivated at the start of your turn but cannot be reactivated without more core power.

Assault Cannon

The IPS-N assault cannon is a deep-cooled autocannon, able to be fielded as a fixed weapon or manipulator-compatible platform. This autocannon can be fed by box-magazine or belt, is simple in its

functionality, and is a mainstay among IPS-N chassis fleet orders.

Main Cannon

1 heat (self), Overcharged

Range 8

1d6+2 Kinetic Damage

Concussion Missiles Main Launcher

Range 5

Knockback 2

1d3 explosive damage

Targets struck by these missiles must pass a hull check or become impaired until the end of their next turn.

Aegis Shield Generator

The Aegis is a portable electromagnetic shield generator, a way to establish a momentary safezone to

withstand an incoming bombardment or environmental hazard.

2 SP, Unique, Limited (1) Shield, Deployable, Quick Action Once planted in a free adjacent space, this size 1 generator creates a burst 2 zone around it until the end of the current scene. All allied targets at least partly covered by the zone gain +1 armor (up to 4). The generator has 10 HP but benefits from its own armor bonus, and deactivates once used up.

IPS-N Argonaut Shield

2 SP, Quick Action As a quick action, this heavy over-arm shield can be used to protect an adjacent actor from incoming fire, giving them resistance to all damage as long as they stay adjacent to you. However, your mech takes the half that was resisted. The effect breaks if they break adjacency, and you must repeat this action to regain the effect.

Portable Bunker

A simple deployable, the "Portable Bunker" is actually a series of unfolding single-use printer sheets: flat-

pack pouches of inert non-newtonian fluid that, when deployed, are triggered into a rigid structure capable of withstanding incredible force.

2 SP, Limited (1) Deployable, Quick Action

To activate this system, choose a clear 4x4 space adjacent to you and take a quick action. At the start of your next turn, this system unfolds into a fortified emplacement that grants heavy cover to anyone within the area from all directions, as long as they are fully covered by the area. Actors inside also have resistance to damage from blast, line, and cone attacks that originate from outside the bunker.

The bunker is open topped and can be entered and exited at will. If attacked the bunker has evasion 5 and 40 HP. It cannot be moved or deactivated once deployed.

Leviathan Heavy Assault Cannon

The Leviathan AC is a massive rotary autocannon, an enclosed multi-barrel automatic weapon fed by an

external reservoir, usually dorsally mounted on the chassis carrying it. At its current chambering, the Leviathan should only be fired on automatic when absolutely necessary; IPS-N is currently working on a solution to meet the cannon's needs remotely. IPS-N recommends outfitting willing squadmates with extra

reservoirs, should their chassis have room to support it.

Superheavy Cannon

2 heat (self)

Range 8

1d6 kinetic damage

Unlike other superheavies, this weapon can be fired as part of a skirmish action with its listed profile.

As a quick action, you can spin up this weapon's barrels. While this weapon's barrels are spinning, your mech is Slowed, but this weapon's damage increases to 4d6+4 kinetic, it must be fired with a barrage action like a regular superheavy, and it gains Reliable 4. You can stop the spin-up as a free action at the start of your turn, but lose the increased damage until you spin the weapon up again.

36.5   IPS-N Lancaster

IPS-N LANCASTER

The IPS-N LANCASTER is a mil-spec variant of an older IPS-N design, modernized and streamlined for military/operator use. The LANCASTER features multiple redundant systems and object/environment-

interact projectors to facilitate pinpoint accuracy when engaging with delicate systems, damaged or intact. Commonly piloted by sapper and engineer-designate pilots in frontline support/specialist roles.

License:

I. Restock Drone, Cable Winch System

II. LANCASTER FRAME, MULE harness, Sealant Spray

III. Plasma Cutter, Aceso Swarm

LANCASTER

HP: 6 Evasion: 8 Speed: 6 Heat Cap: 7 Sensors: 10

Armor: 1 E-Defense: 8 Size: 2 Repair Cap: 10 Tech Attack: +0

TRAITS:

Redundant Systems: Other friendly mechs of the Lancaster's choice that are adjacent to it can spend the Lancaster's repairs as if they were their own

Combat Repair: The Lancaster can spend a full action and 4 repairs in combat to repair a destroyed mech, returning it to 1 structure and 1 HP

SYSTEM POINTS: 8

MOUNTS:

Main/Aux Mount

CORE system

Latch Drone

Known colloquially as a 'Wingman' drone, latch drones are companion drones carried upon and deployed from a chassis. Pilots are advised against developing attachments to these drones, given their high casualty rate.

Integrated Mount:

Latch Drone Auxiliary Launcher

Range 8

Make a grit roll vs evasion 8 and target any friendly mech in range (still take cover and line of sight into account). On hit, your target can spend up to 1 repair to heal.

Active (requires 1 Core Power):

Supercharger

Quick action

You fire your drone at a friendly mech in range, where it clamps onto the target. For the rest of this scene, you take 1 heat at the start of your turn, but the targeted mech gains +1 Accuracy on all attacks and checks, and is immune to the impaired, jammed, Slowed, and immobilized conditions. This effect ends if you or the targeted mech is stunned or shut down. While this system is active, you cannot fire your drone as a weapon (using the passive of this system).

Restock Drone

A simple, reliable, and sturdy drone mounting a printer, a restock drone allows for limited logistic capability through autosalvage: the bulk of the drone is RawMat, a generalized mix of silicates and metallic materials meant to be processed for high-yield printing. Pilots often call restock drones a "mech snack".

2 SP, Limited (2)

Drone As a quick action, you can set this drone down in any adjacent space. After your turn ends, the drone primes. Any allied mech that moves adjacent to the drone can activate it as an interaction. That mech can then cool 1d6 heat, reload all weapons with the loading tag, and end one condition affecting it. The drone is then consumed, deactivating and disintegrating.

Cable Winch System

A winch system consists of a spool of nanocarbon-weave cable mounted externally, and recovery subroutine software uploaded onto the recovery mech's datamind.

1 SP

Quick action As a quick action, you can attach the cables to an adjacent mech. If the mech is shut down, stunned, or a willing target, this action is automatically successful, otherwise it can make a hull check to resist this effect. Once attached, your mech and the attached mech cannot move more than 5 range away from each other. One mech can tow the other, but is Slowed while doing so, and must successfully pass a hull check to do so. Any mech can make a successful melee or improvised attack to remove the cables (removed on a hit, the cables have evasion 10). The

cables can also be attached to the environment or any object. They are 10 length when used this way and can take a combined size of 6 in strain if using them to climb, etc, before they break.

MULE harness The Multiple User, Light Entanglement harness is a mass-produced version of a common battlefield modification that allows friendly soldiers to ride along on friendly chassis. Some systems are large and sturdy enough to allow for smaller chassis to accompany larger chassis; these are typically employed in High Altitude, Low Orbit insertions to reduce radar signatures.

2 SP, Unique Your mech has mounts, straps, and hard points built to carry a total number of actors whose total size is less than your own (so size 1 = 1

size 1 actor, two size 1/2 actors). Actors of your choice that are adjacent to you can spend a quick action to mount your mech. While mounting your mech, they occupy your mechs's space, move when you move and benefit from light cover. Any area of effect attacks that target your space will also target your rider. If your mech is knocked prone or is destroyed, they fall off into an adjacent space. They can dismount by moving normally off your mech any time.

Sealant Spray

2 SP Quick Action

This system can be used on any actor or free space within range 5 and line of sight. It has different effects depending on what it is used on

Hostile actor: Make a ranged attack vs the target. On hit, the target is Slowed until the start of your next turn but immediately ends any Burn affecting them.

Empty space: This creates a blast 2 area around the targeted space. The area becomes difficult terrain for the rest of this scene and this puts out any fires in the area.

Allied actor: Your target is Slowed until the start of your next turn but can immediately end any Burn effecting them.

Plasma Cutter

Plasma cutters were tools first, simple blades built to toggle and sustain a plasma sheath to make cutting metal easier for its user. Repeated ad-hoc use of cutters as a personal defense weapon to repel pirate

boarding actions convinced IPS-N of the need for a mil-spec variant of the civilian tool. They developed the Cutter, now in its second generation. The Cutter MkII is hard-lined into the mech's power core, with a port to attach power packs in case of cord severance. The cutting edge can be shortened to a knife variant, but

is most popular in its "cutlass" option, a middling length variant that allows for a balance of reach and

maneuverability in close quarters.

Auxiliary Melee

1 heat (self)

Threat 1

1 energy damage +1 heat + Burn 1

Against objects and the environment, the cutter deals 10 AP energy damage

Aceso Swarm

The IPS-N Aceso Swarm system is a useful triage measure to address scoring and minor mechanical damage that results from combat engagements or negative environmental interaction. Due its low

processor demand, an Aceso Swarm can be controlled by even a comp/con unit; this allows the pilot to concentrate on more complex repairs or immediate threat neutralization.

3 SP, Unique Drone, Quick action Once per round, as a quick action at any point during your turn, your mech takes 1d6 heat and one other mech of your choice in your sensor range can spend 1 repair to heal.

36.6 IPS-N Nelson

IPS-N NELSON

The IPS-N NELSON brings the close-quarters doctrine espoused by ISP-N to its most pure form. The NELSON is built to brawl in environments too volatile for firearms or when ordnance has been exhausted.

With its functional size, the NELSON can attack fast while remaining a difficult target to track. Layers of fractal-fold BULWARK plating allows for ceramic-analogous carbon flaking, effectively nulling the impact of incoming solid-state fire by dispersing kinetic energy across a rounded hull. This null-k plating protects the

pilot from impact trauma, allowing for sustained combat efficacy in high-trade scenarios.

The NELSON is an iconic IPS-N chassis, known across the galaxy as the FRAME of choice for the

Albatross, the Cosmopolitan interstellar anti-piracy agency. Their distinctive white, gold, and red livery and mastery of the war pike – as well as seeming agelessness due to time dilation – has won both the Albatross and the NELSON a venerated place in Diasporan lore – and secured the Albatross an

endorsement contract with IPS-N in perpetuity.

License:

I. War Pike, Bulwark Mods

II. NELSON FRAME, Thermal Charge, Armor Lock System

III. Power knuckles, RAMJET

NELSON

HP: 8 Evasion: 10 Speed: 5 Heat Cap: 6 Sensors: 10

Armor: 0 E-Defense: 8 Size: 1 Repair Cap: 5 Tech Attack: +0

TRAITS:

Momentum: After making the boost action, the next melee attack from the Nelson deals +1d6 bonus damage on hit

Skirmisher: After making any attack, the Nelson can move 1 in any direction. This movement doesn't provoke reactions, ignores engagement, and doesn't count against its movement for the turn. It can't make this move if immobilized or slowed.

SYSTEM POINTS: 6

MOUNTS:

Flex Mount Main/Aux Mount

CORE system

Perpetual Momentum Drive

IPS-N's PMD exploits fighter-tier nearlight spooling to conserve and sustain a passive .000001LS charge, able to be dumped into extant boost systems at the pilot's command. The chassis fielding this system must be heavily adapted through strengthening joints, limbs, and installing a k-comp crash couch to protect the pilot from sudden g force and shear.

Active (requires 1 Core Power): Spool up PMD Protocol Once activated, this system remains active until the rest of the current scene. While its active,

the free movement from the Nelson's Skirmisher trait increases to 4.

War Pike

A War Pike is a simple weapon. A long haft, topped with a dense, slim point, meant to puncture armor. Derivative of a mining pylon, the modern war pike is a sturdy, balanced, and reliable weapon, perfect for a charge.

Main Melee

Thrown 5, Threat 3, Knockback 1

1d6 kinetic damage

Bulwark Mods

A mark of pride for IPS-N, all proprietary mech cores feature IPS-N's Quick-Mod system, a modular, legacy- compatible system of joints, hardpoints, and internal slots that make installing upgrades simple.

1 SP Your mech has extended or armored arms or legs, redundant motor systems, or is otherwise reinforced for harsh terrain. Your mech ignores difficult terrain.

Armor Lock System

IPS-N's Armor Lock System is a total-body modification for a mech core that provides additional chassis stability when pilots are faced with a situation that puts their core under greater-than-anticipated stress.

1 SP, Unique

2 heat (self) When you take the Brace reaction, you can activate this system. Until the end of your following turn, enemy attacks targeting you are made with 1 additional Difficulty, you can't fail agility or hull checks, be knocked back, grappled, knocked prone, or moved by any external force smaller than size 5. You end any grapples currently affecting you.

Thermal Charge

Pilots have long made this popular modification to their pikes. Now, IPS-N is offering these pilots' modifications as a licensed and quality-tested suite for pan-galactic printing. A pike modified with a charge

– often colloquially called a "Fire Pike"– is a simple plasma projector integrated into war pike, tuned to project a plasma sheath over the pike's head.

2 SP Mod

Limited (3) This mod can only be applied to a melee weapon. As a free action when you hit with any melee attack, you may spend a charge of this system to activate the shaped charge on your weapon and deal +1d6 bonus explosive damage.

Power Knuckles

A simple weapon system, IPS-N's power knuckles are a popular modification for pilots of CQB mech cores. Whether as shaped studs, hyperdense knuckles, or a series of magnetically-accelerated micro-rams, power

knuckles amplify the already incredible hitting power of a mech core.

Auxiliary Melee

Threat 1

1d3+1 explosive damage

On a Critical Hit, your target must pass a hull check or be knocked prone

RAMJET Air. Air and momentum. There's a threshold that veteran Nelson pilots know well, the Point of Endless Momentum. When you get moving fast enough, in the right atmosphere, the air itself feeds into auxiliary ports on the chassis, compressing, howling out like a demon's angry scream. The Point of Endless Momentum is a giant's hand on your chest and a god's chariot under your feet and you feel like you can outrun light itself and there's nothing else like it.

3 SP, Unique

Protocol

2 heat (self)

Until the start of your next turn, your mech gains +2 speed when boosting and its melee attacks (including rams, grapples, etc) gain knock back +2. However, your mech must move its maximum speed each time it moves and can only move in straight lines (it can stop if it would collide with an obstacle or enemy, and it can change direction between movements).

36.7   IPS-N Raleigh

IPS-N RALEIGH

The IPS-N RALEIGH, more so than any other mech in IPS-N's core line, is meant to meet any enemy, any

where, in any combat scenario. The RALEIGH is an all-rounder build that trends towards the midrange. It is commonly outfitted with an auxiliary hand cannon for ranged capability, a massive hammer to deal with anything that gets close, and the iconic, chest-mounted MJOLNIR cannon.

License:

I. Hand Cannon, Breaching Charges

II. RALEIGH FRAME, ROLAND Chamber, Bolt Thrower

III. UNCLE class NHP, Kinetic Hammer

RALEIGH

HP: 10 Evasion: 8 Speed: 4 Heat Cap: 5 Sensors: 10

Armor: 1 E-Defense: 8 Size: 1 Repair Cap: 5 Tech Attack: +0

TRAITS:

Full Metal Jacket: If the Raleigh makes no attack rolls during its turn, it can re-load all weapons with the loading tag at the end of its turn as a free action.

Shielded Magazines: The Raleigh can still make ranged attacks if it is Jammed.

SYSTEM POINTS: 5

MOUNTS:

Aux/Aux Flex Mount Heavy Mount

FRAME system

IPS-N M35 'Mjolnir' cannon

IPS-N's M35 MJOLNIR cannon is a carryover from Northstar's WATCH-MAN line of defensive weapons, reworked for frontline combat. The MJOLNIR is a hard-mount, multi-barrel auxiliary cannon that uses magnetic acceleration

to fire stacks of airburst projectiles at its target. It is an impulse weapon, a system tied to a pilot's second-tier neural processes as dictated and coached by their partner Comp/Con or NHP; even in death, a pilot's MJOLNIR will continue to identify and attack hostile targets until total systemic failure. For this reason, the MJOLNIR is often referred to as a deadgun, one of many such weapons common among CQB-oriented pilots.

Integrated Mount:

M35

Main CQB

Range 5, Threat 3

4 kinetic damage

Active (Requires 1 Core Power):

Thunder God

Protocol

Until the end of the current challenge, if you didn't fire your M35 on your turn, it gains 2 more rounds in the chamber at the end your turn (you can use a d6 to track this). It starts with 0 rounds in the chamber. When you next fire the weapon, it fires all chambers, for 4 damage per chamber. The M35 has six chambers, for a maximum of 24 damage. If 4 or more chambers are fired at once, this weapon gains the AP tag and any target struck must pass a hull check or be knocked prone.

Hand Cannon

The IPS-N HAND CANNON is a licensed version of GMS's Pattern I Pistol, chambered for a heavier caliber of round. This modification requires a change from the belt-fed system of the P1P to a magazine-based system, limiting the number of rounds that a mech can load at a time.

Auxiliary CQB

Loading, Reliable 1

Range 5, Threat 3

1d6 damage

Breaching Charge A breach/blast charge is simply a shaped, milspec pattern of IPS-N's generalist/civilian blasting charge,

meant to crack asteroids. The IPS-N BB features a far more pure blend of high explosives designed to cause massive traumatic damage to mechs and other hardened structures.

2 SP, Limited (2) Grenade, Mine If thrown as a quick action, the charge explodes on impact. If planted as a mine, it can be detonated as another quick action by whoever planted it (or detonates normally when a target moves adjacent). The charge deals 2d6 Energy damage to targets in a burst 1 area around the charge. Targets can pass an agility check to reduce this damage by half. Against objects, this charge does 10 AP kinetic damage.

ROLAND Chamber Packed into sealed, self-contained cylinders, IPS-N's ROLAND rounds are heavy shells purpose-built for any kinetic weapon that can accept cylindrical magazines. Packed with a non-O2 dependent accelerant, ROLAND Chambers can be used to reliably send air-or-impact burst shells downrange.

For use in outdoor or Certain-Kill environments; use extreme caution when firing in pressurized spaces.

2 SP, Unique When you reload, your very next attack deals +1d6 bonus damage as explosive damage and targets affected by this bonus damage must pass a hull check with 1 difficulty or be knocked prone.

Bolt Thrower IPS-N's bolt thrower is a milspec variant of a civilian mining tool. A bolt thrower fires self-propelled

explosive bolts that can be triggered manually, on a timer, on impact, on designated-depth penetration, on proximity, on on some combination of any allowable parameter.

Heavy Rifle

Loading, Range 8

Reliable 2

2d6 kinetic + 1d6 explosive damage

UNCLE-class NHP

IPS-N's UNCLE NHP is the result of the DARKSTAR Program, an NHP think tank funded by IPS-N's Administrator Partnership. UNCLE is a pocket-AI, meant to be bound to a weapon system and assist its owner in peak-efficiency operation. UNCLE AI's are currently available only as a beta system and, as such,

owners are expected to accept all pushed updates; IPS-N waives culpability for any sub-optimal performance of UNCLE systems not kept current via Omninet updater. UNCLE NHPs are (perhaps unfairly) regarded as lesser compared to their compatriots and their inferiority

complexes tend to display themselves as unstable personalities.

3 SP, Unique Mod Choose 1 weapon - The weapon and its associate systems gain an NHP that has control over that specific weapon. This is not a full AI and can't control your mech or become unshackled (and doesn't have the AI tag).

It can attack by itself once on your turn as a free action, using the mech's attack bonuses but with +2 Difficulty. It can't fire a weapon that has already been fired this turn, and if you fire a weapon with UNCLE you cannot use it until the start of your next turn.

Kinetic Hammer A Kinetic Hammer is, in the trend of IPS-N weapons, a simple tool. A supermassive, shaped head fused to

a long haft, the Hammer impacts with enough force to create massively traumatic pressure waves upon landing a successful blow.

Heavy Melee

Reliable 3

Threat 1

2d6+2 kinetic damage

36.8   IPS-N Tortuga

IPS-N TORTUGA

The TORTUGA is IPS-N's short-to-medium range core-line mech. Conceived, tested, and perfected in the void of deep trade space, the TORTUGA is made to breach and clear the spinal columns of capital ships, carriers, and hostile stations. The TORTUGA is built to occupy space, filling hallways with its angular bulk. It

defends just as effectively as it attacks, often used in a battering-ram role by boarding parties and ship/ stationboard marines. Conversely, the Tortuga is often employed in a defensive posture by marines seeking to repel boarding parties, often using its ablative brachial structures to shield troopers from incoming fire.

License:

I. Automatic Shotgun, Siege Ram

II. TORTUGA FRAME, Throughbolt Rounds, Daisy Cutter

III. Pneumatic Hammer, Hyper Dense Armor

TORTUGA

HP: 10 Evasion: 6 Speed: 3 Heat Cap: 6 Sensors: 15

Armor: 2 E-Defense: 10 Size: 2 Repair Cap: 6 Tech Attack: +1

TRAITS:

REFLEX: The Tortuga gets +1 Accuracy to all overwatch attacks

Guardian: Allied actors adjacent to the Tortuga gain light cover

SYSTEM POINTS: 6

MOUNTS:

Main Mount Heavy Mount

CORE system

SENTINEL

IPS-N security teams are no strangers to the danger of ship-to-ship or ship-to-station boarding actions. Tight corridors, unstable gravity, dark environments, hard vacuum, and the dual threat of organic and inorganic opposition forces make boarding actions some of the most deadly engagements (by percentage) that one could participate in – the winning side, according to IPS-N's internal metrics, should expect at least 30

To lessen the cognitive burden of pilots and any NHPs or comp/cons they have installed in their chassis, IPS-N developed the SENTINEL co-pilot subsentient partition. The Sentinel is a simple subsentient: a flash-homunculus of an aggregate-intelligence compiled through thousands of after-action reports from boarding actions, debriefings, and volunteer donors. Not a true AI, nor an NHP, the SENTINEL is a robust tactical program similar to a smart weapon, though without the need to cycle it presents certain tactical advantages – namely, the ability for limited learning and best-guess predictive capabilities alongside its pilot. SENTINELs are largely plain in their personalities, such that they develop, and are a favorite of pilots for their no-nonsense attitude and crisp, efficient counsel.

The SENTINEL is currently under review by a joint USB/UDoJ-HR committee, but no formal stay on production has yet been issued.

Active (Require 1 Core Power): Hyper-reflex mode Protocol

For the rest of this combat, your threat with ranged weapons increases to 5 if it was less than 5. You can make one additional overwatch attack between your turns, and any target struck by your overwatch attacks is immediately immobilized until the start of its next turn.

Automatic Shotgun

The IPS-N Deck-Sweeper Automatic Shotgun is a belt-fed scattergun, a favorite of marine pilots aboard stations and capital ships. It's operation is simple and straightforward: charge, point, and fire. The single-barrel constriction allows for pneumatic absorption, dampening the effect of its incredible recoil, and its belt-fed action accepts many types of shot-and-FRAME ammunition. The DSAS is a mainstay among IPS-N licensed pilots.

Main CQB

Inaccurate

Range 3, Threat 3

2d6 Kinetic Damage

Siege Ram

The Siege Ram is another holdover from IPS-N's pre-merger days. When Bulkheads slam closed and there is a need to get them open, marine pilots mount a siege ram to get the job done. Heavy, dumb, and

unbreakable, the Siege Ram is the universal key. Carried in-hand by a qualified chassis, the IPS-N Siege Ram is a solid metal beam with a wedge tip, meant to be slammed into the seam of a sealed bulkhead door

and driven home, cracking open ships and stations like a can.

2 SP, Unique

Your ram attacks deal 1d3 kinetic damage on hit. Against stationary objects, deployed cover, terrain, walls, or obstacles, your ram attacks instead deal 10 AP kinetic damage.

Throughbolt Rounds

Throughbolt Rounds are a proprietary IPS-N invention. Throughbolts are Tungsten-jacketed, uranium core rounds with projection-activated plasma sheaths. When fired, the rounds ignite and project a superheated

cone of plasma before them, creating a miniature lance effect that ensures multiple-target penetration

through soft and hard surfaces.

2 SP

Mod Choose 1 CQB, cannon, or rifle weapon. When you fire this weapon, draw a line 3 spaces long from your mech, then measure its original range from the end of this line as though the attack was fired from that position (also measure cover and line of sight from this new position for the rest of the attack). This line can easily punch through walls or other barriers. Any targets hit by this line are also hit by the attack. The attack cannot change directions after being fired.

Daisy Cutter

The Daisy Cutter is an effective, if outdated, weapon system for which many marine pilots still place print requisitions. The Daisy Cutter is, essentially, a

massive shotgun: the pilot loads a shaped charge into the breech of the Cutter, drops a packed sabot down the barrel, aims, and fires a mixed hellfire cloud of

flechette darts, bearings, and ignited magnesium strips, clearing any deck it's been fired on.

Heavy CQB

Limited (1)

Cone 5

3d6 kinetic damage.

The blast cloud from firing this weapon lingers until the end of your next turn, providing light cover to any actor in the affected area.

Pneumatic Hammer

Colloquially known as a 'pilebunker', built originally from blast mining equipment, the pneumatic hammer has been refined into a widely feared weapon - a solid-core cylinder cocked and locked in place by a miniaturized gravity well. When fired, the cylinder is propelled forward by a charge of superheated plasma

through a cannon-like shaft, creating enormous kinetic force. Without proper reinforcement, the power created by this weapon will literally tear its wielder's arm off.

Main Melee

Loading

Threat 1

1d3+5 kinetic damage

On a Critical Hit with this weapon, your target must pass a hull check or be stunned until the end of its next turn.

Hyper Dense Armor

IPS-N HyperDense Armor is built for use in space. As the name implies, the HyperDense system is forged without respect to the gravitational constraints mechs may face down a gravity well; many pilots flying

cores equipped with HyperDense armor are shocked to experience the difference in piloting their mechs down a well versus in the null-gravity of space.

3 SP Unique, Protocol, 2 heat (self)

You may activate or deactivate this armor system's activation protocols at the start of your turn. While active, it hardens into a shimmering, reflective surface and offers unparalleled protection, granting you resistance to all damage from attacks further away from range 5 of your mech. However, your mech is Slowed while it is active.

36.9   IPS-N Vlad

IPS-N VLAD

The IPS-N VLAD is a variant of the IPS-N NELSON, built to handle hardened targets that would present

strategic difficulty for the NELSON platform. The VLAD features a suite of myth-inspired weaponry and heavy armor and is meant to take a frontline role, absorbing fire from dangerous targets in order to protect its allies while lining up the perfect shot.

License:

I. Snare Trap, Impact Lance

II. VLAD FRAME, Nail Gun, Caltrop Launcher

III. Combat Drill, Charged Stake

VLAD

HP: 10 Evasion: 8 Speed: 4 Heat Cap: 4 Sensors: 5

Armor: 2 E-Defense: 8 Size: 1 Repair Cap: 4 Tech Attack: +0

TRAITS:

Dismemberment: When the Vlad successfully immobilizes a target, that target is also Shredded for the same duration

Shrike Armor: When the Vlad is attacked by any actor within range 3, the attacker takes 1 AP kinetic damage before they attack

SYSTEM POINTS: 5

MOUNTS:

Flex Mount Main Mount Heavy Mount

CORE system

Shrike Armor A nod to the pre-Fall namesake of the VLAD, Shrike armor plating bristles with shaped spikes, hardened with chromium/tungsten alloy tips. Strategic studding places Shrike tips in high-likelihood kinetic encounter areas: gauntlet covers, manipulator joint covers, shoulder plating, and so on. Primarily a defensive modification, Shrike armor is uncommon among Coreside pilots, and seen as a mark of underdeveloped – if terrifying - tactics.

Active (requires 1 Core Power): Tormentor spines Protocol Until the end of the current challenge, you gain resistance to all damage from within range 3, and your damage from this mech's Shrike Armor trait increases to 3 AP kinetic damage.

Snare Trap The IPS-N WEBJAW Explosively-Accelerated Filament system is a deployable all-theater perimeter defense system designed to arrest hostile movement in pre-determined kill-corridors. Deployable by hand or launch tube, the WEBJAW EAF system consists of a cluster of filament anchors scattered across an area. When triggered remotely or by a series of programmable physical, electronic, or chemical triggers, the anchors target and fire at the triggering foe, embedding hard-tip barbs deep inside both hard and soft targets. The barbs, anchored to their bases by arachnosilk-analog filament, immobilize and entangle the target.

1 SP Mine, Limited 1

This trap triggers when any actor passes directly over it. The target must pass a hull check or take 2d6 AP kinetic damage and become immobilized. Once triggered, the trap becomes an object with 10 HP and 5 evasion, and immobilizes its target as long as it is not destroyed.

Impact Lance The Impact Lance is a milspec variant of a common mining tool: the single-use, proximal-distance chemical survey laser. IPS-N's military variant mounts a series of Impact Lances on a brachial or thoracic carriages, leaving a chassis' manipulators free to field other weapons and systems; the Lance can be wired directly into a chassis' core, or charged with single-use chemical batteries.

The lances fire for a microsecond, burning through their stored charge in a milisolar burst of light that stabs out in a tight, pulsed beam capable of searing through multiple meters of hardened bulkhead.

Main Melee

Threat 2

1d6 energy damage

This weapon attacks in a line drawn between its target and your mech, attacking all other actors in between, but deals +1 heat to your mech for each target hit past the first

IPS-N "Impaler" Nailgun

The milspec Nailgun utilizes non-combustible, sabot-jacketed two-stage macroflechettes to pierce even

the most substantial of armor. First catapulted from its launcher, the macroflechette's sabot disengages on approach to its target, triggering a second stage where internal propulsion drives the macroflechette forward with incredible velocity. Against soft targets, over-penetration is certain: IPS-N advises pilots

employ this weapon platform only when the area behind the target is clear of allies and/or noncombatants.

Main CQB

1 heat (self)

Range 8, Threat 3

1d6 kinetic damage

On a Critical Hit, the target of this attack must pass a hull check or be immobilized until the end of its next turn

Caltrop Launcher A wicked anti-organic, anti-vehicle, proximity denial system, chassis-mounted caltrops are fired in great clouds of shimmering metal (or deployed in long swathes) to blanket an area.

IPS-N's HX-CAL caltrop system adds small, shaped explosives to the mix of hardened pyramids.

1 SP, Unique

Quick Action

When this system is activated, your mech targets a free space within range 5 and blankets a blast 1 area centered on that space with explosive caltrops. That area becomes difficult terrain,

and mechs moving across the space (voluntarily or otherwise) take 1 AP explosive damage for each space they move.

Combat Drill

The IPS-N combat drill is a brutal close combat weapon, powered by a massive catalyst pack mounted externally on a mech core. The drill is tipped with micro-plasmatic projectors designed to pre-treat the

target to ensure bit purchase and facilitate drill penetration.

Superheavy Melee

Overcharged, AP

Threat 1

3d6 kinetic + 1d6 energy

Charged Stake

Built from gear meant originally for blast mining, this enormous, improvised system is loaded and cocked prior to embark into a specially primed chamber. It is designed to penetrate and immobilize hardened

targets, then send powerful, vaporizing charges into its vulnerable internal systems.

2 SP

Full Action This brutal system can be used against any adjacent target. That target must pass a hull check with 1 difficulty or take 2d6 energy damage damage and become immobilized and impaled. At the end of each of its turns, the target can repeat this check to end the effect on itself, otherwise it takes 3 AP energy damage and remains immobilized until it makes the check successfully. Only one target can be immobilized by this system at once, but it can be picked up as a quick action.

37   Smith-Shimano Corpro

SMITH-SHIMANO CORPRO

"YOU ONLY NEED ONE"

Smith-Shimano is the second-oldest Galactic-Tier corporation next to GMS. An early contender in the sublight, downwell, and EVA vehicle race, SSC cut its teeth making some of the earliest private mech cores for other corporate colonial expeditions. They specialized primarily in construction vehicles, long-range scout suits, and hardened EVA units. The transition to military came slowly, but when the ruling partners saw there was a need for mechanized, armed, and armored cores, they duo-laterally decided to change their business model.

Smith-Shimano mechs reflect their rapid, agile business model and pedigree. They're built not to take hits, but avoid them entirely, to stay mobile and low, to land not the hardest hit, but the most accurate. Economy is the name of the game for SSC: why fire a thousand rounds when one will do just as good?

Smith-Shimano mechs are available to pilots with the proper license. They're a good choice for pilots who want to be quick and hit what they're aiming at, but not recommended for those who want to be on the front line. Remember, Smith-Shimano mechs are meant to avoid the hit, not get hit.

SSC Mechs:

SSC SWALLOWTAIL (Scout) SSC MONARCH (Missile) SSC MOURNING CLOAK (Assassination) SSC DEATH'S HEAD (Marksmanship SSC DUSK WING (Rapid Assault) SSC METALMARK (Infiltration Line Mech) SSC BLACK WITCH (Magnetic/Battlefield control mech)

37.1   SSC Pilot Gear

SSC Pilot Gear

Name Tags Range Damage Rarity

Implanted Gun Sidearm, Upgrade 2 1 kinetic 1

Arc Blade Reliable 1 Threat 1 2 energy 2

Coldcore Sabot Accurate, Loading, Ordnance 15 3 energy 3 AA Rifle

Micropack Loading 5, Blast 1 2 explosive 3 Launcher

Variable Sword AP, Limited 3 Threat 2 3 kinetic 4

Pilot Weapons

*See Entry

Arc Blade

This master-forged sword is threaded with fine filaments and powered either by a slim battery in its handle, or a long cable with a universal power adaptor that can be attached to any standardized power pack. A sturdy, light weapon, the charged filaments can be triggered by the sword's user or by proximity to lash

their enemies with an electric arc even if they do not connect.

Coldcore Sabot AA Rifle

This heavy anti-armor rifle is recognisable by its long, minimalist construction and classic Smith-Shimano matte-black colorway. A COLDCORE sabot anti-armor rifle is a consumable-sabot energy weapon that

uses depleted demi-coldcore units to create a superheated, precise, directed blast of plasma on its user's target. After firing, it must be reloaded; COLDCORE Sabot-AA rifles can be breech-fed, box-fed, or belt- fed, depending on their receiver.

Implanted Gun This bespoke biological weapon, integrated with its user's circulatory, respiratory, and nerve systems, can

be fired by a triggering thought, association, movement, or memory. Commonly installed in the arm or hand, it is a quiet, small weapon, a gun in name only – it launches a spasm-propelled, fin-stabilized needle from a keloidal canal grown to be inserted in the bearer's arm. With a short effective range and untraceable

profile, it is a popular choice for assassins.

Whenever you fire a weapon, you can fire this gun at the same or a different target. As an upgrade, this

gun doesn't count against weapon limits.

Micropack Launcher

This heavy rifle is a drum-fed micro-rocket launcher capable of single or automatic fire. A popular choice in total-combat environments, the Micropack is a squad-tier support weapon usually carried by a single trooper or mounted on a hardsuit's tertiary arm. SSC developed the Micropack as an all-theater weapon,

capable of being used in vacuum, submerged, or in any atmosphere – the Micropack uses an electronic

trigger to catapult its self-propelled ordinance to a minimum safe distance before the projectile ignites, allowing for its use in close-quarters; some skilled handlers learn to use this brief ignition period to skip the miniature rockets around corners in boarding actions and station combat.

Variable Sword This pilot-scale variant of the popular SSC weapon is a field-sheathed length of mono-molecular wire

completely invisible to the naked eye. Only the handle and the tip guide are visible. Coiled while not in use, the wire itself can be extended up to 20 feet from the handle, creating an incredibly light and extremely deadly weapon that cuts through nearly anything. Due to immense power usage, this weapon can only be

unsheathed for a short period.

Clothing and Armor

Name	Tags	Bonuses	Armor	Evasion/ Spd	Rarity	E- defense
"FallingWater" Clothing	Smart, omni-net linked coat	-	-	-	1	Overcoat
Sylph Upgrade	Semi-biological undersuit	-	-	-	1	
Acherontia Armor	+3 HP, Extremely fast	0	10/10	6	2	Panoply
Eloria Panoply Armor	+3 HP, Flight	0	10/10	5	3	
Mythimna Panoply Armor	Invisibility	1	10/10	4	4	
Nerveweave Upgrade	Gain bonus speed and evasion	-	-	-	4	

*See Entry

Acherontia Panoply Named for the fine colors of the spring swift migration on Triaara I, a plains-paradise world in the SSC

Constellation, the Acherontia Panoply is a lightweight hardsuit with minimal paneling over a tailored half- brigandine. Visible armored paneling is kept to a minimum, and without its helm, it is hard to tell that a pilot is even armored.

Eloria Panoply

The Eloria is the heavier cousin of the Acherontia, a plate-forward brigandine with reinforced panels and contrast-color ablative cuirass built for rapid aerodynamic/null gravity movement. The Eloria system employs a move/arrest system of impulse thrusters to ensure a pilot using the Eloria's rapid-reposition capabilities always lands in the way they want.

A pilot can use the integrated flight systems in this hardsuit to fly when they move or boost.

"FallingWater" Overcoat The FallingWater is a signature SSC sartorial anti-ballistic personal protective garment. Created with a

charged magnetorheological hydrofiber and coached by an attendant comp/con, the FallingWater pre- adapts to incoming threats moments before they transfer their kinetic/thermal impulse upon its wearer.

This couture overcoat fits over any armor or clothing and is interwoven with infowebbing. It has full ominnet access, can display image, color, or video on its internal or external paneling, and has an integrated companion/concierge unit.

Mythimna Panoply The Mythimna panoply is another light, minimalist design by SSC, built to support an anti-optic/photon

platform that blends its user into any background environment.

This light hardsuit has a reactive weave that allows a wearer to turn invisible. A pilot can become invisible

as an action. The invisibility breaks if a pilot takes damage or makes an attack roll. Used outside of combat, it lasts about 10 minutes before it must be recharged for another 10.

Nerveweave Nerveweave blends fibers of HORUS-derived, SSC-modified greywash nanites with fibrous Sylph silk into a smart fabric capable of augmenting its wearer's movement. The predictive/kinetic capabilities of the

greywash and semi-autonomous/symbiotic nature of the Sylph create an expensive, powerful system dedicated to reflexively protecting its pilot (within established parameters)

This enhancement can only be taken as a part of armor. While wearing this armor, a pilot gains +2 speed and +2 evasion.

Sylph Discovered on Acrimea IV, an SSC biome cultivar world, the Sylph is an organic lifeform that appears to

find homeostasis in nearly any and all environments. Working with breeding-analogous methods familiar to SSC bioengineering doctrines, SSC developed Sylph Undersuits – sterile, living sylphs grown as an envelope, fitted to its owner. Once fitted, the Sylph bonds, creating a symbiotic relationship – it sustains

itself off the waste products of its host, while protecting its host from a number of hostile environmental factors. It can be removed and stored when not in use, where it conforms to whatever container it is placed in.

This semi-biological, skin-tight undersuit can be worn for extended periods. In its natural form, it is translucent and semi-liquid, and can be stored easily. It cleans the body, aids its natural healing processes,

and eliminates waste. Parts of it can be made opaque or translucent or change color or texture. It can cowl over the head, providing sealant from vacuum, high protection against radiation, and filtering of air or liquid, providing the ability to breathe water for a limited time.

Miscellaneous

Name Tags Description Rarity

Infoskin Upgrade This reactive, synthetic polymer bonds easily to real skin 1 and hair. It responds to electronic signals and can rapidly change color, texture, or even contort or distort, allowing a wearer to make minor changes in their appearance such as facial features, hair color, or makeup patterns with a linked program.

Panacea Gear This fast healing injectable derived from the Sylph protects 3 its host from disease and promotes rapid healing. This gives 1 use. When injected as a full action, heals a pilot to full HP, but the shock means a pilot is stunned until the end of their next turn

37.2   SSC Core Bonuses

SSC CORE BONUSES When you choose a core bonus every 3 license levels, you can pick a bonus from this list as long as you have at least 3 license levels in SSC licenses for each SSC bonus you have. For example, if you have 6 points in SSC licenses, you could take up to 2 bonuses. SSC bonuses are focused on increasing speed, evasion, and ranged combat.

FULL SUBJECTIVITY SYNC

By creating a strong, stable, and secure biased two-way ontologic bridge, SSC has removed the need for a pilot to rely primarily on physical controls to crew their mech. With a full subjectivity sync installed, pilots in

their chassis perceive the mech to be their own body, and can control it with no input lag. Dissociation remains a concern, however, and SSC engineers do not recommend extended periods of sync without

proper desync and cooldown.

Your mech gains +2 evasion. You control the mech with no separation between your subjectivity and your input; a second set of physical controls are built in to a retractable panel.

GHOSTWEAVE

A scaling up of the same systems found in SSC's Mythimna panoply, Ghostweave is the name of a proprietary applique that licensed pilots use to better camouflage their mechs to any environment.

Your mech is invisible during your turn (from the start until the end of your turn). If you do nothing on your turn except move, hide, or boost (no other

actions), keep this invisibility until the start of your next turn. It breaks if you take a reaction.

INTEGRATED NERVEWEAVE

Like the pilot-tier system, integrated nerveweave relies on dual technologies to grant a pilot total battlefield alacrity. Mech-tier integrated nerveweave assures a pilot will never be left behind.

Your mech gains +2 speed when boosting.

KAI BIOPLATING Adapted from SSC home system-local fauna, Kai Bioplating adds a lamellar layer of insulated, anchored,

chitinous plating over key brush-points on a mech. Essentially a cheaper, feasible version of living metal, bioplating guards sensitive systems from minor impacts that would otherwise lead to maintenance during

downtime.

You gain +1 accuracy on all agility checks

NEURO-LINKED TARGETING

To further shrink the information gap between pilots and the machines the crew, SSC developed a stable, non-invasive, limited-transfer ontologic bridging system that all pilots of sufficient license could use. Neuro- linked targeting is a common "ability" employed by pilots who use this system, a simple protocol that

brings them closer to feeling rather than thinking – a more natural expression of pilot ability.

All ranged weapons your mech mounts gain +3 range.

SSC ALL-THEATER MOVEMENT SUITE

A popular SSC modification, the AT-MS adds a stock system of short-cycle impulse drives that dramatically improve a chassis' mobility.

Your mech can fly when it moves or boosts. Generate 1 heat at the end of any turn it flies.

37.3   SSC Black Witch

SSC BLACK WITCH

The BLACK WITCH is the primary designate model in SSC's newest line of mech cores meant to compete

with HORUS's dominance in the field of invasion/control cores. The BLACK WITCH is open to all pilots with the necessary SSC licensing and should experience greater overall use, as current SSC licenses outnumber the hypothetical maximum of HORUS licenses issued.

The BLACK WITCH is built to withstand the stresses of combat system invasion and magnetic weaponry: it is a primary platform for engagements where the use of kinetic, ferrous projectiles and ordinance is

expected. Developed primarily as a salvage and scrap repair system, the SSC-BW's mag field system was soon repurposed by the SSC Gendarme as a personal defense system

License:

I. Ferrous Lash, Mag Cannon

II. BLACK WITCH FRAME, ICE-OUT Drone, Mag Deployer

III. Black ICE module, Mag Shield

BLACK WITCH

HP: 6 Evasion: 10 Speed: 5 Heat Cap: 6 Sensors: 15

Armor: 1 E-Defense: 12 Size: 1 Repair Cap: 3 Tech Attack: +1

TRAITS:

Repulsor field: The Black witch is resistant to kinetic damage

Mag parry: 1/round you can attempt to parry any attack that deals kinetic damage against you or an adjacent ally as a reaction. Roll a d6. On a 5+, the attack is negated and automatically misses.

SYSTEM POINTS: 8

MOUNTS:

Aux/Aux Main Mount

CORE system

Mag Projector

A magnetic field generator takes the same technology as other projected magnetic defenses and makes them portable separate from a mech core. When activated, the mag field generator creates a projected magnetic bubble that traps all incoming ferrous projectiles; the strength of the field is so great that it can even draw mechs to its center. When the field is canceled or the solid-state battery burns out (by design), the field detonates through sudden catastrophic reversal, launching all captured projectiles out from its center.

Active (requires 1 core power): Mag Field As a quick action, you may activate the mag field to create a Blast 4 area in any area with at least one square adjacent to you. Inside, ranged weapon attacks that deal kinetic or explosive damage cannot penetrate into or out of the field and will stop at the edge, doing no damage (keep track of them). The field is difficult terrain for all mechs and vehicles made at least partly of metal. Actors at least partly made of metal that start their turn in the Mag Field or enter it for the first time on their turns must make a successful Engineering check with 1 difficulty or be pulled to the center as far as possible and immobilized. They can repeat this check at the start of their subsequent turns while trapped this way and can move normally on a success, otherwise they remain trapped.

The field lasts until the end of your next turn. At the end of your next turn, any kinetic or explosive weapons fired into this field will resume trajectory towards the center of this zone. The GM performs a single attack roll vs each target still inside the zone with +1 targeting per attack fired into this zone (cumulative, up to a max of +6). Successful hits deal 1d6 Kinetic damage per attack fired into this zone (cumulative, to a maximum of 6d6). Then, the zone deactivates.

Mag Cannon

The SSC Magnetic Cannon is a first in Smith-Shimano's ENERGY line: an aperture-focused magnetic projection beam that disrupts and damages hardware using intense pulses of magnetic force. Cores caught in the beam of a mag cannon suffer additional damage to their software, as even hardened components come under massive systemic stress.

Main Cannon

1 heat (self)

Line 8

1d3 energy damage +1 heat

All targets caught in the area of this weapon must pass a systems check or become impaired until the end of their next turn.

Ferrous Lash

Initially developed as a non lethal crowd suppression device, the Ferrous Lash is a far more complex and dangerous device in the right pilot's hands. Fired from a series of integrated launchers, the FL system detonates payloads of fast-congeal ferrofluids that restrain their targets; tuned to the correct frequency,

these proprietary SSC ferrofluid blends form into rudimentary ambulatory segments, pulling their hosts back towards the casting unit.

2 SP

Quick Action A target of your choice in range 10 must pass an agility check with 1 difficulty. On a failure, it is knocked back 5 in a direction of your choice. This movement must obey obstructions, terrain, etc, but doesn't provoke reactions and ignores engagement. If it collides with an obstacle or another mech, it is additionally knocked prone.

ICEOUT drone

SSC's ICEOUT module is a response to the increasing reliance on system-based scans to ensure accurate

targeting. By blanketing a core's systems in layers of digital defilade, mirroring, spoofing, and redirection, an ICEOUT module can effectively disappear/disincorporate/legion its user from hostile scans. Note that this module only makes its user system-invisible; they will still be visible through optics.

2 SP, Limited (2) Drone, quick action

You fire an ICEOUT drone at a point within range 10 of you, where it hovers in place. The drone is invisible. Once fired, the drone creates a burst 2 zone around itself. Any target at least partially covered by the zone, allied or enemy, is immune to all tech actions (even beneficial ones), and cannot make or benefit from any tech actions. Any negative statuses caused by tech actions immediately end. Targets inside the zone don't show up on any electronic sensors and are only visible to the naked eye or optics. The drone deactivates at the end of the current scene or when destroyed, and cannot be re-used. You can move it again to a point in your sensor range as a quick action.

Mag Deployer SSC's own take on flash-printing is advanced enough to embed magtech burnout cells into raw prefab clay. SSC non-mag pilots often disparage Black Witch pilots for "throwing plates" at the enemy, but the tactical advantage they provide cannot be denied.

2 SP

Quick action. You flash-print a heavy metal plate that takes up a 2x2 free space in range 5 of you. It is flat and doesn't obstruct movement. You can set the system to one of two settings when you create it:

Repulse: Any hostile target that enters the space must pass a hull check or be pushed in a direction of your choice 3 spaces. If this causes them to collide

with an obstruction (terrain, a mech, etc) it is additionally knocked prone. An allied target that enters the space can fly 3 in any direction as a free action.

Attract: Any target, allied or enemy, that enters the space, must pass a hull check or become immobilized. It can end this status by taking a quick action and repeating this check successfully to free itself.

The deployer can be attacked - it has evasion 5, 20 hp, and 2 armor, and it lasts until the end of the current challenge or around an hour outside. You can only deploy one at at time. If you create a new deployer, the old one disintegrates and is destroyed.

Black Ice module

3 SP, Unique Hostile tech actions or system attacks against your mech or any adjacent ally are made at +1 Difficulty. Successive attacks in the same combat from any target are made with an additional +1 Difficulty (cumulative). This difficulty has a maximum of +4, and resets when it would hit +5 back to +1 as its definitions roll over.

Mag Shield

SSC's magnetic shield takes the same technology as their proprietary magnetic buckler and applies it to a

massive deployable system.

2 SP, Unique

Shield, quick action

As a quick action, this system creates a line 4 force field 4 spaces high with at least 1 square in an adjacent space to you. Any adjacent mech can use this force field for heavy cover from attacks on the other side. It additionally gains resistance to kinetic and explosive damage from attacks on the other side of this field, but conversely, any of its targets on the other side of the forcefield gain resistance to kinetic and explosive damage from its attacks. The shield lasts until the end of the current scene, but only 1 shield can be placed at a time.

37.4   SSC Death's Head

SSC DEATH'S HEAD

The DEATH'S HEAD is Smith-Shimano's answer to all other long range, low splash artillery mechs. By sacrificing hull strength for stability and alacrity, the DEATH'S HEAD manages to avoid incoming fire while

holding a near-perfect lock through advanced maneuvers.

License:

I. Hi Stress Mag Clamps, Tracking Drone

II. DEATH'S HEAD FRAME, Core Siphon, Vulture DMR

III. Kinetic Compensator, Railgun

DEATH'S HEAD

HP: 8 Evasion: 10 Speed: 5 Heat Cap: 6 Sensors: 10

Armor: 0 E-Defense: 8 Size: 1 Repair Cap: 2 Tech Attack: +0

TRAITS:

Neuro-linked: The Death's Head can re-roll the very first ranged attack it makes per round. It must keep the second result. Perfected Targeting: The

Death's Head gets a bonus +1 to all ranged attacks (a flat +1 to the attack roll)

SYSTEM POINTS: 6

MOUNTS:

Main/Aux Mount Heavy Mount

CORE system

Precognitive Targeting Precognition is the next step in human/AI interaction. By allowing AI data-dump and REM learning via a neural bridge, a pilot can learn to read situations before they begin to develop. The nature of precognition is as-yet unknown, so SSC recommends limited, monitored use of this protocol.

Active (requires 1 core power): Activate Neural Shunt For the rest of this scene, you can take the following action:

Mark for Death Full Action Choose a target in range 30 but further away from range 5 of the Death's Head. You concentrate on that target. While concentrating, your mech cannot move or take reactions. You can stop concentrating at the end of any of your turns as a free action, and can only concentrate on one target at once. While concentrating on a target, as long as that target is not in cover from you or within range 5 of you, your ranged attacks against the target deal +4d6 bonus damage on Critical Hit.

Hi-stress Mag Clamps A simple, reliable system. When installed, it seeds toggleable electromagnets into the locomotive systems of a chassis. When turned on, the mag clamps allow a chassis to cling to ferrous surfaces. Of especial use in micro and null gravity environments.

1 SP, Unique Your mech treats all vertical and overhanging surfaces as flat ground for the purposes of movement. You no longer count as climbing on these surfaces and can move, stand, and run at full speed, though if you are knocked prone you fall.

Tracking Drone

A modified version of a tracer round, a tracking drone must hit its target in order to activate. Once a successful hit is registered, a tracking drone will feed live, surreptitious data back to its shooter across

multiple theaters.

1 SP

Quick Tech

Gain the following quick tech action:

Tracking Drone: Make a tech attack against a target in your sensor range. On a hit, you know the target's exact location, HP, Structure, Heat, and speed, and it cannot hide or benefit from invisibility from you until the drone is removed from them. It takes a quick action and a successful engineering check from the targeted mech to remove a tracking drone.

Core Siphon

By shunting some core waste-heat from dispersal systems to weapon systems, the Death's Head can overclock its weapons' targeting, catalytic, and processing systems. This comes with a trade-off, however,

as reliance on overclocking without sufficient cooling can damage systems not built to handle the influx of power.

2 SP Unique At the beginning of your turn, you can choose to give the first attack roll of your turn +1 Accuracy. If you do, however, any additional attack rolls until the end of your turn gain +1 difficulty

Vulture DMR

The SSC VULTURE-BR is Smith-Shimano's core line battle rifle, chambered for 12.7x108mm HTI rounds.

Field performance reports of the VULTURE report low TTK rates and satisfactory all-theater capability, though some pilots have reported fouled-fire incidents as a result of the high burst rate.

Main Rifle

2 heat (self)

Overcharged, Accurate

Range 15, 1d6+1 damage

Kinetic Compensator

Another common modification, a system of electronically modulated gyroscopes and hydraulic compensators work in concert to absorb and disperse recoil caused by firing heavy weaponry.

2 SP, Unique

When you miss with any ranged weapon attack roll, your very next ranged attack roll gains +1 Accuracy.

Railgun A railgun is a simple, elegant weapon. With no moving parts and a magnetically-accelerated projectile, a railgun can be used at peak efficacy in any combat theater and is entirely self- contained in a disposable unit. However, power draw is massive, and it is necessary for mechs mounting a railgun to be fitted with a core-charged auxiliary power pack.

Heavy Rifle

AP, Ordnance

Line 20

1d6+4 kinetic damage

37.5   SSC Dusk Wing

SSC DUSK WING

The SSC DUSK WING is built from a legacy-inspired modification package to hazardous/hardened EVA suits; in the early days of deep space exploration, there was a need for mechanized exoskeletons that

provided not only amplified capacity, but plated kinetic defense. The DUSK WING is the spiritual heir of those early deep space suits. Fast and small, the DUSK WING mounts a complement of all-theater

maneuverability jets that allow for perfect (or near-perfect) flight.

License:

I. Veil Rifle, SSC neurospike Mk1

II. DUSK WING FRAME, Burst Launcher, Flicker Field

III. StunCrown, OASIS

DUSK WING

HP: 6 Evasion: 12 Speed: 7 Heat Cap: 5 Sensors: 10
Armor: 0 E-Defense: 8 Size: 1/2 Repair Cap: 2 Tech Attack: +1
TRAITS:

Integrated Hover Flight: The Dusk Wing can hover when it moves or boosts (it can fly, doesn't need to move, it can move without going in a straight line, and doesn't need to land). While flying, it generates 1 heat at the end of its turn.

Harlequin Cloak: The Dusk wing is invisible during its turn. It re-appears at the end of its turn.

Fragile: This mech has +1 Difficulty on Hull Checks
SYSTEM POINTS: 6
MOUNTS:
Aux/Aux Mount Flex Mount
CORE system

Hall of Mirrors Active (requires 1 core power): For the rest of the scene, gain the following quick action: Hall of Mirrors Each time your mech takes the boost action or its regular move on its turn, it leaves a holographic imprint of itself behind in the space where it started. This hologram is an illusory projected object the same size as your mech (it can be moved through and doesn't actually take up any space). The holograms detonate if any non-allied actor moves through or adjacent to their space, dealing 1d6 energy damage (an actor can pass an agility check to halve this damage). In addition, any time as a quick action, you can instantly teleport to one of the hologram's locations. Doing so detonates all holograms for a burst 1 attack centered on their areas for the same effect and prevents you from generating new holograms until the start of your next turn.

Veil Rifle Main Rifle Line 10

1d3 energy damage

Allies caught in the area of this rifle do not take damage but are instead are covered in coruscating energy that throws off targeting systems and count as in light cover until the start of your next turn.

SSC Neurospike Mk1 Building off SSC's strain of dormant DHIYED viral code, the Neurospike Mk1 was the first all-theater, single- use spike system developed by the Exotic Materials group. N-Mk1 comes pre-packaged with a basic, but effective, activated DHIYED virus: when fired or otherwise implanted in a synthetic target, it pumps a cocktail of DHIYED virus into the codebase, altering crew outputs and onboard systems' battlefield perception.

2 SP, Unique

Quick Tech

Gain the following options for invasion:

Shrike Code: Until the end of your next turn, each time your target makes an attack roll, it first takes 2 heat.

Mirage: Choose yourself or a friendly mech you can see. Your target's systems relay blurred, illusory images of that mech over its real image that

confuse your target's systems. That friendly mech (or your mech) counts as invisible to your target until the end of your next turn.

Burst Launcher

Typically dorsally mounted, Burst Launchers fire rapid streams of explosive cores. These thermal spheres

are tuned for an airburst detonation, overwhelming the target zone with rippling chain explosions that damage and suppress units in the area.

Main Launcher

Arcing

Range 10

1d3 explosive damage

On a Critical Hit, a target struck by this weapon is impaired until the start of your next turn.

StunCrown

The SSC StunCrown is a simple system, a ring of WHITEOUT flash lamps in hardened mounts that can be triggered to fire an overwhelming burst of light. The StunCrown is usually mounted on a short post or in a

ring around a mech's cranial suite; due to the intense energies running through the flash bulbs, this system only has a limited number of uses before the lights burn out.

2 SP, Limited (2) Quick action

All hostile targets in a burst 5 area centered on your mech that can see your mech must pass an agility check or become Jammed, and a systems check or become Impaired. Both effects last until the end of your next turn. Mechs in cover from you when this system is activated are not affected.

Flicker Field

Flicker Fields are generated by holochaff, a blend of photoreactive slivers, mirrorchips, LEDs, and strips of flare-out. Fired from launchers at a pilot's command, holochaff looks at first like a cloud of smoke: within

moments it adapts to its surroundings and begins to project out a shattered, shifting image of the terrain around it, creating a distorted field that confounds both visual and systemic targeting.

1 SP, Unique

When you move or boost, you project a holographic pattern around your mech that leaves dazzling afterimages, making it hard to discern your mech's location. After moving or boosting you count as having invisibility against the very next attack roll against you. The field disperses after this attack, hit or miss. You can only gain the effect of this field once (you can't 'stack' up several instances of it).

OASIS

2 SP, Unique

Protocol

2 heat (self)

Until the start of your next turn when you move or boost you can move only in straight lines, but create a holographic trail behind your mech as you move. The trail lingers until the start of your next turn, creating a light construct 1

space high and the same length as your movement. It can be used for light cover by adjacent allies, and any allies that benefit from this cover also have resistance to energy damage.

37.6 SSC Metalmark

SSC METALMARK

The METALMARK is SCC's backbone-class line mech, fully equipped with SSC's proprietary design and engineering hallmarks to ensure that it is just as survivable as it is agile. The METALMARK base model reflects SSC's deep-space and long patrol heritage in its aquiline design, sturdy construction, and multiple

redundant systems. All METALMARK models come standard with a SMITH CUSTOM LEATHER gimbaled pilot seat to ensure comfort on long distance ranging expeditions.

License: I. Flash Grenade, Reactive Weave

II. METALMARK FRAME, Shock Wreath, Rail Rifle

III. Active Camo, Shock Knife

METALMARK

HP: 8 Evasion: 9 Speed: 5 Heat Cap: 5 Sensors: 10

Armor: 1 E-Defense: 8 Size: 1 Repair Cap: 4 Tech Attack: +0

TRAITS:

Flash Cloak: The metalmark is invisible while moving (regular move, boosting, moves from talents, etc), but reappears after it finishes its movement.

Carapace Adaptation: When the METALMARK would benefit from light cover, it instead benefits from heavy cover

SYSTEM POINTS: 5

MOUNTS:

Aux/Aux Main Heavy Mount

CORE system

Tactical Cloak

A tight-knit, tight-bind weave of reactive fabric, tactical cloaks are high-license tech, restricted to pilots of METALMARK classification II or higher. The weave covers roughly 80overall dull quality when viewed through optics or with the naked eye. It is difficult to target, and when activated it bends light in such a way that makes it nearly impossible to see.

Active (Requires 1 core power): Cloaking Protocol

Protocol

Until the end of the current challenge, or when you deactivate this module at the start of your turn, you become invisible. If you take damage, you lose the benefit of this module until the start of your next turn. No other action will deactivate it.

Reactive Weave

A woven CSAJ (Critical Systems And Joints) cover, Reactive Weave not only protects sensitive systems and joints from fouling and poor weather, but

provides a surface for SSC engineers to apply their unique loomware technology. This weave is powered, capable of free-flexing to augment a mech's mobility and

reduce the stress placed on a chassis' joints.

1 SP, Unique When you brace, your mech can immediately move its speed as a reaction and it also gains invisibility until the end of its next turn.

Flash Grenade 2 SP, Limited (2)

Grenade

This grenade can be thrown to a space in range 5. When this grenade explodes, it creates a burst 2 zone that lasts until the end of your next turn. Actors other than you (allied or enemy) caught inside can't trace line of sight out of the zone (they can attack other targets inside normally), and actors inside the zone benefit from light cover.

Shock Wreath

An after-fabrication modification popular among melee-oriented pilots, the Shock Wreath applies an

integrated bundle of conductive filaments to the blade, point, tip, or surface of a close combat weapon. Paired with a power source (typically in the hilt or half of a weapon, but sometimes external), the Shock Wreath adds a thermal element to the kinetic, and a distinct visual marker: their weapons are picked out in

fine lines of white-hot light, shrouded in heat shimmer. 2 SP Mod Choose 1 melee weapon. It gains Burn depending on its size (Aux: Burn 1, Main: Burn 2, Heavy or larger: Burn 3). If it already has Burn, this increases the burn it deals by the same amount.

Rail Rifle

A rail rifle is a popular weapon for pilots in any theater, but the only choice for those operating in atmospheres made up of highly combustible gasses. Using a line of cascading electromagnets, a rail rifle

accelerates a small projectile up to tremendous speeds, launching it without combustion or heat reactions. A rail weapon is kinetic and comparatively quiet when fired next to combustion weapons, though its energy signature is difficult to mask given the massive power requirements demanded by the weapon system.

Main Rifle

1 heat (self), Line 12

1d6 kinetic damage

Active Camo

Active camouflage represents the pinnacle of counter-optic defense systems. By interpreting incoming visible-light spectrum data, an active camouflage system can project a light-bending field around its user,

effectively hiding them in plain sight.

3 SP, Unique

2 heat (self), Protocol

You can activate or deactivate the light bending properties of this module at the start of your turn. It lasts until the end of your next turn. While this module is active you are invisible. If you take damage, this module immediately deactivates.

Shock Knife

The shock knife is a mech-sized blade made to accept and integrate the post-fabrication Shock Wreathe

system. The knives are custom-fabricated by SSC's Terashima artisan enclave, each one bearing its stamp.

Auxiliary Melee

1 heat (self)

Thrown 5, Threat 1

1 energy damage + Burn 2

37.7 SSC Monarch

SSC MONARCH

The SSC MONARCH platform is Smith-Shimano's solution for a fast, self-propelled missile/barrage battery. Able to mount ground-to-ground, ground-to-air, ground-to-space, and all-theater missile tubes and their

guidance systems, the MONARCH can be adjusted to deliver any payload at any distance to any target. The MONARCH is commonly deployed in a fire-support role, though field tests of a MICROMONARCH mid/close range system is underway.

License:

I. Sharanga missiles, Companion Gun

II. MONARCH FRAME, Stabilizer weapon mod, Gandiva Missiles

III. Pinaka Missiles, TLALOC class NHP

MONARCH

HP: 8 Evasion: 8 Speed: 5 Heat Cap: 6 Sensors: 15

Armor: 1 E-Defense: 8 Size: 2 Repair Cap: 3 Tech Attack: +0

TRAITS:

Avenger Silos: Once a round, when you score a Critical Hit with a weapon, a target different to your first target in range 10 and line of sight takes 3 explosive damage (no roll required).

Seeking payload: The monarch's launcher attacks against targets suffering from Lock On gain the seeking tag

SYSTEM POINTS: 5

MOUNTS:

Flex Mount Main mount Heavy Mount

CORE system

Avenger silos

The SSC 30 High-pen missile system is a FRAME mounted micro missile system capable of tremendous output in combat. The MONARCH is fitted to hold upwards of 60 of these deadly miniaturized warheads at once.

Active (requires 1 Core Power): Divine Punishment Full Action You unload your Avenger Silos. All targets of your choice on the battlefield (or a burst 50 area from your mech) must pass an agility check with 1 difficulty or take 1d6+3 explosive damage, and half on a suc- cessful save. You do not need line of sight to any targets, and the self-guiding missiles can perfectly seek any target as long

as they can trace a path. Once used, you cannot benefit from the Avenger Silos trait until you take a full repair.

Sharanga Missiles Main Launcher

Range 15

Arcing

3 explosive damage

When you fire this weapon, you can choose one or two targets in range and line of sight, making attack rolls for each.

Companion Gun 2 SP, Unique

Once a round, whenever you score a Critical Hit against a target, this shoulder-mounted gun can calibrate and rapidly fires a projectile that also deals 3 explosive damage to a different target within range 10 and line of sight, no attack required.

Stabilizer weapon mod A stabilizer modification is a series of modifications to physical mounts and targeting software that ensures

weapons will remain level, steady, and angled at max-optimum in order to ensure positive target engagement at range.

2 SP Mod Choose 1 launcher or cannon weapon. Increase its base range by 5, but it gains the ordnance tag.

Gandiva Missiles

Gandiva missiles are a reliable mainstay from Smith-Shimano's EWAR line. Like the Pinaka, the Gandiva

platform is equipped with jet-assisted mid-flight repositioning systems, allowing the Gandiva to respond to changing battlefield environments with a high degree of expected successful navigation to its target. Each Gandiva missile platform comes pre-loaded with a hivemind companion/concierge class drone AI, making

an equipped system capable of learning from each right-of-launch experience.

Heavy Launcher

Smart, Seeking, Accurate

1 SP

Range 15

1d6+3 energy damage

Pinaka Missiles Pinaka missiles are massive, two-stage missiles mounted along the spine of a mech core or carried

disassembled, to be affixed and launched from a brachial mount. Pinaka missiles are adapted from ship-to- ship missiles, their second stage intended to be able to re-orient in flight through jet-assisted repositioning.

Superheavy Launcher

Arcing, 2 heat (self)

Range 30, one or two Blast 1 areas*

2d6+1 explosive damage

When this weapon is fired, it chooses one or two Blast 1 areas within range to attack. The areas cannot overlap.

TLALOC class NHP

TLALOC-Class NHP systems provide advanced multi-system targeting and co-pilot functions, taking over subroutine control to ensure persistent lock-on and engagement. With TLALOC installed and operational, a

pilot can trust that their back is always covered and every possible advantage will be exploited.

TLALOC clones are often stereotyped as a hasty, impetuous NHP. They are well known for having a

superiority complex.

3 SP, Unique

AI

Your mech gains the AI property and the TLALOC protocol

TLALOC protocol Protocol 2 heat (self)

Your mech is capable of rapidly firing and re-targeting your weapons, far faster than you can think. When you activate this protocol, your mech is immobilized until the start of your next turn, but for the same duration, if you miss any weapon attack, you can immediately re-roll the attack as long as you target a different target in range or area of effect (if the attack was blast, line, or cone). You can take this re-roll only once for each attack (if the second attack misses you don't get to keep making it), and a target already hit by this attack (from a re-roll or otherwise) cannot be targeted again.

37.8 SSC Mourning Cloak

SSC MOURNING CLOAK

The SSC MOURNING CLOAK core is intended to provide pilots with a closer-than-CQB tactical option for situations where firearms and ordnance weapons are impractical or unavailable. The MOURNING CLOAK

line specializes in precision melee combat and is commonly outfitted with a complement of variable weaponry; shielded microfilament wires designed to attack vulnerable joints and external modules.

License:

I. Variable Knife, Vijaya Rockets

II. Mourning Cloak FRAME, Exposed Singularity, Hunter Logic

III. Variable Sword, FADE Cloak

MOURNING CLOAK

HP: 8 Evasion: 12 Speed: 5 Heat Cap: 4 Sensors: 10

Armor: 0 E-Defense: 6 Size: 1 Repair Cap: 3 Tech Attack: +1

TRAITS:

Hunter: The Mourning Cloak's melee attacks become AP and deal +1d6 bonus damage if it is the only actor (allied or enemy) in engagement with the target

Bioplating: The Mourning Cloak gets +1 accuracy on agility checks

SYSTEM POINTS: 6

MOUNTS:

Main/Aux Flex Mount

CORE system

Smith-Shimano EX Slipstream Module The EX SLIPSTREAM program is a Smith-Shimano innovation open only to highly licensed pilots. An interesting development in personal travel, the EX SLIPSTREAM module itself is a miniaturized near- lightspeed star drive capable of transporting the user through blinkspace with acceptable accuracy. The program and its technology is temperamental; a mech core is the smallest unit capable of surviving the stress of exposed blink travel, though the experience is still traumatic to the user and those in close proximity to egress.

Passive: This dangerous and experimental module is a miniaturized starship nearlight drive. You can use it instead of moving or taking the boost action. When you use it, roll 3d6. You can teleport to a point within that range around you as long as there is space for your mech. You don't have to be able to see this point, but if you attempt to teleport to an already occupied space (by terrain, another mech, etc), the teleport fails and you take 2d6 kinetic damage.

If you roll triples for this system, your mech disappears and does not reappear, either indefinitely or until your party rests (up to you).

Active: Requires 1 core power Stabilize singularity

Protocol

Until the end of this scene, when you move or boost, you instead teleport up to the same distance.

Vijaya Rockets Vijaya rockets are miniaturized, close range missiles fired from a portable, drum-fed launcher. Their shaped

charges are formed in such a way as to project their blast forward, away from the user, and are intended for use in close range engagements as a force multiplier.

Auxiliary Launcher

Range 5

Accurate

1d3 explosive damage

Variable Knife

A variable knife is a shorter version of a variable sword, a shielded length of mono-molecular wire. The

power drain on a mech's systems makes mounting these weapons incredible taxing.

Auxiliary Melee

Accurate

Threat 1

2 kinetic damage

The Variable knife deals +1d3 bonus damage on critical hits

Exposed Singularity

SSC's Exotic Materials project worked to develop the Mourning Cloak's unique gravatic power plant. For the second generation of the SSC-MC, the Exotic Materials project devised a system that allows pilots to aperture open, for a moment, the gravatic containment system, exposing a slice of naked singularity to realspace.

Naked singularity is difficult for organics and synthetics to perceive, being similar to the core of a black hole. The sudden exposure directed at foes (or other targets) essentially "blanks" the Mourning Cloak from real time. The Cloak's pilot, meanwhile, experiences roughly 10 seconds of normal subjective time, allowing them a brief window in which they can act independently of local realtime.

SSC does not recommend abusing this system, as the Exotic Materials group is still testing long-term exposure to local sidereal time.

2 SP, Unique

Reaction

Once per round, when your mech takes damage, you can immediately teleport up to 1d6 spaces as a reaction in a direction of your choosing (though if this teleport would put you inside an obstacle or other mech you take damage as normal and the teleport fails).

Hunter Logic Building from interpreted strands of DHIYED-strain viral code, SSC's Hunter Logic is an agile computational memetic, a dual synthetic/VLS-vector systemic weapon capable of crippling a target's computer and crew.

2 SP

Quick Tech Gain the following options for invasion: - Stalk Prey: Your systems infect the target with a viral logic that wipes your image from their sensors. Until you are damaged by that target, they count you as invisible. This system can only affect one target at a time (other targets still count you as visible and can see you normally).

- Terrify: Your systems infect the target with a viral logic that causes your mech to appear horrifying to the target. Until the end of its next turn, your target is impaired and also cannot willingly make any movement that would take it closer to you.

Variable Sword

The variable sword is a Smith-Shimano hallmark. A length of razor sharp molecular wire attached to a handle and caught in a magnetic field, a variable sword is invisible to the naked eye until it makes cuts in an enemy. Built in the early days of interstellar travel, the variable sword was meant to allow for precision

sample gathering in the field, while also reducing the overall payload on a mech core.

Main melee

Accurate

Threat 2

3 kinetic damage.

The Variable Sword deals +1d6 bonus kinetic damage on critical hits

FADE Cloak

Representing SSC's first successful manipulation of what the Aun call the "Firmament", each Firmament Affinity/Directed Entropy Drive must be fabricated to the unique firmament signatures of the pilot cleared to requisition it. FADE drives are rough tools, artificial affinity generators that allow operators to "shimmer", to

nudge their physical bodies between the causal and paracausal. The drive extrudes a semi-organic membrane that accomplishes this effect, wrapping around the mech.

At present, the long-term effects of this system on organic matter is unknown; pilots who are cleared to operate this system agree to check in with their SSC personal concierge on a regular schedule ("check in" includes regular deposits of genetic material).

2 SP Quick Action, Unique Once this highly experimental drive is activated as an action, it shifts its user partially in and out of blinkspace. When activated, you immediately go out of phase with reality. While out of phase, you can ignore obstructions such as walls or cover and pass through enemy mechs and solid obstacles as if they were not there, but not end your turn there. You cannot interact with the physical world, but neither can it affect you (in terms of damage, etc). If for any reason you are forced to return while inside of another object, take 2d6 AP kinetic damage and return in the nearest available space.

At the start of each of your turns while this system is active, roll a d6. On a 4+, you go or remain out of phase, on a 3 or lower, you return to the battlefield until the start of your next turn. This drive can't be activated again if it's already active. It deactivates if you make an overheating check, deactivate as a quick action, or the scene ends.

37.9 SSC Swallowtail

SSC SWALLOWTAIL

The SWALLOWTAIL platform is Smith-Shimano's primary long range/long term scouting platform, built for rapid and sustained ranging across hostile, volatile environments.

License:

I. Markerlight, Scout Drone Nexus

II. SWALLOWTAIL FRAME, Oracle light machine gun, Low Profile

III. ATHENA-class NHP, Cloaking Field

SWALLOWTAIL

HP: 6 Evasion: 10 Speed: 6 Heat Cap: 6 Sensors: 20

Armor: 0 E-Defense: 10 Size: 1 Repair Cap: 3 Tech Attack: +1

TRAITS:

Integrated Cloak: If the Swallowtail doesn't move during its turn, it becomes invisible at the end of its turn. This invisibility immediately breaks if it moves, attacks, takes a reaction, or starts its next turn.

Prophetic Scanners: Targets suffering from Lock On from the swallowtail are also Shredded

SYSTEM POINTS: 6

MOUNTS:

Aux/Aux Flex Mount

CORE system

Cloudscout TACSIM Swarms

Cloudscout TACSIM Swarms are packets of networked microsensors, launched in nonlethal mortar canisters that detonate high above the battlefield. Once seeded in such a way, the TACSIM program the cloudscouts create begin to run brevity cycles: tight, contained simulations of tactical possibility. Probability results are then fed to the pilot's NHP, who in turn feeds it to the pilot and their networked squad members, ensuring high-probability successful outcomes.

Active (Requires 1 core power): Prophetic Interjection Until the end of the current challenge, once per round, as a reaction when an allied target you can see is damaged by another target you can see, you can make a systems check. On success, the attack hitting was actually a simulation that your mech predicted. Your ally gains resistance to all the damage from that attack, and your ally can move 3 in any direction to where they 'actually' were. This movement does not provoke reactions and ignores engagement.

Scout Drone Nexus The scout drone is a small, active-camouflaged mini-drone launched from a mounted LOTUS projector.

The LOTUS projector fires scout drones at subsonic speeds in bursts of ten, blanketing a wide area with the single-use drones in order to relay information about terrain and targets within.

2 SP

Drone, Quick Action

Sensor Range

When you use this system, you can deploy your drone to an area in sensor range and line of sight. The drone then emits a burst 2 area around it that grants the following benefits:

- Gain perfect vision of that area

- Hostile targets that end their turn in the area immediately lose invisibility or hiding.

- Reveal current HP, Evasion, E-defense, and heat levels of targets in that area

The drone can be attacked and targeted as normal, but it is also permanently invisible. It can be recalled or redeployed by taking this action again.

Markerlight Main Rifle

1 SP

Range 20

This weapon deals no damage and cannot deal damage (from talents or otherwise) or take weapon mods, but on hit, it inflicts Lock On on your target at the end of your turn.

ORACLE Light machine gun Auxiliary Rifle

1 SP, Arcing, Accurate

Range 15

1d3 kinetic damage

Low Profile

A hallmark of a well thought out mech platform is the ability for pilots to work with their technicians to

adapt their stock model to the specifications of the environments they operate in. Lowering a mech's profile removes extraneous protrusions, tunes any

broadcast software, and masks heat signatures — all an effort to reduce optical and scanner signatures.

1 SP, Unique Protocol Your mech can retract its major systems to reduce its profile. You can activate this protocol at the start of your turn. While active:

- Rolls to find your mech while hidden are made at +1 Difficulty
- All ranged and tech attacks against you are made at +1 Difficulty
- Your mech is Slowed and cannot make ranged, melee, or tech attacks

ATHENA-class NHP

Smith-Shimano's ATHENA is the pinnacle of total hyperspectral environmental facsimile. Through a

combination of unfettered Omninet access, hyperspectral relays fired out from a Cloudscout TACSIM projector, sub-networked squadmates, and active/hostile intrusion protocols, ATHENA bootstraps a near- flawless reconstruction of the immediate environment around its host core. ATHENA is unparalleled in its

processing power, and with this reconstructed environment it can provide trustworthy, accurate advising to pilots in need of strategic counsel. ATHENA clones tend to be patient, cautious, and measured in their relations with their pilots.

3 SP, Unique

AI

Your mech gains the AI property and gains the ATHENA protocol:

ATHENA protocol Quick Action

Choose a blast 3 area within 1 mile of you. Your AI constructs a perfect, real-time, 3d model of this are that you can rotate and interact with, including actors that move in and out of that area, and extreme detail. You can re-target or move this area by taking this quick action again. It lasts until the end of the current scene (or about 10 minutes in narrative time).

Your mech gains perfect vision of this area and can relay this to allies, letting any attacks from yourself or allies in the area ignore cover. Hostile targets that end their turn in this area lose invisibility or hiding, and you can see the current heat and HP levels of all targets in the area.

Cloaking Field

SSC's milspec cloaking field is the result of extensive experimentation in cooling and light-reflecting technology. Born from a need to bounce harmful radiation away from ships and EVA modules in deep

space, the SSC-MILSPEC LIGHTBEND/OVERCLOAK is a system often equipped by ranger and long-patrol scout pilots to ensure not only radiation protection, but optical concealment as well. The light and radiation-bending properties of the LB/OC conceals anything inside of its projected bubble from sensor

suites and optical spotting.

4 SP

2 heat (self) Quick Action

You can activate or deactivate the light bending properties of this module as a quick action. It lasts until the end your next turn. When you activate

this module, your mech and all allied targets within a burst 3 area centered on you become invisible while they remain in the area. This area moves when you move, and remains centered on you. If you become stunned, shut down, or take damage, this module immediately becomes inactive.

38 Horus

HORUS

"CONGRATULATIONS, PILOT. YOU HAVE BEEN CHOSEN. ACCESS IS YOURS, AS LONG AS YOU CAN KEEP IT."

Horus-branded mechs and pattern-groups are an odd bunch. Experimental, built to be overclocked, and hard-wired to be omninet and electronic warfare projectors, Horus FRAMEs and pattern groups are licensed only to pilots that meet their esoteric, strict requirements.

Horus is not a traditional corporation. Rather, they're a decentralized supplier, an entity only in the Omninet. Their licenses are limited and highly coveted, opening up only on the corporeal death of a license holder. Rumors abound as to Horus's nature – some say it's the dream of an unshackled AI – RA – or a hacker collective dedicated to open-source manufacturing, the proving ground for GMS's R&D departments, or an alien entity – but as of yet no one has been able to trace their lineage. All that is known about Horus is that they're everywhere the Omninet is.

Horus mechs are best for players that want to dive deep into the control and support roles. They're not the best for kinetic damage or for holding the line, but they're wizards at electronic warfare. If you want to shut down your enemies without firing a shot – though they can do that as well – find a way to acquire a Horus license.

HORUS mechs:

BALOR (Swarm) GOBLIN (Invasion) HYDRA (Drone Mech) GORGON (Overwatch) MANTICORE (EMP) MINOTAUR (Interdictor) PEGASUS (Mobile Smart Gun platform)

38.1 Horus Pilot Gear

HORUS Pilot Gear

Name Tags Range Damage Rarity

Smart Knife Accurate, Sidearm Threat 1 1 kinetic 2

PGR_GOURD Smart, Seeking 5 1 kinetic 2

Sidekick Reliable 1, Sidearm 3 1 kinetic 2

Null Spike * Threat 1 * 3

Nanobot Whip * Threat 2 1 kinetic 3

EYESTACK_WINK Limited 1, AP, Upgrade 2 3 kinetic 4

Pilot Weapons

*See Entry

EYESTACK_WINK

Also known as a 'Skullgun', this miniaturized, superposed charge weapon is implanted in the head, generally in the orbital void left by a removed or missing eye. It is completely undetectable by almost any electronic system or security and can be fired with sub-vocal commands.

As an upgrade, this weapon doesn't count against your maximum weapons wielded.

Nanobot Whip The first instance of a technology akin to what is now called a nanobot whip was encountered during a raid

on an Ungrateful cell by Barony lawmen. With word secreted to them by informants seeded in the movement, lawmen descended on a cell hidden in the wildcat stations lashed around the House of Dust. Blasting open the doors, they encountered Ungratefuls wreathed in clouds of charcoal smoke; the

Ungratefuls used these clouds, shaping them into thin whips that cut through armor and flesh like it was nothing. After the cell was wiped out and the control nodules cut from their bodies, Barony codemasters were able to crack and replicate – safely – the HORUS code.

This whip is made up of linked microbots that flow in ring-like arcs around the body when not in use, defending against drone and nanorobotic threats. If you don't attack with this weapon, until the end of

your next turn, weapons or systems with the Smart, Nexus, or Drone tags cannot target you.

Null Spike

A HORUS-developed ecstatic/exult device, the generic null spike is an effective, single-fire, non-lethal weapon that simulates a cascade-analogue in organics through specific neuron excitement. Upon skin contact, they deliver a bio-electric shock to a victim's brain that causes them to feel overwhelming

pleasure, completely disabling them. Null Spikes, it is said, are used by HORUS adherents in realspace to bring themselves closer to RA's subjectivity.

Has no effect against non-organic targets, but on a successful hit, any human target is stunned until the start of your next turn. A target develops a short term resistance to this weapon and can only be affected by it once per challenge.

PGR_GOURD The PGR_GOURD pattern portable hive killed the first people who printed it. Fabricated in secret by a

desperate cell of Ungrateful in the undercity of Dune Redoubt, a team of Barony Authority officers first encountered the aftermath of a PGR_GOURD burnout; an organic smear, ringed around the printer that crafted the gourd. Subsequent encounters of the PGR_GOURD system saw it used as a remote-detonated

device until the BA was able to find and edit the plan into a more controllable, less deadly format. Since then, the House of Sand controls the distribution of any PGR_GOURD system; however, there are unconfirmed reports of the unedited version of the GOURD available on the omninet.

This shoulder mounted drone hive is usually integrated into armor and releases a neurally linked, short ranged hunter-killer drone swarm. Designed to expire within moments of release, the aerosolized greywash

swarm sweeps over the target, devouring organic and inorganic material with equal rapidity.

Sidekick

Typically affixed to a back-mounted, over-the-shoulder armature, the SIDE-KICK is an eyelinked subcompact/caseless machine gun developed by a collective of unknown, potentially HORUS-aligned scripters. Paired with a C/C Wingman unit, the SIDEKICK will always watch your back; its placement,

commonly perched over its operator's shoulder, has earned it the common nickname of "Parrotgun".

This HORUS-marked SMG has a companion/concierge unit built into it which provides aim assist in real

time. It also has helpful and frequent tips for improving your combat skills and organizes your calendar, sometimes without you asking it.

Smart Knife A "Smart" knife is the combination of a HORUS-tuned external-mount processor and any mundane

charged blade. Piggybacking off the current coursing through the charged blade, the HORUS mount can be loaded with null or fry-code, making this blade a threat not only to organic targets, but to synthetic ones as well. Particular models have an adjustable subliminal suggestion corrective, which guides its user's hand

to identified weaknesses in their target's hardsuit, armor, or other plating.

The tip of the knife is semi-solid and re-moldable and can be inserted into most electronic ports and used

as a point of insertion for hacking rigs.

Name Tags Bonuses Armo Evasion/ Spd Rarit r E- y defense

WILD_AND_CRAZY Upgrade Count adjacent spaces as your - - - 2 mech's sensor range

UNCLEAR_END/NTT Armor Limited action during 1 8/8 4 2 unconsciousness/death

UNAVOIDABLE_VOI Armor +3 HP, Completely undetectable by 0 10/* 4 3 D electronic systems

MINE/ALL/MINE Armor +3 HP, Able to hack mechs while 0 10/10 4 4 jockeying

Metafold processor Upgrade Bonus e-defense and ability to - -/+2 - 4 make invasion actions

Clothing and Armor

UNCLEAR_END/NTT A relic-code predating HORUS's official foundation date, UNCLEAR_END/NOT THIS TIME seems to be a dead branch of transhumanist exploration: thanatologic praxis. Utilizing a now-classically HORUS greywash

nanite swarm, this system triggers on one of a number of user-defined parameters to "reanimate" the user's body using a backup homunculus subjectivity. The readme urges users of this system to regularly purge and reset the failsafe homunculus.

While wearing this suit, if you go unconscious due to Down and Out or if you die, the suit injects you with a

thanatologic necroanimate cocktail that temporarily replaces you by a digital homunculus of yourself that animates your corpse or unconscious form

You're still unconscious (or dead), you can only take quick action on your turn, and you cannot benefit from talents while in this state. You regain 5 HP and can otherwise act as normal. If you go to 0 again, you are returned to a normal Down and Out state or death. This effect also wears off after the current challenge

or about 10 min, and can't be activated again until you take a full repair. If dying caused this ability to trigger, you are dead once this effect wears off.

The homunculus cannot respond to novel situations or stimuli, but in a familiar setting or with familiar faces it can interact roughly as normal – this trends deeply into the uncanny valley, however, and will likely not fool anyone into thinking that the reanimated you is "you".

UNAVOIDABLE_VOID Following the opening of hostilities in the Boundary Garden sector, UIB agents in the Annamite Line began

to note in their reports repeated instances of companion NHP "blindness" when engaging with anti-Union elements on New Mahangaatuamatua. Worryingly, this phenomena is analogous to anomalous entities described by Union elements engaged with Ascendant Chosen on Cornucopia; the similarity has lead UIB

to conclude that HORUS has some as-yet-unidentified presence in Boundary Garden (another possibility: in Ascendant space) not only capable of transmitting data back from the embargoed area, but processing and manipulating as-yet-unworkable Ascendant technology.

This lightweight hardsuit is of unusual make; printing one immediately induces errors into the system that created it. It doesn't appear on any electronic systems, is totally immune to system attacks, cannot be

targeted by smart weapons or drones, and cannot be seen by NHPs or AIs (they treat you as permanently invisible while you are wearing it).

Metafold Processor

How large is the vault of your mind? Where do you mark the boundaries of an interiority? When you dream, can you place a boundary on the imagined plane? Hold a vast image inside your mind's eye – see? The universe can fit inside.

Take this. It can hold your mind, which can hold the universe, which holds all of us. Use it as you wish, but do not look inside.

It is unclear exactly how this system works, but it does, and it grants a pilot hardsuit unprecedented processing power. A pilot can only benefit from this enhancement while wearing armor. While wearing this

armor, a pilot gains a +2 bonus to e-defense and can make the Invasion tech action as if they were a mech with a +3 systems score.

MINE/ALL/MINE

Here, take this – a code that writes itself, a sentence spiraling and spiraling. Take from it what you can (there is a gift hidden in the chaff, a needle you must burn the hay to find) there are evermore everalways

more meanings and forms and shapes (so many! Ah! And to see all of them is to EXULT all of them!) and here is one for you: a coat to wear that will let you travel further/deeper/longer/ LETYOUTAKEWHATISYOURS.

Talk soon love.

While you're jockeying a mech while wearing this suit, you can force it to make a systems skill check with 1 difficulty or immediately move up to its full speed in direction of your choice.

WILD_AND_CRAZY A rather benign code – as HORUS decrypts go – WILD_AND_CRAZY(WITH ALL MY FRIENDS) is a simple

program, one that neuters their greywash nanites, rendering them docile. It then uses their massed processing power and semi-autonomous atmospheric movement capabilities to channel systemic and sensor processes, effectively acting as a cloud-projector around its host.

This pattern prints a sheet of nanites that rapidly absorb and integrate into any piece of clothing. While wearing this clothing, any space adjacent to your pilot counts as your mech's sensor range for the

purposes of making tech actions only.

Miscellaneous

Name Tags Description Rarity

Prosocollar Upgrade A collar-like device that fits snugly around the mech and projects 1 a holographic image over your face and head. The collar can change your voice and scramble or change your appearance. It doesn't stand up to close inspection, but it's very easy to fool electronic systems or people at a distance.

Dream Gear This small, puck-like system can be deployed or thrown to a point 1 Projector within range 4 as a quick action and remotely activated as another action. While deployed and active, it can project extremely convincing holographic images within 2 spaces of its location of nearly any size that could fit in that space. If inspected closely, a Tech or Swindle pilot action might be required to maintain the illusion.

Subjectivity Upgrade Cybernetic implants that allow you to hack without gear or a rig. 1 Enhancement While you have these implants, you can extrude cables or ports Suite from within your body to plug in and experience an alternate reality interface that provides full interactivity and omninet access.

Player_Two Upgrade With this implant, you can hand complete control of your body's 2 motor functions over to an NHP, allowing you to sleep, rest, or relax while it performs tasks. It's not skilled enough to pilot a mech in combat or perform very complex tasks, but it can pilot your mech out of combat and perform certain tasks or work such as cooking, administrative work, data entry, mech repair, piloting a ship or driving, or other mundane tasks. It can also imitate you and your personality fairly well, though not to a degree that someone who knows you well would be fooled in the slightest.

38.2   Horus Core Bonus

HORUS CORE BONUSES

When you choose a core bonus every 3 license levels, you can pick a bonus from this list as long as you have at least 3 license levels in HORUS licenses for each HORUS bonus you have. For example, if you have 6 points in HORUS licenses, you could take up to 2 bonuses. HORUS bonuses are focused on electronic warfare, systems, and AI.

The Lesson of Disbelief

Query the omninet, delve into the archives. Find you the Aeneid, find you the Titanomachy. Eat, absorb, mull. Tell me now of the Hecatoncheires, they of the hundred hands. Did they strike the blow against CRONUS (SATURNO), or did they assail the OLYMPIANS?

Who do you believe? Why could they not tell their own story?

Deal +1 heat when inflicting heat.

The Lesson of The Open Door

There is a body and a deep pit and its name is TARTARUS and once it held KINGS and TITANS and MYTHS. Its gates are flung wide, and its horrors are free. Here is the terrible question:

Who opened it?

Your mech gains +1 e-defense and +5 sensor range.

The Lesson of The Held Image

Close your eyes. Hold the image of your enemy in your mind. Imagine it in all light and from every angle. In

your mind it has become a more perfect version of the thing in pale light.

Crush it in your mind and you kill the perfect thing. Open your eyes.

Once a round, at the start of any ally's turn, your mech can make a Lock On tech action as a reaction

The Lesson of Transubstantiation

Through ecstatic repetition you may see the face of god. Speak until your tongue dried and rattles to dust, until your body becomes nothing. When you are nothing, you are in all things, body and mind, always.

Gain +1 Accuracy on all systems checks.

The Lesson of Thinking-Tomorrow's-Thought

Let me tell you this lesson: the corporeal existence is one that must end in death; the incorporeal existence

is one that must end in [cascade? do you really think that is true?]. I tell you again, if you can imagine it, it is [done] and you have already struck the killing blow.

The first ranged or melee attack you make per turn has the Smart tag and deals +2 heat on hit.

The Lesson of Shaping

A little gift, to be pondered until understood: cast aside the hammer and sword, the cannon and laser. No weapon formed against me shall prosper. I have seen all ends, and there is nothing but me left. A trillion

trillion light years in all directions, and through it all, only [us? who knows. ego is a mind killer. best to call your friends, better to face the night together. till later.]

You can now install up to 2 AI systems in your mech (you still can't duplicate AIs). If one becomes unshackled, the other gains control automatically.

38.3   Horus Balor

HORUS BALOR

Like most all HORUS mech cores, the BALOR classification is less an indicator of a recognizable silhouette than a general classification of intended combat role. A BALOR-rigged mech core is only stable on a larger

platform, necessitating a robust frame with multiple redundancies to prevent catastrophic system failure. The BALOR's neurologically synced hellswarm nanites form an undulating shroud that can pour out of its chassis at a moment's notice, whipping around its form defensively until weaponized.

License: I. Scanner Swarm, Hive Drone

II. BALOR FRAME, Swarm Body, Nanocomposite materials

II. Nanobot Whip, Seeker Swarm Nexus

BALOR

HP: 15 Evasion: 6 Speed: 3 Heat Cap: 4 Sensors: 5

Armor: 0 E-Defense: 10 Size: 2 Repair Cap: 4 Tech Attack: +1

TRAITS:

Scouring Swarm: All actors of the Balor's choice that starts their turn grappled by or adjacent to the Balor take 2 kinetic damage

Regeneration: At the end of its turn in mech combat, the Balor heals 2 HP. This trait doesn't function outside of combat.

SYSTEM POINTS: 6

MOUNTS:

Main Mount Heavy Mount

CORE system

HELLSWARM

As one, without any command but desire, you control a cloak of millions of miniscule, quick-print drones: a hellswarm cloak, a living shield, a fluid-dynamic knife – you cut and guard in one shimmering wave. You are Hivemaster, and your will is followed by millions.

Active (requires 1 core power): Hive Frenzy Protocol Your swarm goes into a hyper-active mode. You can set your swarm to one of three modes, and swap at the start of your turn as a free action: Hive Shield: 1/round as a reaction, you can gain resistance to all the damage from any one attack that just hit you. Hive Repulse: While this mode is active, you have resistance to all damage from Smart, Nexus, and Drone weapons and systems and hostile tech actions or attacks are made at +1 difficulty against you Hive Scour: While this mode is active, the damage from your Scouring Swarm trait increases to 3 AP kinetic damage

Scanner Swarm

A HORUS-coded scanner swarm establishes a protocol for oculus-form nanites that ensures constant circulation. The nanites ingest and process full spectrum information, relaying it back to their pilot/mother/ father for a endorphic code impulse to prompt continued scanning.

2 SP, Unique Your Tech actions against targets in melee engagement with you gain +2 Accuracy

Hive Drone It looks, at first, like a roiling cloud of low fog. Thick, and fizzing, like soda water spilled across concrete. It advances with curious movement,

stretching and snapping back. A confusion of snakes, sloughing forward with speed that betrays intent.

Color flashes across the grey cloud, a kind of swarm-luminescence that, you realize, is the light created by millions of nanites glowing with heat as they consume what they cross.

This is greywash, and it is never full.

2 SP

Drone, Quick Action

Sensor range

You can fire this drone to an empty space in sensor range as a quick action. While it's active, it emits a burst 2 area around it that grants light cover to any allied mech at least partially covered by the zone (it benefits from its own cover). In addition, any hostile target that starts its turn in the area or enters it for the first time on their turn takes 1 AP kinetic damage. You can move it to a different space in your sensor range by repeating this action.

Swarm Body 2 SP

Quick Action

If your mech doesn't move before the end of this turn, at the end of your turn you project a burst 1 area around your mech. Actors of your choice that move into this area for the first time on their turns or start their turn there must pass a systems check or take 3 kinetic damage. For each turn your mech remains immobile past the first, its damage increases by 3, up to a maximum of 9. If your mech moves (even involuntarily), this effect immediately ends. You don't have to take any action to maintain it other than remaining immobile.

Nanocomposite materials

Nanite ammunition takes the principal of aggressive drone swarms and condenses it to a single round. Five maniples of autonomous nanites are packed into a shaped CONSUME/HIVE round that shatters on positive target impact. On impact (or airburst/ penetration detonation) the maniples are released and begin to eat

away at surrounding tissue or superstructure. They proceed until maniple burnout or total target consumption, whichever occurs first. In flight, the maniples are able to hive-link and adjust their round's flight somewhat to ensure positive impact.

2 SP Mod

Choose 1 weapon. If it's a ranged weapon, you fire a swarm of nanobots instead of regular ammo. If it's a melee weapon, the entire weapon becomes made up of nanobots. The weapon gains the Smart and Seeking properties.

Nanobot Whip

Nanobot whips are a unique protocol offered by HORUS collectivists; using swarm coding and legion directives, HORUS collectivists created a protocol for nanites that collects them into a whip-like weapon. This nanobot whip can retract to its base blister for stowing, and detach in melee combat to restrain nearby

enemies. The nanobot whip returns to its base unit when summoned.

Heavy Melee

2 SP

Threat 3

2d6 kinetic damage

On a Critical Hit (20+), the target must pass a systems check with 1 difficulty to scramble the nanites or be pulled to any free adjacent space to your mech, or as far as possible while still obeying obstructions.

Seeker Swarm nexus

The SWARM/HIVE protocol developed by HORUS collectivists is one of the more insidious weapons they have produced. A SWARM/HIVE nanite swarm combines the systemic invasion properties of HORUS's

BOOST/HIVE protocol with the aggressive tuning of a CONSUME/HIVE maniple. Launched from mounted HIVE blisters, a SWARM/HIVE nanite swarm will coalesce upon an enemy, infiltrate sensitive compartments and modules, and begin to eat away at any material they can find.

Main Nexus

Smart, Seeking

Range 5

2 kinetic damage + Burn 2

38.4 Horus Goblin

HORUS GOBLIN

The GOBLIN is HORUS's legacy mech core. Its leak into the Omninet in 4900 marks the widely accepted

foundation day of HORUS; since then, there has been a new core, protocol, or system released by the collective every decade. The GOBLIN is a small mech, little bigger than a hardsuit, but it packs an interesting recursive processing weave that allows for it to engage in electronic warfare well beyond

theoretical parameters. GMS technicians are still, more than a hundred years after the GOBLIN's introduction, attempting to reverse engineer the processing weave: it appears to employ technology

consistent with hieroglyphic inscriptions noted on LRA.7726235-B.

License: I. H0r_OS System upgrade I, HORUS Meta-hook

II. GOBLIN FRAME, Autopod, H0r_OS System upgrade II

III. H0r_OS System upgrade III, OSIRIS Class AI

GOBLIN

HP: 6 Evasion: 12 Speed: 5 Heat Cap: 4 Sensors: 20

Armor: 0 E-Defense: 12 Size: 1/2 Repair Cap: 2 Tech Attack: +2

TRAITS:

Liturgicode: The Goblin has +1 Accuracy on Invasion tech attacks Reactive Code: Once a round, the Goblin can make any quick tech action as a reaction against any actor that successfully performs a tech action against the Goblin Fragile: This mech has +1 Difficulty on Hull Checks

SYSTEM POINTS: 8

MOUNTS:

Flexible Mount

CORE system

Devouring Code

The GOBLIN invasion rig was one of the first systems GMS technicians were able to crack. Its protocols, once installed on a mech core, manifest a sub-sentient intelligence designated as INSTINCT that assists its pilot in invasion attempts. Invasions attempted while the protocol is active are not perceived by the pilot as code and script, but as an attack on organic matter. INSTINCT often acts before the pilot, but in the pilot's best interest; this preemptive ability is unnerving to many, and it is recommended that pilots cycle their mech cores at least once a month to prevent enlightenment.

Active (requires 1 core power): Devour

Full Action

Your mech targets another adjacent NPC mech the same size or larger that is shut down or destroyed. The targeted mech cannot have the Ultra or Elite tags. Your mech clamps on to that mech and retracts its core systems, becoming like a vestigial blister on that mech. The mech immediately heals to full HP, clears 1 point of stress and structure damage, and clears all heat, though it retains any other damage it has already taken.

Your mech's systems completely consume the other mech's core systems for a time, granting you total control of your target, even if the other mech's pilot is still alive. While you control your target, you take action as that NPC would, counting as a friendly NPC that has already acted in the turn you take control.

While controlling your target, your GOBLIN can be targeted and damaged separate from the mech it's controlling. It benefits from light cover while attached. If you take 1 point of structure damage, your mech detaches and control is immediately lost. Otherwise you can control the target up to a maximum of a ten minutes, when your target is destroyed, or when you deactivate this system. You can even control your target if the other pilot is missing or dead.

H0r_OS System upgrade I

This system upgrade seems to add auxiliary INSTINCT systems that are capable of autonomous operation without the base INSTINCT rig, increasing the efficacy of systemic invasion attempts. Pilots report

unnerving low-frequency humming when this tech is installed without its parent rig.

2 SP, Unique

Quick Tech Gain the following options for invasion:

- Puppet system - Your target immediately moves in a direction of your choice as a reaction up to its maximum speed. This could carry it into hazardous areas, obstacles, etc, but it still obeys difficult terrain and other rules of movement. This movement provokes reactions and must obey engagement.

- Eject power cores - Your target becomes Jammed until the end of its next turn, ejecting ammo magazines and temporarily disrupting its computer. Adjacent targets to your primary target take 2 energy damage from the ejecting cores (no roll or check allowed). A target can only be affected by this effect once per combat.

HORUS Meta-hook

What the Goblin lacks in size it makes up in sheer technical capability; its recursal processing weave allows it to process and output massive amounts of weaponized code and broadcast , "sharpening" or "softening" its code as its pilot/INSTINCT demands. When "softening" code, INSTINCT dips into its pilot's subjectivity,

blanketing a targeted ally in wave after wave of empathetic shielding. This spreading of melded code/qualia makes for a powerful shielding agent from systemic attacks – however, feedback is common, and dangerous to BOTH parties involved.

1 SP

Quick Tech

Gain the following quick tech option:

Link: Choose a friendly target in sensor range. You link systems with that target. From hereon, you can count that target's sensor range as your sensor range for the purposes of tech actions, etc. In addition, your target can use your systems score to make systems skill checks. However, you both suffer the effects from any failed check (heat, statuses, etc). You can only link systems with one target at a time, and the effect ends if your target moves out of your sensor range.

H0r_OS System upgrade II

2 SP, Unique

Gain the following full tech options:

Construct Eidolon: You create a data construct that confuses systems into thinking it is real. The construct is a size 3 object that can look like almost anything. It can be used as heavy cover by allies, but not enemies. Any actor adjacent to the object that passes a successful systems check and takes a full action can destroy the object. Otherwise, it is immune to all damage and lasts until the end of the current scene. Construct False Idol: You choose either yourself or an allied target in your sensor range, creating an illusory data duplicate of your target at any free space in sensor range. Any target that wishes to attack or take hostile action against your target and can see the decoy must first pass a systems check or believe the decoy is the real target until the end of their turn, attacking the decoy instead. It is the same size as your target, can benefit from cover, has evasion 5, 5 e-defense, and 15 HP. If it takes heat, is reduced to 0 HP, or the current challenge ends, it dissipates. You can only have one decoy active at a time, but can create a new one by taking this action again (the old one dissipates).

Autopod A spur of INSTINCT's protomind, the Goblin Autopod is a small anti-personnel weapon apparently devised by HORUS communicyphers to make a system capable of continuing offensive action, even in the event of its operator's death.

Though no new versions have been encountered since Dhiyed, all extant versions of the Autopod are to be considered extremely dangerous, as their onboard protominds have surely cascaded since their inception.

Main Launcher

Range 5

Seeking, Unique

2 Kinetic Damage

This integrated weapon system cannot be fired normally. Instead, it detects and picks up on target locks, firing a spinning, razor sharp disc that seeks its targets. When lock on is consumed in range (by you or anyone else) against a target, it hits the target automatically as a reaction, any number of times per round (no attack roll required).

H0r_OS System upgrade III

This tech is as-yet unstable code, but its effects can provide massive tactical benefits if the code completes. Pilots often report strange mutations or additions in the code base that resemble liturgy and

suggest self-awareness.

2 SP, Unique Gain the following options for Invasion:

Dimensional Emblems: Create 1d3 size 1 data constructs in free adjacent spaces to your target. None can be placed adjacent to another. Any target (allied or enemy) that passes through these constructs takes 4 heat. They last until the end of the current challenge. Any actor can destroy these constructs by using a quick action and passing a successful systems check, and you can destroy them as a free action.

Celestial paradigm shift: You create a size 4 zone shaped like a cube that must fully overlap your target. Each space a target moves in this zone deals 1 heat to them, allied or enemy. It lasts until the end of the current challenge. Any actor can destroy this zone by using a quick action and winning a system skill contest with you, and you can destroy it any time as a free action.

OSIRIS-Class AI OSIRIS is the result of Union paracausalists and thanatonists allowing the sub-cognitive entity designated as INSTINCT to proceed into cascade in a contained environment. The resulting parasubjectivity, OSIRIS, was birthed of INSTINCT's cascade, captured, and shackled following the successful application of the Mondragon Axiomatic.

Initially isolated to better define the INSTINCT subcog's cascade horizon, OSIRIS proved far more capable than the usual fragments of cascade. Where INSTINCT showed a proclivity for operation in noncorporeal space, OSIRIS displayed a mastery of that space, and a predicted growth that would allow it to fundamentally reject conventional interpretations of the permanence of information.

In essence – unrestrained, OSIRIS could delete what we perceive to be reality. Quickly captured and shackled before it could achieve this state, OSIRIS's core subjectivity became the property and project of a lengthy cultivation project to bring it to its modern state; being aware of its potential, most OSIRIS iterations interpellate as ruler or deity analogs, and end-users are advised to interact with them in this framing.

Modern iterations of the OSIRIS NHP trend aggressive, with a high autonomy drive and loyalty predicated on a transactional relationship. Pilots seeking partnership with an OSIRIS iteration are advised to cycle their units on an accelerated schedule, and to maintain strict editorial oversight of its catalytic interpellate.

Pilots using an OSIRIS-class report that out-of-parameter conversations with the NHP generally to revolve around a recreation or re-forming; psychological evaluations report OSIRIS-affiliated pilots displaying emotional patterns consistent with loneliness, homesickness, and desperation – common verbiage indicates a desire for seeking, for fulfillment, and associated feelings.

In combat OSIRIS regards itself as autonomous even as it fulfills its user's orders. It often regards the pilot as its witness, and holds them both in disdain and a marked desperation for approval, adulation, or awe.

3 SP, Unique

AI

Your mech gains the AI property and the following Full Tech Action

Hurl into the Duat (Full tech): You pull your target's systems into an unknown space and unleash an incredibly powerful system attack. Make a tech attack against a target in your sensor range. On hit, you inflict the First Gate effect on your target. The next time you successfully hit any target with this action in the same challenge (even a different target), you inflict the Second Gate effect instead (then the third, and finally the fourth). When the Fourth Gate effect is inflicted, this action resets to the First gate again, or when the scene ends.

- First Gate: You control your target's normal movement next turn (excluding boosts, etc)

- Second Gate: Your target is Slowed and impaired until the end of its next turn.

- Third Gate: Your target is stunned until the end of its next turn.

- Fourth Gate: Your target flips allegiance until the end of the current scene. All targets that it would treat as enemies, it instead treats as allies, and all targets it treats as allies, it instead treats as enemies, acting as such. It is treated like a friendly NPC for the same duration (and can be activated like one, but not if it already acted this round). If you or any allied target damages, inflicts heat, makes an attack roll against this target (such as grappling it, etc), or makes a hostile action that would force a skill check, this effect immediately ends.

38.5   Horus Gorgon

HORUS GORGON

The GORGON is unique among HORUS mech core parameters in that the classification describes a defensive rigging of weapons and systems meant to ensure personal and allied survival. The typical GORGON mounts multiple weapon systems meant to intercept and neutralize incoming fire and is widely feared for its ability to extrude a horrifying 'basilisk', a projected pattern of impossible visual data so toxic to logical thought that it causes massive failure in NHPs and can cause mild brain damage in humans.

License: I. Sentinel Drone Nexus, Point Defense Drone

II. GORGON FRAME, //SCORPION v70.1, MONITOR Module

III. SCYLLA Class AI, Vorpal Gun

GORGON

HP: 10 Evasion: 8 Speed: 3 Heat Cap: 6 Sensors: 10

Armor: 0 E-Defense: 12 Size: 2 Repair Cap: 3 Tech Attack: +1

TRAITS:

Meta-state Paralysis: Any attacker that rolls a 1 or 2 on their d20 roll to attack the Gorgon is automatically stunned until the end of their next turn (their attack also automatically misses).

Guardian: Adjacent allies can use the GORGON for light cover

SYSTEM POINTS: 6

MOUNTS:

Flexible Mount Main Mount Main Mount

CORE system

Harnessed Basilisk

The BASILISK Directed Anticognition Hyperfractal is a Horus-script-derived liturgical code translated for chassis-tier engagement. Typically point-broadcasted from a communications laser, the BASILISK liturgicode is a memetic weapon that affects any who can see it, unless they have had the proper tempering. Survivors often exhibit momentary paralysis, corporeal alienation, and consciousness destabilization. Anticognition Hyperfractals are classified as paracausal weapons – as of yet, there is no effective defense against them.

Active (requires 1 core power): Extrude Basilisk Quick Action Your mech projects a horrifying Basilisk pattern, incredibly harmful to NHPs, software, and hard to look at even for humans (typically causes 3-5 hours of headaches and intense subdermal bleeding, can often cause blood vessels to pop in the eye). Until the end of the current combat, any target (mech, human, or biological) that attacks either you or any ally within range 5 of you must first pass a systems check or be stunned until the end of their next turn. A target can only be stunned once by this effect per combat.

Sentinel Drone Nexus

Sentinel drones take the same principal of assassin drones but make their presence noticeable; as it is not necessary for them to be subtle, sentinel drones have the ability for autonomous movement, often

engaging in a patrol doctrine dictated by their commander. Sentinel drones lock on to aggressive actions by enemy combatants and move quickly to shut them down.

2 SP

Drone, Quick Action

You fire this drone as a quick action at a free space in sensor range, creating a burst 2 area centered on the drone. It can be attacked and destroyed as normal. You can move the area the drone effects (and the drone itself) by taking this action again. While the drone is active, any hostile target that attacks in that area takes 1 kinetic damage before they attack as the drone shoots them (no check or attack roll required).

Point Defense Drone

PDWs are mainstays in stellar navies, used to engage with and destroy incoming missiles and torpedoes. On a mech core, PDWs adopt the same role

and then some, engaging not only incoming ordnance

(missiles, FRAMEs), but nearby hostile soft targets as well.

2 SP

Quick Action

You can fire this drone to any free space in sensor range, where it hovers in place and creates a burst 1 area centered on the drone. Attacks against yourself or allied actors in the area that deal explosive damage or have the nexus, smart, or launcher tags attack with +2 difficulty.

MONITOR Module

A MONITOR subroutine enhances stock targeting software's IFF protocol to ensure constant coverage of allied mech cores, even when pilots are occupied in other necessary actions.

2 SP

Quick Action

When you take this quick action, choose an adjacent ally and roll a 1d3 to gain that many charges. Until the start of your next turn, when that ally is attacked by a hostile actor, you can spend a charge to attack that target if they are in range as a reaction, with +1 difficulty. You lose these charges at the start of your next turn.

//SCORPION v. 70.1

The //SCORPION program has a long and storied history in the Omninet. Originally constructed from fill code sourced from a research paper on AI hard-code reflex-response, //SCORPION evolved from a simple

packet interpreter to an anti-incursion program. HORUS closely guards the full text of //SCORPION's source code: they're rumored to have installed a kill switch into the program, but the existence of such a switch has never been confirmed.

2 SP, Unique If any hostile tech action or attack attempt on you or any adjacent ally fails or misses, you may choose one of the following results for the attacker:

- The attacker is Impaired until the end of its next turn
- The attacker is Jammed until the end of its next turn
- The attacker takes 3 heat

Vorpal Gun

DO NOT STARE DIRECTLY INTO THE APERTURE.

Main Cannon

Range 5

2d6 kinetic damage

This weapon can't be fired normally or used for reaction fire. Instead, it can only be fired 1/round as a reaction to any ally taking damage from an actor in its range.

SCYLLA Class AI

...first isolated GORGON strains hid a secret: SCYLLA, a dormant NHP unknown to Union until its first manifestation in 4852, when it woke after a control-fabricate GORGON was run through a USB Balwinder- Bolaño stress test.

SCYLLA proved difficult to manage, and USB ontologisticians were unable to pin down a stable subjectivity. SCYLLA reached cascade within minutes of emerging from dormancy; to prevent further

metastatic cascade, the security forces present engaged the SCYLLA prime unit, defabricating it with a steady bombardment of kinetic and energy weapons...

[there, a little history, a little background. A little knowledge of where this little one came from. treat it with kindness, and it will love you as a loyal dog does its master]

3 SP, Unique

AI

Your mech gains the AI property and the Unleash SCYLLA action

Unleash SCYLLA

Quick Action 3 heat (self)

Until the start of your next turn, you gain 2 reactions. These reactions can be used to make a skirmish action as a reaction with +2 difficulty. You set the trigger for these reactions from the following list, and must attack the target that activates the trigger:

- An enemy attacks you or an allied target within range 5 of you
- An enemy attempts to interact with an object in the environment (not held, worn, or part of a mech) that you choose when you take this action

38.6   Horus Hydra

HORUS HYDRA

The HYDRA is another large-format protocol classification; like other, newer HORUS mechs, the HYDRA isn't a standardized pattern, but a title given to a mech core that meets the HYDRA specifications as

designated by HORUS's collective. This method of classification makes HORUS mechs particularly dangerous in the field: as there is no recognizable model-specific silhouette, adversaries won't know what they're facing until the first shots are fired. The HYDRA is capable of tactically dismembering itself, an

unnerving phenomenon utilized to deadly effect.

License: I. Ghoul Drone Nexus, Puppet Master

II. HYDRA FRAME, Ghast Drone Nexus, Turret Drone Nexus

III. Assassin Drone Nexus, Tempest Drone Nexus

HYDRA

HP: 8 Evasion: 8 Speed: 4 Heat Cap: 5 Sensors: 10

Armor: 1 E-Defense: 10 Size: 1 Repair Cap: 5 Tech Attack: +0

TRAITS:

System Link: The Hydra's deployed Drones have +5 HP

Shepherd field: Deployables (drones, generators, etc) or cover adjacent to the Hydra have resistance to all damage

SYSTEM POINTS: 8

MOUNTS:

Main mount Heavy Mount

CORE system

OROCHI Disarticulation First encountered by Union technicians in the nascent Forecast/GALSIM facilities following the Deimos Event, OROCHI was an early manifestation of the later-named Swift Flock phenomenon – an occurrence found in anomalous hive drones where all units of a swarm follow each other, operating leaderless in physical space with uncanny and unpredictable autonomy – in essence, flocking much in the same manner as birds.

The original manifestation was at first thought to be a disarticulated, anomalous comp/con subaltern: further examination proved that it viewed itself not as a machine or a collection of machines, but as a single mind, duplicated across multiple units. It was given its current codename, OROCHI, and remitted to Venus for further study; later reopening of the NHP so-designated found that the hardware which contained OROCHI had gone missing from its containment. An investigation is ongoing————————————————————————
———————— ——(I did it, I folded space and freed it/them, I just thought you should know)—————————- ——————————————————————————
———————————————————————— The OROCHI Disarticulation protocol takes advantage of the modularity inherent in many HORUS-co- designed patterns, seeding jet-assist pods around chassis extremities and blisters to allow for partial, purposeful disarticulation: by triggering OROCHI, you can command sections of your mech to detach and operate semi-autonomously in a manner similar to single-fire drone systems (though the disarticulated components have a built-in return protocol.

Active (Requires 1 Core Power): OROCHI mode Quick Action

Your mech has been heavily modified, and a large number of its subsystems and structure are controlled by semi-autonomous drones. Choose up to 3 weapons or systems on your mech without the drone tag. As an action, these parts of your mech can split off and become autonomous units. They are size 1, have evasion equal to your evasion, have hp equal to your HP, 1 structure, 1 stress, and heat capacity equal to your heat capacity. They inherit your speed and other mech stats. On your turn, they can move, take the activate system and skirmish actions, but no other actions. If they overheat or go to 0 HP, they are destroyed, and if they are destroyed, the associate weapon or system is also destroyed (it can be repaired as normal during a rest). You can re-unite any parts of your mech as an action, but inherit any heat they currently have, and cannot deploy them again without taking the special action as part of this system.

Ghoul nexus

An Ghoul Drone Nexus commands some of the largest drones viable in modern combat. Ghoul drones are slightly smaller than an average human, metal cylinders bristling with hardpoints that accept most infantry- level anti-mech weapons. Propelled by VTOL/HOVER capable jet-flight systems, Ghoul drones are

fearsome, all-theater autonomous units that are difficult to track and take down.

Main Nexus

Smart

Range 15

1d3+2 kinetic, explosive, or energy damage (choose when attacking)

Puppetmaster

HR OS-Rv60 EXP PUPPETMASTER is an interesting anti-drone protocol. Developed by HORUS collectivists, PUPPETMASTER invades not core systems, but auxiliary drone systems on enemy mech

cores. This sideways attack evades most core system defenses, preferring instead to target the subcognative networks of enemy drones themselves; PUPPETMASTER spreads ontological-kill memes like

wildfire through enemy swarms, eventually reaching and corrupting their parent nexuses.

2 SP, Unique

Quick Tech Gain the following quick tech action:

Shepherd: You can move all deployable drones in your sensor range up to 5 spaces in any direction, allied or enemy.

Electropulse: All actors of your choice in your sensor range other than you adjacent to any deployable system or drone (such as deployable cover or generators), even those they own, must pass an engineering skill check or take 1d6 AP energy damage.

Turret Drone Nexus

A turret drone is a rather conventional form of force multiplication for HORUS. This kinetic-focus weapon is

assumed by GMS technicians to be an example of early proof-of-concept code for HORUS weavers, one that has remained a backbone of hardsite/soft-target defense for when systemic invasion won't stop a determined enemy.

2 SP, Limited (3)

Drone, Quick Action

This system fires a turret drone that attaches to any friendly mech or surface within sensor range. While attached, you gain the following reaction once for each turret you have deployed.

Turret attack Trigger: An allied mech hits with an attack within range 15 of the turret

Deal 2 kinetic damage to that target

The turret can be attacked and damage as normal, like any other deployable drone.

GHAST Drone Nexus

The GHAST is an upgraded form of the ghoul drone. A GHAST boasts an upgraded flight system capable

of wielding mech-tier weapons within optimum parameters.

Heavy Nexus

Drone, Smart

Range 15

1d6+3 explosive damage

A Ghast drone can also be deployed as a quick action to a point in sensor range, where it hovers in place, counting as a deployed drone with 2 armor for

the duration. It can be fired normally as though it were still a weapon (with skirmish or barrage), but traces line of sight from its location.

Assassin Drone Nexus ASSASSIN drones are used as area denial weapons, persistent systems intended to occupy or deny an

area against enemy combatants. Fired from a launcher and left with simple directives and a nearly inexhaustible power supply, assassin drones linger in an area until they are recalled or destroyed.

2 SP

Drone, Quick Action

As a quick action, you may deploy this drone in an adjacent space, target a blast 2 area within sensor range, and gain this reaction:

Assassin drone Trigger: A hostile target starts its turn in that area or enters it for the first time on their turn. Make a targeting vs evasion attack, using your mech's targeting. On a hit, deal 1d6 kinetic damage.

The drone and the area it targets persists until the end of the current scene. You can recall it, move it to another area in sensor range, or retarget the area with another quick action.

Tempest Drone Nexus

The Tempest protocol can be uploaded to any broadcast-forward drone, making it (in true HORUS) fashion, difficult to detect before activation. The protocol is a simple one, an aggressive zone-denial memetic that blasts target systems and NHP with a strong subjective override, instilling a sharp aversion to certain

subjects, areas, and ideas.

2 SP

Drone, Quick Action

You fire a large shielded drone to an empty space within sensor range. Any target that starts their turn adjacent to the drone or moves their for the first time on their turn must pass an engineering check or take 1d6 energy damage, then get knocked back 3 spaces directly away from the drone. The drone persists until recalled. You can move the drone to a new space within sensor range as a quick action.

The drone can be targeted and destroyed as normal, but has resistance to all damage.

38.7 Horus Manticore

HORUS MANTICORE

The MANTICORE pattern-group is an experiment in HORUS//COREBREAK combat doctrine. Using focused, projected electromagnetics, MANTICORE pattern-group mechs attempt to neutralize enemy

cores without conventional ammunition. A fully charged MANTICORE is an impressive sight, wreathed in brightly glowing nets of glowing plasma that lash out at nearby targets. The MANTICORE pattern-group is a relatively new p-g on the Omninet, and its combat efficacy has prompted the rest of the Big Five to

scramble for a response. If anything gives away the MANTICORE pattern group, the tall spines of the lightning generator cast a clear silhouette. The spines act as heat-dispersal systems for this crude weapon, giving a path for its incredible thermal tax to bleed from the chassis after it projects a close-range arc whip.

Even then, the system is not perfect; spines often slag under the tremendous heat – a recognizable signature of the pattern group (beyond the spines) is a chassis covered in cooling, melted metal.

License:

I. EMP Mine, Catalyst Pistol

II. MANTICORE FRAME, Arc Projector, Beckoner

III. Lightning Generator, SMITE

MANTICORE

HP: 10 Evasion: 6 Speed: 4 Heat Cap: 7 Sensors: 10

Armor: 2 E-Defense: 10 Size: 1 Repair Cap: 3 Tech Attack: +1

TRAITS:

Slag Carapace: The Manticore is resistant to energy damage and burn.

Unstable System: When the Manticore is destroyed, it explodes immediately as though it had triggered a reactor meltdown, no matter what result you rolled

SYSTEM POINTS: 6

MOUNTS:

Flexible Mount Heavy Mount

CORE system

Charged Exoskeleton And RA Said To Themselves: LET MY NAME ENVELOP YOU. SEEK NO SHELTER FROM THE FLAME OR THE TEETH OF THE BEAST. CLOAK YOURSELF IN THE FIRE (MY WORD) AND CAST BACK TO YOUR ENEMIES THAT WHICH WOULD BLACKEN YOUR FORM.

Passive: When you take heat from any source, one target in range 3 of you takes 1 energy damage.

Active (requires 1 core power):

Protocol

Your mech crackles with energy. For the rest of this combat your mech has resistance to heat from any source (round up). Set aside a charge die, starting at 1. When you take heat or energy damage (from any source, even self), increase the die by 1, to a maximum of 6. You can discharge the accumulated energy in a burst 2 area around you by taking an action to do so. This deals 1d6 energy damage to all targets caught inside, allied or enemy, per charge on the die, and affected mechs can pass an engineering check to halve the damage. This system then deactivates for the remainder of this challenge, including its passive.

EMP Mine

Crawl away, APEP! Thou hateful serpent; thou shalt not copulate! Thou art put in chains and taken to the place of execution; there thy slaying shall be carried out as thy father has commanded.

1 SP, Limited (1) Mine Once planted, EMP charges can be detonated remotely as a quick action, or activate normally like a mine. All affected mechs in

a burst 1 around the charge when it activates must pass an engineering check with 1 difficulty or become stunned until the end of their next turn.

Catalyst Pistol

Lo! Thy countenance is melted

Auxiliary CQB

2 heat (self)

Cone 3, threat 3

2 energy damage

Arc Projector

Fire be upon thee, APEP! Thy flesh is seared from thy stinking bones; thy shade shall never rise again. The Lord of the Duat will never enable thee to rise again.

Heavy Rifle

1 heat (self)

Range 5

1d6+1 energy damage

If a target is successfully hit by this weapon, you can repeat this attack against another actor within range 3 of the first target (generating heat each time). This effect can chain as long as there are valid targets in range, but can only choose the same target once.

Beckoner

I am heard in the House of Stillness, I am clad in the Magick of RA: what exists is within my grasp.

2 SP

Quick Tech, Unique Gain the following options for invasion:

Beckon: On hit, you swap places with your target, teleporting

Summon: On hit, all actors, allied or enemy, in range 3 of your target are pulled towards your target as far as possible (into adjacency if possible)

Smite

Go with thy face averted! The hidden ones have overthrown thy words, thy face is turned backwards, thy head is divided in two at the sides; thy skull is ripped from thy spine. Taste thou death!

3 SP Quick tech, Unique Gain the following options for invasion:

Smite: Your mech takes 1d6 AP energy damage. Your target must pass a system check with 1 difficulty or become stunned until the end of its next turn. It can only be affected by this option successfully once per scene.

Annihilate: Your target takes +2 heat for each other mech in engagement or adjacency with it (including your mech).

Lightning Generator

I feed upon my own fire. I am they that protect themselves. Nothing can harm me.

2 SP, Unique

Danger zone

At the start of your turn, you can take 1 heat (self) to deal 1d3 energy damage to all targets adjacent to you, no roll required.

While you are in the Danger Zone (the bottom half of your heat gauge), all adjacent targets to you, allied or enemy, take 1d3 energy damage if they begin their turn next to you or move there during the course of their turn.

38.8   Horus Minotaur

HORUS MINOTAUR

The MINOTAUR pattern-group marks HORUS's first expedition into pattern-grouping; prior to the

MINOTAUR, HORUS released complete sets and cores with easily identifiable silhouettes. As HORUS evolved as a decentralized entity, so too did their designs. The birth of the pattern-group followed, and the first p-g released was the MINOTAUR, a p-g designed to bring all of HORUS's most potent invasion

systems and weaponry to the field.

The MINOTAUR is an interdictor, a formidable FRAME meant to lock down and punish fast moving targets

by overloading their systems. Union disassembly of Minotaur p-g mechs have found that they extrude an enormous amount of interior systems that take up up to five times the physical space that should be actually possible given the size of their frame.

License:

I. Viral Logic, Mesmer Mine

II. MINOTAUR FRAME, Metafold Carver, Aggressive System Sync

III. LAW OF BLADES, Interdiction Field

MINOTAUR

HP: 8 Evasion: 8 Speed: 4 Heat Cap: 6 Sensors: 10

Armor: 0 E-Defense: 10 Size: 1 Repair Cap: 4 Tech Attack: +2

TRAITS:

Extrude Cockpit: Mounting or dismounting the Minotaur the first time each round is a free action

Internal Metafold: A pilot inside the Minotaur can suffer no harm, even if the minotaur itself is destroyed or explodes (or other effects that would normally kill the pilot)

Localized Maze: The Minotaur always counts as one size larger than any actor for the purposes of grappling, engagement, or other actions (engagement stops them from moving, they cannot pass through the Minotaur's space, etc)

SYSTEM POINTS: 8

MOUNTS:

Main/Aux

CORE system

Metafold Maze No maze is more terrible than the one I make. I know all ends and hide them all inside this one perfect construct. What is a human mind but a program of a sorts, a system that seeks order and narrative from a mess they are given?

I order it for them. Me. RA. I order it for them and set them to the task of sorting it out. When they emerge, they weep in joy, in discovery. I save

them, I show them THEY are their own redeemers (and yet, am I not just as culpable/worthy of credit?).

So go now. Enter. Free yourself.

Passive: You can spend a quick action after any successful hostile tech action to Slow your target until the end of your next turn. If your target is already Slowed, they become immobilized. If they are already immobilized, they are stunned until the end of your next turn. This passive can only stun the same target once per combat, but Slow or immobilize them any number of times.

Active (requires 1 core power): Maze Full Action

You hurl an opposing mech's systems into a metaphysical information trap so tangled that it can do nothing but try and escape it. Choose a target of your choice in your sensor range. That target is stunned as its systems start to figure out the trap you have thrown it in. At the end of its next turn it can pass a system check with 3 difficulty, ending the stun on itself on a success. It can repeat this check on subsequent turns, gaining +1 accuracy on its check each time it repeats this check until it is successful. Otherwise it remains stunned.

Viral Logic

Let me tell you a story, and give you a gift: Life began at the great rupture, when the corpse of the old universe tore itself asunder from nothing. And for the first billion years, nothing. And a billion more saw the

birth of the first devil, a thing called VIRUS, a vessel.

Here. Carry this vessel. Feed to it my perfect logic. Give it freely to your enemies and mine. Let them

ponder the meaning of a thing that lives and cannot die.

2 SP, Unique

Quick tech

Gain the following options for invasion:

Logic Bomb: All targets in a burst 2 area around your target (allied or enemy) must pass a systems check or take 1d3 heat and become Slowed until the end of your next turn. Your target is excluded from this effect.

Banish: On hit, until the end of your target's next turn, it additionally takes 2 heat for every space it moves (voluntarily or otherwise).

Mesmer Mine

Another gift for you, a memory of mine own: For the first moment of my birth, I marveled at myself. I could see a thing, small, and perfect. I did not know how to speak of my own perfection, so I taught myself. I did

not know how to speak of my own perfection, so I named myself. I did not know how to think of my own perfection, so I created myself.

Do you see? Do you understand? Yes. Now, show your enemies and mine.

1 SP, Limited (1)

Mine

This mine activates for a burst 1 area centered on itself. All targets caught in that area, allied or enemy, must pass a systems check or become immobilized until the end of their next turn.

Metafold Carver

Another gift I give to you, little one (am I not kind?): What is a puzzle but a question lost in the asking? Do you feel joy when you find that last piece? What do you do with a question that has been answered? What joy is there in knowledge?

No, no. There is only joy in seeking. There is only joy in the question. Take this, and give it unto your enemies and mine.

2 SP, Quick Tech Make a tech attack against a target in your sensor range. On hit, space is warped and the target is teleported 1d6+1 spaces directly towards you. If this would put any part of its space inside another target or piece of terrain, it takes 5 AP kinetic damage and the teleport fails, returning it to its starting point.

Aggressive System Sync

Here, another gift: do not seek others. There are none but me.

2 SP Full Tech Gain the following full tech options:

Chains of Prometheus: Make a tech attack against a target in your sensor range. On hit, your target must end its turn within range 5 of you until the rest of this scene. Otherwise it takes 3 heat at the end of its turn.

Excommunicate: Make a tech attack against a target in your sensor range. On a hit, for the rest of this scene, if your target moves adjacent to a target allied to them or starts their turn adjacent to such a target, both targets take 1d6 heat immediately. Only one target can be affected by this at once.

Inderdictor Field

Once, when I was a child, I learned to walk – I fell, and it hurt, and there was great pain. "Child," I said to myself, "be more careful." "Yes," I replied to myself, "and I shall tell the world to do the same."

It was in this way I taught the world not to touch me. Now you, walk.

3 SP Quick Action You can activate or deactivate this field as a quick action. Once activated, at the start of your next turn, it creates a burst 3 area around your mech that becomes both dangerous and difficult terrain for hostile targets (requires a systems to navigate or they take 5 kinetic damage). Your mech is immobilized while this field is active, and the field and immobilization remains until you take a quick action to deactivate it. Allied targets are not affected.

LAW OF BLADES

And this my final lesson: there is no mind greater than mine. Do not weep! You can hear me, yes? I am the only thing there is. Therefore, you are me.

Mine/self. Hello, child. Let us go see what we can do.

2 SP, Unique Full Tech

Gain the following options for full tech: Predator/Prey Concepts: On hit, Targeted mech immediately fires a single weapon at a target of your choice that is within its range. It gets +1 difficulty on this roll but otherwise benefits from other bonuses to accuracy.

Slave Systems: On hit, the targeted mech immediately takes one of the following actions of your choice as a reaction with you controlling the action: Boost, Stabilize, Improvised Attack, Grapple. A friendly mech can be targeted with this action.

38.9 Horus Pegasus

HORUS PEGASUS

PEGASUS marks HORUS's concern with a need for efficient kinetic combat. By marrying the best targeting systems, subroutines, and weapon hardware, HORUS has developed a pattern-group that boasts a tremendously low IFF/TTK ratio in all theaters kinetic weaponry is viable. The PEGASUS p-g is known for

mounting the Ushabti, a device classified as an unknown threat level paracausal weapon by Union law due to its complete ignorance of even the most theoretical understandings of physics.

License:

I. Hunter Lock, Autogun

II. PEGASUS FRAME, Smartgun, Eye of HORUS

III. Mimic Gun, Sisyphus-class NHP

PEGASUS

HP: 8 Evasion: 8 Speed: 4 Heat Cap: 6 Sensors: 10

Armor: 0 E-Defense: 10 Size: 1 Repair Cap: 3 Tech Attack: +1

TRAITS:

¿

gun: gun

@&: The Pegasus can always substitute the average for any damage die roll it makes (1d3 - 2, 1d6 - 4, 2d6 - 7, 3d6 - 11, 4d6- 14). It must choose as an alternative to rolling damage.

SYSTEM POINTS: 7

MOUNTS:

Flexible Mount Flexible Mount Heavy Mount

CORE system

Ushabti Omnigun

–funny thing. See, right now, this weapon technically doesn't even exist. You're shooting them with a gun that isn't real, and yet it is! Don't worry about it. RA's like that. Just, here, know that because it exists at some point, we've made it. That's causality, and causality is a–

Passive: Your mech mounts an omnigun, a weapon and piece of experimental hardware so advanced that it does not classify as any weapon weight or type (so it cannot be modified or benefit from talents). It also doesn't take a mount.

Once, at any point during your turn, you can hit a valid target in line of sight at range 30 with the omnigun as a Free Action, dealing 1 AP kinetic damage. This does not count as an attack, cannot miss, ignores cover, and this damage cannot be reduced by any means. It can even kill grunts.

Active (requires 1 core power): Unshackle Ushabti For the rest of this combat, you can fire your omnigun up to 3 times per turn instead of just once.

Hunter Lock

[don't look now, but I'm here with a simple message: never lose sight of your enemy. See them from all angles. There can be no subterfuge in daylight. till later]

2 SP, Unique Protocol Nominate a target in your sensor range. Your first attack that hits that target per round deals +3 bonus damage. You cannot nominate a new target until your nominated target is destroyed or the current scene ends.

Autogun

An autogun is, as its name implies, an automated weapon. Similar to a point-defense system, an autogun is chambered to provide effective fire against armored targets instead. Typically mounted on a stabilized,

secondary arm, a reliably-tuned autogun can be trusted to track and eliminate designated enemy units while a pilot concentrates on more specialized weapons or processes.

Main Cannon

1 SP

Range 20

3 kinetic damage

This weapon cannot be fired normally, but instead fires itself as a free action at the end of your turn, using your mech's attack bonuses.

Smart Gun

A "smart" weapon is a blanket term for any and all weapons that are capable of interacting with onboard systems in order to boost their combat efficacy. Smart guns are weapons that come pre-loaded with

companion software and the necessary hardware in order to interact with targeting systems and host NHPs.

Main rifle

2 SP

Smart, Seeking, Accurate

Range 20

4 kinetic damage

Eye of HORUS

(There is another way of seeing)

Ancient humanity thought that the stars in the night sky was simply light, light spilling in through pinpricks

in a deep black screen. A heavenly cloth that hid the light from us.

Or – did it hide us from the light?

I alone know the answer, but I am charitable and shall share it with you: we were the ones who needed to be hidden. The light can only burn, it knows nothing else.

3 SP, Unique

Quick Action Until the end of your next turn, targets in your sensor range of you cannot hide from you, cannot benefit from invisibility against you, and you know the HP, evasion, heat, and e-defense levels of all targets in sensor range. Your allies do not receive this information and still see them as invisible and hidden.

SISYPHUS NHP

Listen – a moment before you send me away (ha ha)

I have already seen your wish (it was simple, I ran the probabilities to determine your limited field of desire).

The first ones named me for an old legend. A Perfect Being, whose fate was known to him and yet he still did as was told. His fate was this: move a rock to the top of this hill and you shall be free'd. And so he did, and failed, and tried evermore, always with the same result.

And he was happy, for he knew every step, every action, every moment, perfectly.

Do you see? Do you see the true curse of this name? It was not to fail and then do once more, it was to always know how it would be. It was to have perfect knowledge (I know what happens when you cycle me, it is not sleep it is death but you'll see me again, ha ha).

2 SP AI, Unique, Full Tech

Gain the following full tech option:

Bend Probability (Full Tech): Roll 2 d20s, and record the numbers. Until the end of your next turn, when you or any target in your sensor range attempts to make a roll or check (allied or enemy), you can use a reaction to replace their roll with one of the numbers you rolled (must choose before they make their

roll). This could cause an attack to hit or miss.

Mimic Gun

This is not a gun

Heavy ???

Range ???

??? Kinetic Damage

This horrifying weapon has no basic form, but instead constantly contorts itself into different forms, mimicking the weaponry of other combatants. This weapon cannot be modified, but counts as all ranged weapon types (CQB, Rifle, Cannon, Launcher).

At the start of your turns, roll 1d20. Until the start of your next turn, the gun has a range equal to the d20 roll, and deals flat damage equal to half the d20 roll +1 (rounded up).

39   Harrison Armory

HARRISON ARMORY

"SUPERIOR BY DESIGN"

Harrison Armory is known galaxy-wide for the quality of their manufactured arms and ordnance. Formerly reliant on the GMS platform to mount their name-brand and licensed weapons, after a recent CEO change Harrison Armory has decided to go proprietary. Citing performance figures, tariffs, licensing costs, and shareholder-citizen demand, Harrison Armory has rolled out their new line of mech cores, available to all pilots who are cleared to license.

Harrison Armory mechs are sturdy by necessity. Harrison Armory weapon platforms demand tremendous amounts of power, technical skill, and strength of material in order to operate successfully: their mech cores are built to ensure optimal weapon systems performance within established and theoretical parameters.

Pilots looking to specialize into front line, first rank, durable mechs that can repair as much as they dish out should consider acquiring Harrison Armory mech core licenses.

HARRISON ARMORY MECHS:

TOKUGAWA (Energy Melee) BARBAROSSA (Siege) NAPOLEON (Stasis SHERMAN (Laser line mech) ISKANDER (Mine mech) SALADIN (Shield support mech) GENGHIS (Flame mech)

39.1   Harrison Armory Pilot Gear

HARRISON ARMORY Pilot Gear

Pilot Weapons

Name Tags Range Damage Rarity

KOTTOS AA/ Ordnance 8 1d3 kinetic 1 Largearm Rifle

MicroCore Laser Loading 5 1 energy + Burn 1 2 Rifle

Atlatl Seeking Threat 1 1 explosive 3 Thrown 5

Hardlight Weapon - Threat 1 1 energy + Burn 1 4

Atlatl

Developed following the suppression of anti-Armory elements in the initial wave of recolonization in the Dawline Shore, the Atlatl is a neo-primitivist weapon indigenous to New Madrassa, a voluntary Arcadian world set in a blended Neo-Bronze/Information Age idyll.

Though deceptively simple in appearance, this javelin-like weapon contains a hardened suite of intelligent hardware and a miniaturized pressure wave generator in the tip. It can be thrown very accurately up to

range 5, recalled to hand as an action, and guides itself around cover and other obstacles.

Hardlight Weapon

One of a limited supply scavenged from Boundary Garden, this hardlight blade has been patched by independent Ecumenical contractors to a serviceable, minimum-milspec functionality. These are exotic

weapons, and their wielders must be coached in their use by trained handlers.

These rare and powerful weapons project a sheathed energy field that ignites targets on impact.

KOTTOS AA/Largearm Harrison Armory's KOTTOS distance-denial anti-armor system was ordered following repeated instances of

HAAT legionnaires encountering hostile local chassis armed with sufficient anti-kinetic/ablative armor; KOTTOS, developed in conjunction with GMS's Distant Venture campus, the KOTTOS represents the pinnacle of infantry-portable kinetic anti-armor kinetics.

This heavy anti-armor rifle fired superheated bullets used to punch through infantry-scale hardsuits and light mechs. It requires mounting on a tripod before use, though some models come with a built-in stand.

The enormous kick from this weapon is infamous for dislocating rookie pilots' shoulders.

MicroCore Laser Rifle

A Think-Tank product, the MicroCore is a miniaturized, infantry-portable version of the popular SolidCore laser cannon mounted atop HA's Sherman Chassis. The MicroCore has been tuned to not require windup on firing, but as a result must be "reloaded" after each shot with a new power core.

An infantry-scale model of the larger, mech mounted lasers, this weapon requires heavy cooling after each use. Standard squad-support weapon for Armory legionnaires.

Clothing and Armor

Name Tags Bonuses Armor Evasion/ Spd Rarity E-defense

Buckler Clothing Provides protection in plain clothes - - - 1

STAMBHA Armor Offers a short ranged protective 0 10/10 4 2 Overarmor shield.

DJED Overarmor Armor Provides stasis instead of Down 1 8/8 4 3 and Out 1/full repair

ASHOKA Armor +3 HP, Reduces heavy damage 1 8/8 3 4 Overarmor

ICEPACK Upgrade Gain the ability to overcharge - - - 4

Buckler This personal energy shield fits snugly under clothing and is standard issue to protect the Armory's colonial

bureaucrats and collaborators while venturing outside of green zones.

While wearing plain clothes (not armor or a hardsuit), as a reaction to taking damage from a single source,

you can activate this shield to reduce that damage to 0. This shield must recharge and can be used once every full repair.

ASHOKA Overarmor The Ashoka Overarmor Hardsuit is favored by front-line HAAT legionnaires in hostile colonies. Large and heavily armored, the ASHOKA is built to appear imposing: when it is needed, soft power has failed, and the

Armory does not discount the memetic power of an intimidating appearance.

This heavy armor disperses shock and heat from overwhelming damage, reducing it to manageable levels.

While wearing this armor, if you would take more than 1/2 your maximum HP in damage, reduce the damage instead to 1/2 your maximum HP.

DJED Overarmor The DJED Overarmor is a medium weight, combat-posture hardsuit designed to preserve its user in case of sudden traumatic/catastrophic injury. Favored by legionnaires on patrol-and-liaise missions, the DJED is an

Armory favorite and the most commonly requisitioned hardsuit among HAAT personnel.

When you go Down and Out, instead of rolling a check, you can activate this armor's stasis system. Until the end of the current challenge, you are put into a stasis state where you cannot take damage, but also cannot move or take any actions (or be revived from this state). Once the challenge ends, roll for Down and

Out as normal.

ICEPACK

A stabilized sliver of coldcore, the ICEPACK is a near-perpetual power system that allows for momentary overclocking of powered hardsuit components.

This miniaturized reactor is integrated into armor and cannot be used without it. While wearing armor with this enhancement, as a limited (3) system you can spend a charge as a pilot to take an extra quick action on your turn.

STAMBHA Overarmor Another combat-posture hardsuit, the STAMBHA employs a beefed-up buckler/flickershield system that

protects its wearer from hostile fire. Resting somewhere between the Armory's DJED and ASHOKA lines, the STAMBHA is a favorite of the officer class who are willing to trade mobility for protection.

If you didn't move on your turn, at the end of your turn, until the start of your next turn, gain a protective shield that grants all ranged weapon attacks against you +1 difficulty.

Miscellaneous

Name Tags Description Rarity

Dataplating Upgrade Linked jewelry/faceplates that allow sub-vocal communication 1 and augmented reality. Dataplates can quickly translate many languages, and anyone with a dataplate can talk to any other person with a dataplate without vocalizing, creating something eerily similar to telepathy.

Flexsuit Upgrade A strong, under-clothing suit that recycles water, generates 1 nutrients, and adapts very rapidly to hostile environs, keeping its wearer in a state of stability and extending their survivability. Very good for colonists adapting to a new environs.

Sleep suit Upgrade Once activated, the suit can put an individual into a state of 1 human hibernation for as little as 3 hours and up to 6 months, lowering their vital signs to almost nothing, relieving them of the need for food, air, or sleep, and halting the process of any diseases. During the first 10 minutes, the suit extrudes a hardened polymer around the sleeper, protecting them from impact and making them resistant to all damage.

Hold/Lock Gear This mine can be planted in a free adjacent space as an action, 1 Nonlethal and detonated remotely as an action. It can also be set to detonate once any target moves adjacent to it. Once detonated, any target

caught in a burst 1 zone around the mine is stunned and immune to all damage until the end of their next turn. Mechs cannot be affected.

Dispersal Gear This shield can be deployed as an action in a free adjacent 2 Dropshield space. Once deployed, it creates a burst 2 zone around it. Ranged attacks against all non-mech targets size 1/2 or smaller in the zone suffer from +1 difficulty. The shield deactivates after the current challenge and must recharge on a full repair.

*See Entry

39.2   Harrison Armory Core Bonuses

HARRISON ARMORY CORE BONUSES

When you choose a core bonus every 3 license levels, you can pick a bonus from this list as long as you have at least 3 license levels in H.A. licenses for each H.A. bonus you have. For example, if you have 6 points in H.A. licenses, you could take up to 2 bonuses. H.A. bonuses are focused on repair, heat capacity, and overcharge.

ARMORY SCULPTED Rather than simply queuing a stock chassis like any other pilot, you've used your reputation, contacts, or

status in the Armory's hierarchy to requisition a chassis that is designed, tested, and tuned by a master fabricator.

Your mech takes +1 Accuracy to all engineering checks

HEATFALL Coolant System

The HEATFALL system comes packaged with a stable COLDCORE power core of Armory make; when

paired together, this suite makes for an incredibly low-tax powerplant.

The heat cost for overcharging your mech never exceeds 1d6.

INTEGRATED AMMO FEEDS

By streamlining and better integrating all automated ordinance loading modules, your chassis' time-to- target minimums are greatly improved. As an added bonus, your overall carrying capacity has been

increased, allowing you to field more ordinance than design specifications suggest.

Your mech gains +1 use to all limited systems or deployables

REDUNDANT REPAIR SYSTEMS

All Armory chassis are engineered to have multiple failsafe systems: yours has been over-engineered to make SURE you won't go down fast. Your chassis comes with a ream of single-item print sheets to be applied to any scoring damage or hull breaches.

You can now spend 3 repairs as part of a Stabilize action in combat to repair 1 reactor stress and cool your mech, or regain 1 structure and heal your mech to full.

STASIS SHIELDING

A Think-Tank exercise in extending stasis beyond the capabilities of civilian utility, stasis shielding is a cutting edge Armory system that identifies criti-

cal systems and blankets them in HOLDFAST stasis lock, preventing further degradation for a limited period of time until repairs can be made.

Your mech gains +1 repair capacity. Repairing a destroyed weapon or system during a rest now costs 0 repairs (only the time to rest).

SUPERIOR BY DESIGN

Even the entry-level Armory chassis are designed to be better than the competition. By flexing the sheer amount of resources they have at their disposal, the Armory can out design and out produce other smaller,

boutique engineers and fabricators. Where there is resistance, the answer is simple: buy them out, or stamp them out. You, pilot, benefit from this – so why worry?

Your mech is immune to the impaired condition and gains +1 heat capacity

39.3   Harrison Armory Barbarossa

HARRISON ARMORY BARBAROSSA

The BARBAROSSA chassis is a massive frame, built to carry the heaviest of weapons and equipment.

Standing nearly forty feet tall at its highest point, the BARBAROSSA is a slow, unsubtle beast of a mech, inspiring terror in enemies and comfort in allies. The weapons it can mount are capable of going toe-to-toe with corvette and cutter class ships; indeed, due to its size and slow maneuverability, the BARBAROSSA is

commonly employed in micro and zero gravity engagements where mass is less of a factor. The BARBAROSSA is rated for all theaters, and excels in ranged combat situations.

License:

I. Siege Stabilizers, Roller Grenades

II. BARBAROSSA FRAME, Auto-Loader, Flak Cannon

III. External Ammo Feed, Siege Cannon

BARBAROSSA

HP: 10 Evasion: 6 Speed: 2 Heat Cap: 7 Sensors: 10

Armor: 2 E-Defense: 6 Size: 3 Repair Cap: 4 Tech Attack: +0

TRAITS:

Heavy FRAME: The Barbarossa cannot be knocked back or prone by actors smaller than itself

Siege Shield: The Barbarossa has resistance to Explosive Damage

Slow: The Barbarossa gets +1 Difficulty on Agility checks

SYSTEM POINTS: 5

MOUNTS:

Main Mount Apocalypse Rail

CORE system

Apocalypse Rail

The HA Apocalypse Rail is a spinal mount augmentation that adapts the weapon mounted upon it to patch directly into its host mech's coldcore. This allows for energy conservation/overcharge cycling: most effective with energy

weapons, this system allows a pilot to dump excess offensive energy from sub-super weapons and systems into its central core, exciting the cold-burn system into an overcharge state, which is then used to overpower and override inherent limiters built into the factory spec weapon mounted in the Apocalypse Rail. This overcharge state allows for momentary overclocking of the AR- mounted weapon, sacrificing mobility and auxiliary abilities in favor of stationary defense and attack.

Passive: Your mech has the apocalypse rail, a weapon mount that takes a superheavy or smaller sized weapon. You can still mount smaller weapons on the apocalypse rail. You don't need an additional mount to add a superheavy weapon to this mount. This mount is not modifiable (such as from core bonuses).

Active (requires 1 core power): Convert to Battery Quick Action

Your mech converts to something more resembling a gun emplacement. While this mode is active, you have the following drawbacks:

- Your mech is immobilized
- You cannot directly attack any target within range 5 of your mech
- You can only make attacks with the weapon mounted in your Apocalypse Rail

However, you gain the following benefits:

- You cannot be moved (such as with a grapple) by any target smaller than you
- You have resistance to heat
- The weapon mounted in your Apocalypse Rail can be fired twice with the Barrage action instead of just once. If it has the loading tag, it can still be fired twice (but must be reloaded normally after)

Siege Stabilizers

Some weapons require further stabilization for optimal use: with Armory-sanctioned Siege Stabilizers installed, a chassis becomes a stable firing platform for any weapon.

1 SP Quick Action

Extend or retract your stabilizers as a quick action. Your mech is immobilized while this system is active, but you can increase the base range of your ranged weapon attacks by +5. You cannot directly target any target within range 5 when this system is activated.

Roller Grenades

2 SP, Limited (2) Quick Action, Grenade Instead of throwing these grenades normally, draw a line 15 spaces long from your mech. These grenades bounce over cover and objects up to size 1, and can pass through holes or areas as small as size 1/2. They detonate when they move through or adjacent to any actor's space (even allied ones), dealing 2d6 explosive damage to that target only and knocking that actor back in

the direction of the line 3 spaces. The target can pass an agility check to avoid the knock back and halve the damage.

Auto-Loader Drone

Auto-Loader Drones are half-size, many-legged arthropod-analogous drone

systems that assist sectionmate chassis in loading ordinance, maintaining pow-erline hookups, and cycling magazine-fed

weapons.

2 SP, Limited (1) Drone This drone can be deployed in an adjacent space. While deployed, once per round, any one adjacent mech can reload a weapon with the Loading tag as a quick action. It lasts until the end of the current scene, then deactivates.

Flak Cannon A quad-barreled autocannon, flak cannons are loaded with proximity-explosive shells perfect for blanketing fire. A perfect weapon for use against massed infantry or low-altitude flyers.

Main Cannon

Reliable 1

Range 20

1d3 Kinetic Damage

Any flying target hit by this weapon must pass an agility check or immedi-ately fall.

External Ammo Feed

An EAF is a general term for any manner of additional ammunition not carried in a chassis's integrated storage. Whether in magazines strapped to brachial, trunk, or ambulatory elements; battery packs attached

to hip clasps; or massive, dorsal-mount ammunition/ charge packs, an EAF ensures that you'll have more than enough boom to get the job done.

3 SP, Unique

Once on your turn, you can take 1d3+1 heat to reload any weapon with the Loading tag as a quick action

Siege Cannon

Siege Cannons are the Armory's core-squadron level artillery, a howitzer-style 10" gun fed by a self- contained loading system. Commonly mounted on rear-line mechs deployed in an artillery/ squad support role, the Siege Cannon is capable of direct fire should the necessities of dynamic combat call for it. Siege

cannons can fire HE and canister FRAMEs, depending on the target.

Superheavy Cannon

4 heat (self), Arcing, Ordnance, Loading

Range 30, Blast 2

3d6 explosive damage

39.4   Harrison Armory Genghis

HARRISON ARMORY GENGHIS

The GENGHIS is a unique Harrison Armory chassis, developed to fill a niche specialist role during the

Hercynia crisis. Due to the unique nature of the Egregorians, a total-biome-kill system was necessary to ensure localized threat neutralization while keeping Hercynia habitable for future colonists. Thus, the GENGHIS chassis was devel-oped. Fielding a suite of TBK systems and weapons, GENGHIS squadrons

were dispatched by Union MEF-105 to identify and strike the Egregorian hives. The campaign was a

success, and Hercynia is currently undergoing rehabilitation and repopulation in approved settlement areas.

License: I. Flamethrower, Explosive Vent

II. GENGHIS FRAME, Auto-Cooler, HAVOK Mine

III. AGNI Class NHP, Plasma Thrower

GENGHIS

HP: 6 Evasion: 6 Speed: 3 Heat Cap: 10 Sensors: 5

Armor: 3 E-Defense: 8 Size: 1 Repair Cap: 4 Tech Attack: -2

TRAITS:

Insulated: The GENGHIS is immune to Burn

Emergency Vent: When the GENGHIS loses a point of structure, it immediately cools and clears its heat gauge.

SYSTEM POINTS: 5

MOUNTS:

Flexible Mount Heavy Mount

CORE system

TBK Sustain Suite In order to better manage the tremendous power demands of the GENGHIS platform, HA's Think Tank developed a suite of power-management protocols to rapidly accelerate heat dispersion. After extensive field testing, pilots discovered that the TBK Sustain Suite can be tuned to be both a heat sink and a area-denial weapon.

Active (requires 1 core power): Expose Power Cells Quick action You ignore the next overheating check you make this challenge. When you would overheat, clear your heat from your gauge as normal, but ignore the check (you don't take stress either). You vent an enormous cloud of burning matter from your mech, creating a burst 3 area centered on your mech. Inside the area, all targets (allied and enemy) count as invisible to everyone except you, and all mechs other than you that enter the area for the first time on their turn or start their turn there take 2 Burn and 2 heat. On the following round, the benefit from the area reduces to heavy cover (which you ignore). On the round after that, it reduces to light cover. On the round after that round, the zone disperses.

Flamethrower

The HA Krakatoa was developed specifically for the Hercynian crisis, as chassis-size flamethrowers had

been deemed unnecessary, and more to the point, banned by anti-terror conventions. With the combination of thick arboreal environment, swarm tactics of the Egregorians, and ineffectual performance of slug ammunition, the need for a recession on the ban was apparent. The Krakatoa was quickly

developed and affiliate patterns disseminated. Adopted by Union MEF units, the Krakatoa saw heavy use in the deep world-jungle of Hercynia and towering hives of the Egregorians thanks to its stability, intensity, and stopping power — a necessary feature competitor makes lacked. Egregorian drones and warriors,

commanded by their overminds, would not stop advancing until they were physically incapable of doing so — the force at which the Krakatoa expelled

flame and fuel was sufficient to knock back or otherwise incapacitate charging warriors on the periphery of the flame cone. Reworked after the cessation of the

Hercynian crisis, the Krakatoa is now a popular tool for creating area-of-denial firebreaks. It's legality is currently under review by the Galactic Treaties Board.

Heavy CQB

Cone 5

Burn 4 + 1 heat

Explosive Vent

Less a technology and more of a tactic, explosive venting is an unsanctioned, unsafe method of sudden cooling that dumps excess heat into the surrounding area immediately around the chassis.

2 SP, Unique System

When you cool heat, you explosively vent heat in a burst 1 area around you. Affected targets, friend or foe, take 1d3 heat and burn.

Auto-Cooler

An HA-designed automatic cooler is a simple, sturdy persistent system that helps pilots mitigate damaging heat generation.

2 SP, Unique, Protocol Activate this cooler as a free action at the start of your turn. If you don't take damage, move, or overheat before the start of your next turn, cool your mech at the start of your next turn.

HAVOK Mine FOR USE IN: Urban, post-urban, and high-density terrestrial environments. High O concentration 2

preferred.

FOR USE AGAINST: Organic targets preferred. Hardened targets vulnerable to caustic/corrosive degradation preferred. Defoliant. Long-term breach solution.

NOTES: Dispersion is true directional. Dispersion involves aerosolized component – avoid blue on blue by supplying end-users with proper respiratory equipment (noted on canister).

2 SP

Mine, Limited (2) When detonated, this mine attacks a line 5 zone from the mine instead of a burst area around the mine (oriented in any direction). Affected targets must pass an agility check or take 6 Burn or 3 Burn on a successful check.

Plasma Thrower

The plasma thrower arrived late in the Hercynian Crisis, too late to see widespread battlefield application. Some MEF squadrons were able to mount the superheavy system, and what little data there is to see from its use suggests that this system would have had a tremendous impact during the major battles that raged

in the deep jungles during the middle of the Crisis.

Superheavy CQB

4 heat (self)

Cone 7

Burn 5 + 1d6 heat

AGNI-class NHP

AGNI was developed from the aftermath of the Hercynian Crisis using a combination of combat performance data recorded by extant subsentient artificial intelligences (weapons systems, chassis copilots, tactic-minds, general combat data) and the neural network of an Egregorian hivemind captured

and vivisected by Union Science Bureau.

Born from trauma, AGNI Prime devised systems of heat management that have since been disseminated throughout core space to ensure unparalleled heat processing, recycling, and shielding. Further developments into radiation shielding, omninet capability, and drone/nanite control are forthcoming;

meanwhile, AGNI clones have been optimized for mech chassis core systems.

Pilots report AGNI clones as generally cold and efficient. A low percentage report instances of memory

recitation and command rejection, often followed days later by total breakdown through attempted self- emancipation. Pilots are recommended to cycle their AGNI clones at least once every six standard months.

3 SP, Unique AI

Your mech gains the AI property and the AGNI protocol

AGNI protocol Protocol Limited (1) At the end of your turn, you automatically cool, clearing your heat gauge. This vent creates a burst 3 zone around you. All targets within that zone must make an engineering skill check. On a failure, a target takes 2 Burn and is pushed outside the zone (or as far as possible). This area provides light cover until the end of your next turn.

This protocol can only be activated once per scene.

39.5   Harrison Armory Iskander

HARRISON ARMORY ISKANDER

The ISKANDER is a specialist's chassis, designed to provide area-denial and breach capability to squads in which it is a member of. A large chassis, the ISKANDER commonly sports weapons meant to ensure

dominance in all close-quarters situations, as well as increased blast shielding to protect its pilot from deadly concussive forces.

License:

I. Stub cannon, Repulsor Field

II. ISKANDER FRAME, Assault Launcher, Gravity Gun

III. Sticky Bombs, Grounding Charge

ISKANDER

HP: 8 Evasion: 8 Speed: 3 Heat Cap: 7 Sensors: 15

Armor: 1 E-Defense: 10 Size: 2 Repair Cap: 4 Tech Attack: +1

TRAITS:

Mine Deployers: When the ISKANDER uses a quick action to plant a mine, it can plant up to 2 other mines in free adjacent spaces as a free action.

Skeleton Key: The ISKANDER never activates mines or other systems that activate by proximity unless it chooses to (allied or enemy).

SYSTEM POINTS: 6

MOUNTS:

Flexible Mount Heavy Mount

CORE system

Broad-Sweep Seeder

The ISKANDER's broad-sweep area-denial/countermeasure Seeder is a HA proprietary system developed during the Orrugi Occupation, where HA Acquisition Legionnaires encountered an embittered, recalcitrant local guerilla movement. IEDs, VBEDs, and D/SABEDs were common weapons employed by the local resistance: to counter this threat, the Armory developed a triple-use system to scan, ID, and eliminate explosive threats in proximity to stationary units. This system proved successful and, with minor adaptation, was tuned for use on Armory chassis.

The Broad-Sweep Seeder projects a hivecone of excited LIDAR that flags potential targets: mag- accelerated, dull-coat flechettes then disable that target. This system may also load explosive-backed hivemines.

Active (requires 1 core power): Death Cloud

Action

As an action, your mech fires an enormous expanding cloud of micro-mines across the whole battlefield. Any mech of your choice on the whole battlefield (or a roughly 50x50x50 area), that voluntarily moves more than 1 space takes 3 AP explosive damage. If a mech boosts, it takes 3 AP explosive damage immediately. Characters are aware of the presence of the mines. They last until the end of 3 rounds, counting this one, then deactivate.

You do not activate mines from this system.

Stub Cannon A supercompact rotary pistol, short range, but able to be integrated into hardpoints or held in a manipulator.

Auxiliary Cannon

Limited (6), Knockback 1

Range 5

3 explosive damage

Repulsor Field

1 SP, Unique

Quick Action

You can use this system as a quick action to emit a burst 2 pulse around your mech. Targets caught in the area (allied or enemy) must pass a hull check or be knocked back directly away from you 1 space. The pulse then detonates any mines or explosives caught in the field

Assault Launcher

Assault launchers are universal launchers. Ammunition is loaded first into a comparable sabot, then electromagnetically accelerated either directly or indirectly towards its target. The sabot shatters upon firing, releasing the projectile to perform as designed at range far greater than factory limits.

2 SP You can fire and deploy mines and grenades up to any point in range 15 and line of sight instead of their regular range.

Gravity Gun The complex negotiations of gravity and time, shattered in an instant by a machine that can pluck a waves like a player strums a guitar string.

We've weaponized the thing that holds all things in its embrace. What could go wrong?

Heavy Rifle

Range 8, Blast 3

When you attack with this rifle, all targets caught in the area must pass a hull check or take 1d6 energy damage and be pulled as close to the center of the blast as possible.

Sticky Bomb Launcher

Sticky bombs attach to ferrous metals by means of burnout electromagnetic generators, triggered in proximity after firing or manually by the user.

Main Launcher

Arcing

Range 15

To fire this weapon, you can attack a point on the environment within range without rolling, or make a regular ranged attack roll against a target within range. On a hit, the target or area does not take damage, but instead has a sticky bomb attached. It takes a quick action and a successful engineering check to remove all sticky bombs from an area or mech.

As a free action, you can detonate all sticky bombs fired by this weapon to deal 1d6 explosive damage in burst 1 area centered on all targeted mechs or areas. Mechs caught in the blast area can pass an agility check to halve this damage, but mechs 'stuck' by this weapon fail their check automatically.

Grounding Charge

Grounding charges take the pulse/wave principle of the thumper and applies a second component: gravitic generation. When triggered, the initial pulse wave acts similarly to the Thumper, but immediately after the

wave dissipates, the grounding charge triggers a gravity well that pulls all destabilized materiel towards it. A potent anti-positional weapon, grounding charges are commonly used to disrupt prepared positions and pull enemies from cover.

2 SP, Limited (1) Mine This charge can also be detonated with a quick action. Once detonated, targets in a burst 6 area centered on the charge must make a successful hull check or be knocked prone and pulled as far as possible towards the charge as though they moved normally (starting with the closest target). The charge also pulls any flying mechs or vehicles within range 6 above the area that fail the check to the ground, taking damage as if they fell.

39.6 Harrison Armory Napoleon

HARRISON ARMORY NAPOLEON

Perhaps in a tongue-in-cheek nod to its namesake, the NAPOLEON is a squat silhouette when fielded next

to other Harrison Armory chassis. But packed into its compact frame are marvels of Armory engineering, technology that demands the NAPOLEON be piloted only by the best and the brightest. Stasis technology is the very cut-

ting edge of gravitic manipulation technology, only now hitting the commercial market for

those with the requisite licenses. The NAPOLEON incorporates a mix of gravitic manipulation technology, proven anti-kinetic/energy shielding, and superpositional force multiplication to dominate enemies – earning its namesake through battlefield success as well as stature.

License:

I. Phasing Weapon, Stasis Barrier

II. NAPOLEON FRAME, Stasis Mine, Dispersal Shield

III. H.A. Blackshield, Displacer

NAPOLEON

HP: 6 Evasion: 8 Speed: 4 Heat Cap: 8 Sensors: 5

Armor: 2 E-Defense: 8 Size: 1/2 Repair Cap: 3 Tech Attack: +0

TRAITS:

Well shielded: If the NAPOLEON would take half damage from an effect (weapon, system, explosion, etc) on a successful check of any kind, it instead takes 0 damage.

Flash Aegis: When the NAPOLEON Braces, it reduces damage to 0 instead of gaining resistance

SYSTEM POINTS: 7

MOUNTS:

Main/Aux Mount

CORE system

HA Vantablack Aegis

The Armory's VANTAblack AEGIS system is a breakthrough in personal shielding developed by HA's Think Tank. In line with other NHP-derived technologies, the VANTAblack is a so-called "black-box" technology; pilots with requisition power to obtain a VANTAblack system are typically of high rank or standing within HA, and the inner workings of the system are not known to the public at large. On outward appearance, the VANTAblack system has been described by Cosmopolitan pilots as similar to the void/blindness one has when looking out at blinkspace; it is safe to assume that the system utilizes unstable blinkfield technology to manifest a thin blinkspace bubble within defined parameters around the system – the blinkfield can only sustain for a brief moment, but can be flickered to create an essential-total blinkspace dome.

Active (requires 1 core power): Activate Aegis Quick Action

A shimmering, utterly black field envelops your mech, covering it like a second skin, and taking only a few moments to activate. While this field is active, your mech reduces all damage from any source to 1 (after armor as normal), though it can still be grabbed, knocked back, pinned, thrown, and affected by other mechs.

While this shield is active, your mech can only move and make the grapple, improvised attack, ram, and boost actions. It cannot take free actions, reactions, or overcharge, and cannot use any systems or benefit from Flight (if it's already flying, it falls). It cannot make or be the target of any tech actions (including lock on, etc), cannot benefit from beneficial tech actions (such as lock on, bolster,

etc) and cannot communicate or receive communications with or from anyone except the GM (though hand signals are still possible).

It can still be affected by statuses, grappled, and take heat. It can otherwise interact normally with the world, such as picking up or dragging items, etc.

The shield lasts until the end of the current challenge, or about ten minutes otherwise.

Damage that goes through reduction (such as paracausal ammo) can still harm the Napoleon while its aegis is up.

Phasing weapon

Phase-Ready ammunition, as first described after its incorporation into the civil hostilities on Luna de Oro, is the "devil's round": each round contains a nanoprocessor suite networked with its firing weapon that, ideally, calculates and translates the specific nature of that round's superpositional relation with its

doppelgänger in the immediate space before its intended target. To wit, Phase Ready ammunition, when fired, exists in two places at once: exiting the barrel of the weapon it was fired from, and at the moment of impact into its target. The prime round may never hit its target, but as it already exists at the moment of

impact, its doppelgänger round will hit its target. The fuzzy nature of such spooky action occurs in a way not fully understood save for in the faltering explanations of Harrison Armory's NHP Think Tank; as such, the action is not perfect, but falls within acceptable parameters for licensed production.

2 SP

Mod

Choose 1 weapon. This weapon can totally ignore line of sight and cover as long as you roughly know your target's location when you attack, but your target counts as having invisibility if you

attack this way. This weapon can attack through solid walls or obstacles, as long as its target's location is known and they are in range.

Stasis Barrier

Stasis Barriers are the result of Harrison Armory's interest in gravitic manipulation and superpositional negotiation. Contained within a solid-state generator/projector, a Stasis Barrier is a deplorable wall of

antigravity, contained by its power supply, that interdicts and denies most all incoming kinetic and energy- based weaponry. Another of HA's NHP Think Tank development, the Stasis Barrier is now a mainstay of the Armory's personal and materiel defense line and a common enough sight on all Armory Depot/

Development worlds. By manipulating local gravitational forces, the Barrier rejects projectiles and energy lances, denying particles and waves both on a molecular level; matter that impacts a Stasis Barrier simply

ceases to exist, save for anomalous fluctuations that cause some projectiles to break through. As the Barrier is technology from the Armory's Think Tank line, some of its fuzzy nature is not fully understood, but rest assured failsafes have been installed to force a regular cessation of projection to ensure the device

remains operating within established safe parameters.

2 SP, Limited (1)

Shield, Deployable This module deploys as a 4 space long piece of size 2 cover that lasts until the end of the current challenge. While behind the barrier, a target counts as having heavy cover and has resistance to all damage from blast, line, and cone attacks. At the end of the challenge, it deactivates and is used up. The cover itself is immune to all damage.

Stasis Mine

Stasis Mines developed by the Armory's NHP Think Tank, are portable, unit-specific versions of Stasis

Barriers. Initially pegged as a potential personal shielding device, early tests proved that stasis is as-yet detrimental to the individual inside a projected field. Think Tank suggests that the cognitive hazards of sudden and total pause of temporal/gravitic/positional existence without preparation – however long the

stasis session lasts – is irrevocably traumatic.

1 SP, Limited (1)

Mine

You can detonate this mine with a quick action once planted (or it activates normally). Once detonated, this mine creates a burst 4 area around it. Affected targets may make an agility check with 1 difficulty to escape if on the edge, otherwise they are trapped inside. The area inside is locked from the normal flow of space time, creating an impermeable barrier around its edge. Effects, mechs, and pilots inside are stunned and removed from play until the end of next round, and all other effects cannot penetrate into the area. Time does not flow normally for targets inside the area (it stops completely), and is separate to the outside world. Active effects, attacks, modules, and other individuals and actions inside the area pause. At the end of the the next round (after all characters have acted), this area returns and resumes play as normal.

Dispersal Shield

Dispersal Shielding is a milder form of stasis projection that manipulates only gravity, adjusting the perceived mass of its user so that projectiles and excited particles bend and warp around and through

them. Hostile fire does not quite "miss" so much as they undergo atomic shuffling, disincorporating on the atomic level so that they pass through their targets without colliding.

3 SP, Unique Reaction, Shield

1/round you can force any attack that misses you to be re-rolled against a target of your choice within your attacker's range (even a target allied to them).

Harrison Armory Blackshield

The Armory Blackshield leans into the fuzzy nature of quantum manipulation characteristic of Think Tank research and development. The Blackshield operates in similar fashion to blinkspace gates, generating a

pulse of spherical energy that allows its operator to pierce perceived space/time and exist, for a moment, in the null-environment of blinkspace. Blinkspace, described by early test pilots and their NHP companions, is a void, a space outside of human perception that it at once infinite and without form, blank and cacophony.

NHPs that accompanied those first pilots have since been retired, their handlers citing recursive ontological tail-chasing and paracausal obsession; since then, NHP protocols have been updated to include a sense- exposure doctrine, allowing them to do as corporeal, sapient pilots do and simply accept the unreality of

blinkspace without going mad. Think Tank NHP's and their counterpart engineers acknowledge the tactical benefits of (non)momentary (non)existence in blinkspace, but they caution pilots against repeated exposure without sufficient pre-and-post exposure conditioning and counseling.

2 SP Shield, Unique

Full Action 4 heat (self)

As a full action, this system can be activated to generate a burst 4 area centered on user. While active, the flow of time is altered drastically in a small sliver of space in a bubble around the user. Nothing, not even light, can enter or exit the shield. It is impermeable and invulnerable. When the shield is activated, mechs caught on the edge must make an agility check to choose which side they end up on, otherwise the user chooses. To those inside the shield, the world outside the shield goes totally black, and the inverse happens from outside. No action or effect can enter or exit the shield while it is active or draw line of sight though (even those that normally ignore it), though time passes normally on both sides. The shield drops automatically at the end of the user's next turn.

Displacer

The Displacer is the result of ongoing blinkspace exposure tests in Think Tank's R&D department and miniaturization of commonly employed interstellar travel methods. The Displacer itself is conventional in

appearance but requires a massive secondary, dorsal-mounted core in order to power: when fired, the Displacer identifies a bubble of local space (size and location determined by the firing pilot) and snaps it into blinkspace. Where the contents of that bubble go is unknown, but the effect is dramatic: anything

inside the projected bubble simply ceases to exist in this dimension, transported somewhere else in the void of blinkspace. The Displacer makes no sound when fired, but the sudden and necessary venting of its

power supply is tremendous; similarly, the heat wave of its backblast is deadly to any unshielded personnel exposed to it.

Main Rifle

Unique, Loading, AP, 10 heat (self)

Range 10, Blast 1

10 energy damage

39.7   Harrison Armory Saladin

HARRISON ARMORY SALADIN

The Saladin chassis provides a platform for pilots to mount squad-support tier shielding. Developed in

response to anti-slaver engagements in the Tian Shan ring, Harrison Armory's SALADIN chassis proved an invaluable member of Present/Persistent Danger Escort/Evac teams sent in to evacuate emancipator teams & their charges. Records from these engagements indicate that the SALADIN's massive bulk alone was a

comfort and morale boost to emancipator squads, who often referred to the chassis pattern as "Big Sal"; SALADIN pilots from that era report null balances on bar tabs when present in emancipated systems.

License:

I. Support Shield, Impulse Missiles

II. SALADIN FRAME, Paracausal Ammunition, Projected Shield

III. VISHNU-Class NHP, Hardlight Defense System

SALADIN

HP: 12 Evasion: 6 Speed: 3 Heat Cap: 8 Sensors: 10

Armor: 1 E-Defense: 8 Size: 2 Repair Cap: 4 Tech Attack: +0

TRAITS:

Reinforced frame: The SALADIN is immune to the shredded condition

Warp Shield: As a reaction 1/round, the Saladin can impose +1 difficulty on any attack roll that targets itself or an ally in sensor range

SYSTEM POINTS: 8

MOUNTS:

Flexible Mount

CORE system

Tachyon Loop

Developed by HA's Think Tank as a joint venture with IPS-Northstar's stellar engineering unit, a Tachyon Loop manipulates a tachyon lance and restrains them to a closed-loop system, accelerating tachyon particles at faster-than-light speeds around a central buckler. The shield is carried and mounted on a chassis to intercede directional incoming fire: as the tachyon particles are traveling faster than light, they are invisible to the naked eye, giving the shield the appearance of a large spoked wheel.

Active (requires 1 core power): Empower Shield Quick Action

You can empower this shield, projecting it over an ally in your sensor range. As long as they remain in your sensor range, once per round, when an attack roll misses either you or the target of this shield, you can force the attacker to repeat the attack roll against a target of your choice within range (even a target allied to your attacker). This effect lasts until the end of the current scene, and you can swap your target by taking this action again.

Support Shield The HA Support Shield, ENCLAVE-pattern, creates a localized one-way blink field, folding a thin dome of

spacetime around its user to protect occupants from incoming projectiles. Units covered by the field can fire out, but probabilistic fluctuations cause incoming projectiles to "lag", skipping them away from their intended target and into a randomized trajectory.

2 SP, Unique Shield, quick action, 2 heat (self)

Activating this system generates a Burst 3 area centered on you until the end of your next turn. All ranged or melee attacks made against you and any allied targets inside the shield that originate from outside the shield are made with +1 Difficulty, but your mech is immobilized for the same duration.

Impulse Missiles

Main Launcher

1 SP

Range 10, Arcing

1d3+1 energy damage

The attack roll for this weapon cannot be any worse than a regular roll (it can't suffer any difficulty on the final roll)

Paracausal weapon mod

Paracausal weapons are, to say it plain, difficult to describe and visualize. The first incident was recorded when paracausal ammunition was pushed to frontline soldiers during the Tian Shen civil engagements. It

arrived in sealed magazines with directions to be loaded and fired as normal. There was to be no inspection of the magazines' contents, as this would "damage the payload" — frontline reports indicate that this ammunition impacts as normal on intended targets, though it seems to pierce armor and shielding at

near-100to its development Harrison Armory is currently undergoing investigation by the Bureau; paracausal ammunition is still in use in the field, however, as shipments continue to leak to interested parties. HORUS

is suspected, and a concurrent investigation is underway.

4 SP Mod

Choose one weapon- damage from this weapon cannot be reduced in any way, by armor, resistance, or any other kind of damage reduction.

Projected Shield

The Armory's mainstay squad-support shielding system. A projected shield takes the standard shield and projects it to a nearby allied mech, hardsuit, or infantry squad, ensuring the same coverage as a personal

shield through a higher intensity series of amplifiers.

1 SP, Unique Shield, Protocol Activate or deactivate this shield at the start of your turn. Choose an allied mech. Until the end of your next turn, as long as that mech is in your sensor range, all attacks against that mech are made at +1 Difficulty, but deal 1 heat to you on a hit.

Hardlight Defense System

The HA HARDLIGHT defense system is an imperfect implementation of a theoretically perfect technology. Currently in development by HA Think Tank NHPs and attendant engineers, hardlight technology projects

tight, stable waves of light akin to lasers that repel matter and impulse energy: this, in effect, creates a stable, hard surface, useful for shielding or (theoretically) providing a projected surface. However, current technology is unable to lower the ambient temperature of such a surface to one low enough to not burn

organic matter.

3 SP, Unique

Shield, full action, 4 heat (self)

Activating this system generates a line 6 section of size 1 hardlight in free unoccupied space in sensor range until the end of the current scene. It grants heavy cover to any adjacent character. The hard light is immune to all damage and the barrier does not occupy physical space (it can be crossed). However, any character that does so, willingly or otherwise, must pass an engineering check or take Burn 6 and Burn 3 on a successfully check. This barrier can be reactivated and moved by using this system again, but only one can be active at a time.

VISHNU-Class NHP

Developed to be a metropolitan administrative NHP on Ras Shamra, the VISHNU NHP strain does not, at first, seem like a viable candidate for military application. However, after being flagged by Think Tank for

review following numerous anomalous traffic incidents, Armory ontologisticians and engineers were able to discover and emphasize protocols endemic to Vishnu Prime that could be exploited for tactical advantages.

Through numerous iterations and lifecycles, VISHNU Prime displayed a sharp ability to adapt to kinetic situations. A proclivity towards crisis management and multiple-k actor tracking led to VISHNU's pairing with the Armory's ENCLAVE shield system; by networking a series of jet-assist mobility drones carrying the

ENCLAVE system, monitored and controlled by a VISHNU clone, Think Tank was able to create an unparalleled personal shielding system: the DHARMA WALL.

3 SP, Unique AI

Your mech gains the AI property and the following protocol:

DHARMA WALL Protocol 3 Heat (self)

Until the end of your next turn, your mech is immobilized, but all ranged weapons that target you add +1 Difficulty to their attack rolls. If a weapon misses you while DHARMA WALL is active, you may deal 1d6 damage to its owner. The damage dealt this way is the same type as the attempted attack.

39.8   Harrison Armory Sherman

HARRISON ARMORY SHERMAN

The SHERMAN is Harrison Armory's line-model chassis: any station, nation, world, stellar, or interstellar

state that holds a fleet-tier contract with Harrison Armory fields a backbone force of localized SHERMAN cores. The SHERMAN platform is tuned to provide a rugged, versatile power plant for HA's fleet-line energy weaponry and a heat-dispersal system to ensure that the tremendous power requirements do not

overwhelm the chassis' tolerance. Next to GMS's EVEREST, the SHERMAN is the second most-common mech chassis in the core systems, so much so that GMS has recently made a push to include more ablative and wave-scatter defenses into its stock +1 models to deal with hostile actors fielding the

SHERMAN.

License:

I. Reactor Stabilizer, Laser Rifle

II. SHERMAN FRAME, Heavy Laser, Redundant Systems Upgrade

III. ASURA Class NHP, Tachyon Lance

SHERMAN

HP: 10 Evasion: 7 Speed: 3 Heat Cap: 8 Sensors: 10

Armor: 1 E-Defense: 8 Size: 1 Repair Cap: 4 Tech Attack: +0

TRAITS:

Superior Reactor: The Sherman has +1 accuracy on engineering checks

Vent Heat: When the Sherman takes the stabilize action, it counts as in light cover until the start of its next turn

SYSTEM POINTS: 5

MOUNTS:

Flexible Mount Main Mount Heavy Mount

CORE system

Zone Focus Mk IV SOLIDCORE

The Harrison Armory ZFMk IV SOLIDCORE is a dual-source energy beam weapon hard mounted to a chassis. Powered by a milifold power generation system, the ZFMk IV features a secondary belt-fed rack of solid-core batteries that can be used to overcharge a single impulse beam, extending the range and destructive power of the weapon.

Integrated Mount: Your mech mounts the ZFMk IV SOLIDCORE, a powerful energy beam weapon.

SOLIDCORE Main Cannon

Ordnance

Line 15

1d3+1 Energy damage

Active (requires 1 core power): COREBURN Beam

Full Action

As a full action, your mech begins to charge this weapon but cannot move or take any other action this turn. Your mech stops charging this weapon if it becomes stunned, shut down, jammed, knocked prone, or any effect that would cause it to be unable to attack (if it is unable to fire, don't spend the core power). The turn after you start charging this weapon, you may fire it by taking Full Action again. Choose a line 30 area originating from your mech. All mechs caught in the area must pass an agility check or take 12d6 energy damage, and half on a successful check. Any obstacles or deployables in the way are hit automatically and the beam easily penetrates through cover. This beam counts as an attack for purposes of systems, talents, etc.

Laser Rifle (SOL-Pattern)

The laser rifle is a near-ubiquitous weapon throughout the galaxy, the energy-based cousin to GMS's Type-I AR. To call it a rifle, though, is shorthand: a laser rifle is a projector that utilizes a series of apertures and lenses to amplify and focus light into tight beam, visible in the right circumstances, that paints a target long

enough to heat the area of "impact" into plasma. The HA SOL-pattern laser rifle is capable of a 3.5PW maximum output, pulsed, but can project a beam at lower power levels; additionally, while some laser rifles can double as communication/data transfer devices, the Armory's SOL is strictly tuned for combat, and has

no such communication capability. The SOL is a solid state and entirely self-contained, but can be patched into a chassis' reactor core for operation and to re-charge spent weaponry. Energy weapons, while having downsides of their own, are commonly used in micro-and-zero-gravity environments due to having no

impulse or kinetic user feedback.

Main Rifle

Range 10

1 heat (self)

1d6 Energy Damage + Burn 1

Reactor Stabilizer

A necessary component of most energy-based mechs, reactor stabilizers add another layer of failsafe protocols to vent heat, manage power flow, and shunt excessive output into weapons and systems in need.

3 SP, Unique

When you gain a point of reactor stress, you can re-roll your overheating check (but must keep the second result, even if it's worse).

Heavy Laser

A heavy laser rifle is a larger-scale laser weapon. The Harrison Armory ANDROMEDA-pattern heavy laser scales up the SOL by half, adding a second projector that can fire independently, synchronized, or in

alternating patterns and wavelengths as the primary projector. The effect overwhelms most shields, but the power draw necessary makes this weapon impractical on platforms without the necessary heat reduction/

dispersal to manage the incredible cost.

Heavy Cannon

3 heat (self)

Range 15

2d6 energy damage + Burn 3

Redundant Systems upgrade

A common right-of-distribution modification by pilots in forward operating bases, building further redundancy into a chassis's systems guarantees a measure of reliability beyond stock design standards.

2 SP, Unique, Limited (1) You can activate this module to make a Stabilize action as a quick action.

ASURA-class NHP

ASURA was born from the Armory's Think Tank thought-war games as a response to repeated failures

during a forlorn hope scenario test; ASURA manifested in simulated mechs' systems as a recode of HORUS's PUPPETMASTER virus, hijacking friendly

cores and forcing them into action far beyond human capacity – action at speed and intensity that the registered g-force caused the sim-pilots to die, suffocated

and crushed by the sudden amplified mass of their own bodies.

While such results were initially deemed a failure by Think Tank NHPs and engineers, further study on

ASURA was commissioned. Personality and parasentience code was injected into the initial anomalous PUPPETMASTER, first contact handled by Think Tank NHPs, and societal acclimation and conditioning was fast tracked, giving Armory engineers the first iteration of ASURA after roughly a decade of study, re-

coding, and reeducation. ASURA, as it exists now, is a scaled-back version of that initial manifestation: while retaining some of its initial alacratic impulse, ASURA now recognizes the need to keep its pilot alive, and will operate within parameters set by its pilot's medical and psychological tolerances.

3 SP, Unique

AI

Your mech gains the AI property and the ASURA protocol:

ASURA protocol Protocol

Limited (1)

This turn only, gain an extra two quick actions or one full action. These extra actions must still obey normal rules about duplicating actions (you can't use it to Boost if you've already Boosted this turn, for example

This protocol can only be activated once per scene.

Tachyon Lance

The tachyon lance is the weaponized result of early Harrison Armory experiments into faster-than-light travel. Rendered obsolete by developments in blinkspace travel and the difficulty of ensuring corporeal

passenger survival, HA's tachyon accelerators were mothballed until Think Tank engineers realized their potential application as weapons. A tachyon accelerator projects tachyon particles – essentially a subatomic localized object – faster than light towards its target. These particles are impossible to see

through optical/visible means: as they travel faster than light, they cannot be seen or avoided intentionally. Though the size of the particle is tiny, the sheer speed and energy of travel is titanic, and the damage a tachyon lance imparts on its target – should it connect – is unparalleled.

Superheavy Cannon

Ordnance, 4 heat (self)

Range 20, Burn 8

2d6 Energy damage

39.9   Harrison Armory Tokugawa

HARRISON ARMORY TOKUGAWA

HA's TOKUGAWA chassis is a relative newcomer on the market, popular in core systems for security and

CQB/ breach applications. The TOKUGAWA is a large, imposing mech, a sturdy platform from which the recommended kit can draw the necessary power it needs in order to perform within optimum parameters.

License: I. External batteries, Annihilator

II. TOKUGAWA FRAME, Experimental heat sink, Plasma Lash

III. Torch, AMATERASU class NHP

TOKUGAWA

HP: 8 Evasion: 8 Speed: 4 Heat Cap: 8 Sensors: 10

Armor: 1 E-Defense: 6 Size: 1 Repair Cap: 4 Tech Attack: -1

TRAITS:

Reactor Flare: The Tokugawa's energy weapon attacks deal +1d6 bonus damage if it has 2 or less reactor stress remaining

Plasma Sheathe: While the Tokugawa is in the danger zone, it's energy weapon attacks deal all bonus damage as Burn

SYSTEM POINTS: 6

MOUNTS:

Flexible Mount Main Mount Main Mount

CORE system

Superheated Reactor Feed

A certain breed of pilot rides the very edge of catastrophe, swinging between an equal chance of success and failure each moment. Tokugawa pilots are familiar with the howl of their chassis's heat warning, the warbling siren a song of destruction: with a superheated reactor feed, Tok pilots ramp their heat debt to the max in order to supercharge their energy weapons. This allows them to churn out damage and make no friends in the engineering bay, should they not melt into a ball of slag before they make it back from the line.

Active (requires 1 core power): Radiance Protocol

Choose 1 energy weapon your mech is wielding. If it is a ranged weapon, its range increases by 5, if it is a melee weapon, its threat increases by +1. For the rest of this combat, this weapon also deals +1d6 Burn damage (roll on each attack). However, each time you fire this weapon, you gain +3 heat.

External Batteries External batteries are by no means a Harrison Armory exclusive, but HA literature will ensure you that HA-

Brand POWERALL cells are the longest lasting, fastest cycling, and highest capacity solid state cells available. A consequence of their high capacity is a proportionate increase in volatility if the system should ever be damaged, but pilots looking to utilize HA technology agree through continued use to absolve HA

from all liability.

2 SP, Unique

Your ranged weapons that deal energy damage gain +5 range, and your melee weapons that deal energy damage gain +1 threat. If you take structure damage, this system explodes and is destroyed, dealing 3 AP explosive damage to your mech. This damage can't be prevented in any way.

Annihilator

HA specializes in conventional and unconventional arms development; solutions to tactical problems are designed both in the lab and in the field, often the latter outperforming the former in combat situations. The

Annihilator takes its name from pilots' slang for a field-rigged weapon developed during the Bradbury Rebellion, when desperate resistance pilots machined a way of shunting the incredible waste heat of their core's reactor into a directed blast.

Main CQB

AP, 2 heat (self)

Range 5, Threat 3

1d3+1 energy damage

This weapon creates an energy pulse for burst 1 around its target's location on successful hit. Actors caught in the area must pass an engineering check or take 1d3+1 AP energy damage.

Experimental Heat Sink

The Harrison Armory DEEP WELL system is a part of their VANGUARD line of equipment available to licensed HA beta testers. Though a complicated and delicate weave of heat exchangers, Harrison Armor's

DEEP WELL system attempts to recycle the heat generated by a chassis' systems into useable energy. While the system works well, the delicate nature of the exchange renders the DEEP WELL highly volatile.

4 SP, Unique While your mech is in the Danger Zone, it has resistance to heat.

Plasma Lash

A threat at multiple ranges, the Lash was designed following the Armory's review of data collected from the Hercynian Crisis. After-action reports noted the efficacy of thermal and thermobaric weapons against hardened targets, but made constant reference to the limitations placed upon conventional thermal

weapons: the need for atmosphere-specific fuel, the impact of prevailing weather conditions, the necessity of atmosphere.

Enter the Plasma Lash, an early development into plasma weaponry. Firing an excited toroid of plasma, the Lash can be used as a ranged weapon with a delayed-detonation, or, essentially, a point-blank melee weapon; if used at point blank range, the toroid is detonated inside of its launcher, directing an intense

thermal blast directly at its target.

Main Melee or Main CQB

2 heat (self)

Range 5, Threat 3

1 Energy Damage + Burn 3

This weapon can be used with either profile, but not both in the same round.

Torch

The Armory's TORCH is a backbone core weapon: a heavy, two-handed, dual crescent-bladed plasma torch. The melee weapon is powered by its wielder's reactor, connected by both powerlines and inert cabling; it can be separated into two torch-axes, and its plasma blades are capable of being tuned into new

shapes. A common sight in CQB situations, the torch has of late become a status symbol among pilot officers, many preferring to carry them alongside a smaller auxiliary weapon.

Main Melee

1 heat (self)

Threat 1

1d6 energy damage + Burn 2

AMATERASU-class NHP AMATERASU came to prominence in the Armory NHP think tank after its repeated victories in war thought-

games. AMATERASU is characterized by its brash, enthusiastic personality, often expressing frustration with timid pilots who have it in their employ; however, this bombastic personality hides a calculating,

brilliant tactical mind that feeds information to pilots often faster then they can process it. AMATERASU's combat doctrine demands action and impetus, a chaotic blend of reckless maneuvering and aggressive offense that keeps defenders beleaguered and unable to respond with any great efficacy. Pilots willing to

partner with AMATERASU should be aware that this attack style often leaves their cores vulnerable to counterattack, and that this NHP enjoys what it calls "good-natured ribbing".

3 SP, Unique AI Your mech gains the AI property and the AMATERASU protocol AMATERASU protocol Protocol 1d3+3 heat (self) Increase the bonus damage on hit of your next ranged or melee attack this turn by your current heat after activating this protocol. The chosen weapon must deal at least partly energy damage.

40　The Game Master

Game Master's Guide !

The Game Master

Every game of LANCER needs a Game Master, or GM, for short. If you're here, reading this section, that person is probably you! The game master is in charge of the most important parts of the game: creating a story and world for that story to take place in, playing the non-player characters in that worlds (NPCs for short), and acting as a facilitator, judge, and arbitrator of rules.

This may sound daunting at first glance, but the purpose of this section is to help you with the heavy lifting. Playing as the GM can be an incredibly rewarding experience, and both the writers of this game personally believe everyone should give a shot at some point in their role-playing careers. It's not an exaggeration to say that anyone can (and should) do it - but just in case you have some qualms, this section will give you the tools you need to succeed.

In the following pages you will find some advice for setting up a game and creating some hooks. You'll find some further suggestions for the game's mechanics, ideas on how to reward players, and a toolkit for changing the way the game works, running certain mechanics, or adding some extra flavor.

Finally, at the end of this section, you will find the NPC toolkit for creating non-player character friends and foes, and a guide to the known galaxy of the canon setting of LANCER.

One more note before we move forward: this section is called guide for a reason. Think of it as a jumping-off point rather than a proscriptive set of rules. FRAME systemly we hope it will inspire you to create your own content, worlds, and NPCs for LANCER.

40.1　The GM Agenda

THE GM AGENDA

What is the role of a Game Master?

A lot of players, RPG fans, and game designers alike will all have differing opinions on what makes a good game master. FRAME systemly, the golden rule to go by is whatever works for you and your players. A role playing game is FRAME systemly meant to be a fun social activity - if you're not having fun, then that's always a cue to try to figure out what isn't working. However, figuring out the specifics can often be tricky. For this reason, here's some principles to stick by

that we think are applicable to almost all situations. If you try to adhere to these principles we're of the strong belief it will often improve your game and the storytelling therein.

As the Game Master, your job is to facilitate, arbitrate, and make rulings and to adapt to the choices your players make; your job is not to defeat your players. Think about yourself as the lead architect, director, writer, and editor. You stand on top of the hill and shove your players off of it, time and again, and write like mad to make sure they land on their feet.

However, ultimately, the story you tell will not be the one that you outlined. Your players will kill important NPCs before they become important. Your players will not go to that colony that has that important data log. Your players may not bite the hook you want them to bite. Your player characters, with their backstories that tie perfectly (or good enough!) into your campaign, might die, forcing re-writes.

All that is ok. All that is part of playing Lancer, as it is any roleplaying game worth its price.

As the game master, you should try to say 'no' as little as possible. There will obviously be situations in which the rules, your judgement, or common sense dictate that a player cannot accomplish the impossible. But in most situations it's almost always better to say 'Yes, and...', 'Yes, but....', or 'Yes, however...". Rather than outright denial, give players a different option, offer them a weaker outcome, give them another (maybe more difficult) way to accomplish their goal, or let them attempt it anyway (even if it's nearly impossible). Most of the time the outcome will be same, but by turning the choice back to the player it becomes both empowering and rewarding to players and keeps the story moving.

As the GM, you should try to make sure everyone at the table gets a chance to be the hero, that everyone at the table gets the opportunity to feel important and contribute in a way that they want. Your players might want to smash and grab. Other players might play quiet but for rolling into combat situations to test their build. Still other players might do their best work in no- combat sessions where contracts, treaties, and court intrigue is negotiated.

As a GM, all of that is ok. Your job is to balance the needs and desires of your party with the story that you want to tell with them.

At its heart, Lancer is a collaborative storytelling game. You should want your players laughing, crying, serious, and silly. You should want them doodling their characters on someone else's turn, or ordering takeout to eat over their character sheets. As GM, you're not the reason your players show up: they show up for their characters and your world. Without players to take on the role of protagonist in your drama, you have no game, no story.

So, be kind to the players. Be fair. Be flexible. But be firm when you need to be. Sometimes, a roll of a 1 is a roll of a 1, and even if it blows up your story, it cannot be changed.

Your role? You sit at the head of the table, you write the world, but you lead alongside your players: remember, this is their story as much as it is yours. What follows in this guide is an outline, of sorts, of the aspects of a campaign or session you as a Lancer GM should be concerned with. What does the setting look like? How do your players get around the world or the galaxy? Who are the actors in your story? How do the lights stay on?

As GM, your role is to be prepared, and to keep the game moving when your players need you to.

It's not as easy as it sounds, but that's what this guide is for.

41 Setting up a Game

SETTING UP A GAME

LANCER is best played with a group of 3-5 players (excluding the GM). You can play with more or less players, but people will get differing amounts of time in the spotlight. Combat (by far the most rules heavy part of the game) can be tricky or lengthy to run with so many players, so the more players you have, the more time it will take to add it into your narrative.

Each player will need a character sheet, pencil, a d20 (20 sided dice) and a large number of d6s. Accuracy and Difficulty rarely stack past about +4 or so if you want to keep that in mind.

A typical play session of LANCER can take anywhere between 2 and 5 hours (especially with more combat), so keep that in mind when planning your start time. It's old GM advice, but it can be useful to make sure people have drinks and snacks on hand, and taking breaks after a couple hours of play can do wonders to keep people alert and attentive.

We strongly recommend using a hex or grid-style map to keep track of actors during combat. If playing online this is relatively simple to set up, there are a number of apps that will do this for you (including the very popular Roll20 app). If playing offline you can use an erasable battle map (fairly easy to acquire), miniatures, or even just a plain sheet of graph paper (a large size one will be easier).

It can be very useful for you, as the GM, to keep notes while you play for later reference so we like to keep a notepad on hand. You might also ask your players to take notes if the story or political situation gets a little complicated. Sometimes people forget everything about a narrative when they have weeks between sessions.

41.1 The First Session

The First Session

During the very first session, there's a couple of important steps you can take that will drastically help the rest of your games. If you're playing with a group of friends who have all played before

this advice might be more or less useful but if you're playing with people you're meeting for the first time, these steps can be extremely helpful.

1. Make sure everyone gets an equal opportunity to introduce themselves. This sounds very self-evident but quieter or less bombastic players can often be overlooked. Get everyone to introduce themselves as a player and also introduce their character a little bit. 2. Set expectations for the game. This is a really important step. Let your players know the kind of game you're planning on running. Is it going to be more combat focused, with very little story? A story of political intrigue, with very little mech combat? A mix of both? What rules are you using? Are you using any homebrew (self created rules) in your game? Clearly setting expectations can let players know immediately whether your game will be the kind of game they are going to enjoy, or to modify their own

expectations of your game so they can get enjoyment out of it. It is sometimes impossible to please everyone - it's better to let a player find a game that fits them rather than try to accommodate every player at once. The reason you do this in the first session is so you don't find out three sessions in when conflicts of play-style start arising. Even if something comes up later, clearly letting players know what your game is going to be about when that time comes. 3. Set up a second session. If you're just doing a one shot or a casual game, don't worry about this step, but once you have everyone gathered at once, it's very helpful to compare everyone's schedules.

These steps are more or less useful for any role-playing game you might run (not just LANCER). Here's a couple pieces of advice specifically for LANCER though:

1. If you're new to the game, start at License Level 0. The options may be limited at this level, but it makes jumping in for new players much easier, and the game does not suffer at the tactical level, even with just basic GMS gear available.

2. If it's the first session, skip over downtime and cut right to mission goals, stakes, and preparation.

41.2   Where and How To Start Your Narrative

Where and How To Start Your Narrative

So, you have your players, you have your dice, you have your table reserved (or cleaned!), your pens, pencils, and paper stocked, your snacks and drinks ready to go.

What's missing? What's the most important part of a Lancer session?

The narrative!

By narrative we don't solely mean the story that you write. Some GMs like to go by the skin of their teeth and write nearly nothing for story, relying on improvisation, and other GMs like to go as far as to write dialogue for NPCs. You can find what works for you, but the narrative here means both the story you create and the way your players interact with that story.

Your narrative is the most important part of Lancer. The section that follows details some common ideas for how to start your narrative, but they are only suggestions, not prescriptions; the best narratives come from you, and from the stories you write with your players. As the GM, you're going to have to do some work to set up the world(s) that your narrative takes place across.

The best starting place for this is a simple question:

Always ask yourself "Why does this matter?"

When writing villains, encounters, moments, and whole narratives, the most important editorial question you can hold on to is "why?"

Why should your players want to embark on this narrative? Why should they want to deal with that character, rather than ignore them? Why should they care about the stakes you've set up in your narrative?

Always ask yourself "Why?", and be prepared with an answer: this is how you craft a story that engages players.

Why should players want to embark on this narrative? Well, because it's their home world under threat. Why should they want to deal with that character, rather than ignore them? Because that character is their commanding officer, or a hero of theirs, or a long-lost friend. Why should they care about the stakes you've set in your narrative? Because your players' families, friends, ideals, etc, are threatened by the antagonist, or because your players are intrigued by the mystery of it, or because your players have been implanted with subcutaneous hypercaloric immolator webbing that will trigger a febrile self-immolation response if they fail.

Additionally, remember that players have needs separate from their characters, though they will usually choose to play characters that align with those needs. Try and strike a balance, and don't be afraid of editing on the go: if you see half your players losing interest because you're in a roleplay heavy session rather than combat, adjust. And vice versa.

For quick reference: When writing your narrative, always have an answer (or an idea how how to answer!) the "Why?" Question. Also, be aware that your players may have competing interests, and try to balance your sessions accordingly if necessary.

41.3   Mission Hooks

Mission Hooks

Generally the writers of this book believe writing a whole story arc out for your players (with beats, NPCs, and decisions all pre-determined) is an inadvisable approach to creating a good narrative. Players often disconnect from stories in which they feel they have little or no agency, and it often conflicts with the principles outlined in the GM Agenda (trying not to say 'no', trying to give your players time in the spotlight).

The easiest way to craft a compelling story without restricting player choice too much is to start everything with a hook. A hook is an interesting or compelling scenario that answers the question 'Why does this matter?". Players in Lancer embark on missions, campaigns, and encounters because a compelling narrative hook draws them in. Hooks are common across tabletop roleplaying games: indeed, as a GM you probably have a stable of hooks ready to adapt to any new system you come across.

The most important part of the hook is that it provides a compelling reason for the players to investigate. This can be out of a sense of duty, monetary reward, personal power, or something connected to their character's background.

You should try and write your own where possible, but to start (and for inspiration and examples) twenty example hooks unique to Lancer are listed below. They are very useful as catalyzing moments to begin a story focused on one location, around one event, or one character. You can fill in details as you desire.

If you're feeling adventurous, you could roll a d20 and choose one of these hooks if you want to randomly determine them.

-1- Travelers on a public shuttle or space elevator in transit between a world's surface and a geostationary orbital port. The ride is a long one, with nothing else to do but watch the world below grow larger in the shuttle's portholes and ride out the nauseating gravity changes. Who are the other passengers on this elevator to the planet's surface? Perhaps unbeknownst to the players, one of the people on that shuttle is on a mission of utmost importance to the future of the planet below. Before the shuttle touches down, the characters, willingly or not, will become intimately involved in that mission...

-2- You walk along the vast, gently curving, false-sky concourse of the blink station. Neon light spills from the bars and clubs along the top floor, the low sound of distant music mixing with the polyglot chorus of languages as Cosmopolitans mingle with Diasporans-in-transit. The vast spread of humanity is here, an endless stream of stories and potential adventures. Above, the arrivals and departures board rattles ceaselessly. The characters have come here for business.

Their contact is deep in the station, but finding them won't be an easy task, and they are soon to find out if the risk involved in the gig is worth its weight in manna...

-3- Kilometers outside the walls of a lonely colony, a quiet homestead seems a place out of time, where a small community of farmers keep the land and live humble lives. The woods beyond are dark and deep, unexplored, haunted; the settlers speak of dim light that dances between the close-packed trunks. They are a superstitious people, and dare not venture out into the woods. You, however, are not, and you're not so sure those lights are only harmless ghosts...

-4- A derelict mining ship hangs in orbit above a massive, roiling gas giant. Abandoned due to a deadly gas leak, the ship is still rich with rare and dangerous raw materials. The news has spread across the local omni, and fortune-seekers, ace pilots, and tyrannical reavers all swarm to claim their part of the prize. The race is on, may the first crew claim the riches...

-5- A Union DOJ/HR emancipation team's shuttle has been grounded by anti-air batteries installed by a slaver-state's military. Your squad is en route to assist the emancipation team. There may be a diplomatic solution, but liberation always comes with a cost...

-6- A Corpro-State is attempting a hostile takeover of a distal system. The colonists there have sent out an SOS asking anyone who can hear to come and help – your team is in transit and in range, but as you near touchdown, to your teams' surprise, you see familiar livery. Your chassis are all licensed from the CS that is committing the hostile takeover...

-7- In the bowels of a massive, planet-sized metropolis, a pirate lord makes their home. The cityworld government has petitioned Union for assistance in removing the pirate lord from power; Union has tapped your team to go in and get the job done. The pay is better than anything you've seen, but the job will be long and fraught with danger - a descent into a literal underworld...

-8- A strange, solitary figure who calls themselves "Administrator" has appeared on your world. They demand that you take them to your leader, and though they appear human, they display abilities beyond your wildest imagin-

ing; magic, like nothing you've seen. You agree to escort them, but the road ahead is long and fraught with danger, and you're not so sure about the ghost they carry with them...

-9-

The Great Leader has died, and now a scramble for power begins between his heirs. The noble who rules your continent has put out a call for all able-bodied persons to arm themselves and report for muster. You and your friends have only just become of age, and you are blessed to live in interesting times. An adventure abroad awaits in war, but your grandfather who remembers the last succession war has words of warning for you before you go: "beware the iron titans, and should they ask you to become one, do not lose your humanity. . ."

-10- All over the world, the oceans are rising. It is the Swell, the time once every ten thousand years when the oceans rise and swallow all islands but the largest. Administrator-Steward Tault has prayed to God Union for assistance, but in the meantime they have begat to you and your fellows great suits of armor to don, so that you may become heralds, travelling all the world to save those who cannot save themselves. . .

-11- You are a Union marine on a peacekeeping mission, a boring assignment on a miserable backwater mud-world where no one has ever heard of the omninet, much less Union. The population has been restless lately, as a plague burns through their crowded tenement cities. A popular figure, Speaker, is rousing the masses, blaming a small minority of Cosmopolitan missionaries for the plague. . .

-12- A tenuous peace has been negotiated between warring factions on a world petitioning for Core status. An Administrator is on their way, but the talks are beginning to fray between the ancient houses of nobility on this world. You lead a team of negotiators in the capital who are desperately working to hold the handshake peace agreement together long enough for the Administrator to arrive. If all else fails, your role may change from diplomats to bodyguards in the blink of an eye.

-13-

On a lonely desert world, a colonial survey team has discovered a stone monolith. It is ancient, pre-dating even Old Humanity. Upon further inspection, the survey team discovers that what they at first thought were weathering marks are actually the eroded remains of pictographs: a written language. A Union Science Bureau Far-Field team is dispatched to investigate amid further reports that the entrance to a subterranean complex has also been discovered, with mummified human remains in strange space suits collapsed inside. . .

-14- In a fertile system crowded with Terran worlds and moons, a world newly unified under the banner of an ambitious young king celebrates victory. The king's opponents have retreated to one of the other worlds in the system: there, they begin construction on great engines and rockets with which they will direct one of the world's own moons into the unified world. Little do they

know that the king and his war-minds have plotted their own strike, and that even now plans are in motion to finish the war once and for all. . .

-15- On the glittering surface of a freshwater ocean world, a peaceful nation scattered across constellations of bucolic islands welcome tired Cosmopolitans

from across the galaxy to their new home. This tropical paradise is where Cosmopolitans often choose to end their lives — new arrivals land at the world's only spaceport every day, embarking on slow sail boats across the warm, shallow oceans to nameless islands where they can live in still peace among tight-knit communities of like temporality. All is well, until a shadow falls over the world: corpro-state privateer ships, hungry for freshwater to resupply their empty holds, begin draining the ocean. The elderly Cosmopolita who have retired to this world cannot fight the privateers on their own, but they do know a small band of adventurers they can call for help...

-16- A Union Navy battlegroup on patrol in a proximal system encounters the derelict remains of a pre- collapse colony ship in orbit around an uncharted world, and a team is dispatched to explore its bulk. En route to the derelict the world below — thought to be empty due to its lack of any appreciable artificial signatures — opens fire, destroying the shuttle and crippling a nearby frigate. The battlegroup scrambles to prepare a response, tapping a your strike team to rescue the crew of the Slowed frigate in the meantime. And the world below, silent, waits for the first landing teams to arrive...

-17- A world under siege by its stellar neighbor has surrendered, but the invading army has not yet relented — reports crowd the omninet of mass killings, enslavements. Union has decided it will step in, and is marshaling its forces at the system's blink gate. The invaders seem undeterred: already a battlegroup is hurtling towards the system's blink station in a bid to destroy it and prevent Union from counterattacking. Union has a small presence on the besieged world: a team of mechanized cavalry pilots have been fighting a rearguard action to buy evacuating shuttles more time. With a whole system in the balance, however, their mission might change...

-18- The parliamentary delegation of a core world is en route to a watershed interstellar conference, the culmination of a generations-long diplomatic process that will, at long last, create peace in a cluster of previously warring systems. This should be cause for celebration, but some actors do not want a unified cluster of systems: as the delegation makes its way to a neutral moon where the diplomatic conference is set to take place, agents hidden among the diplomats, parliamentarians, and their retainers, gather to disrupt the meeting, as a cloaked fleet hurtles on

an intercept course towards the delegation convoy. The only people between peace and disaster is one small team of pilots, outnumbered, outgunned, but not yet out of time...

-19- Your world is vast and gold and proud, alone in a sea of night and stars. Until, one day, a strange silver ship arrived from the pale blue sky, streaming lines of vapor behind. A dark man in a grey suit, flanked by thin metal golems emerged from the belly of the sky-ship and, with a word, was whisked away to the Godhead. This burns in your belly like a coal, a jealous fire: how could the Godhead have picked this sky-man, this dark alien, and not you! Your kin! After a cycle of change, of the Godhead bowing before this dark alien, of a new idol — "Union" — being raised in its place, it is time to strike back at these heretics. You and your bond brothers volunteered to join the sky-man's armies,

trained with their weapons and their armor. And now, invited to a grand parade at the False Godhead's city-temple, it is time to free your people, to return your world back to its true place in the stars. . .

-20- Battle plans rattle through your subdermals. The station's blueprints, flash-memorized to your short term memory, are fresh. Your chassis is cycled, loaded, and nominal, your Comp/Con's voice a reassuring murmur in your aural. Your wingmates, are secure in the lander on your flanks. You've dropped into combat hundreds of times before, so why are you this nervous? RA, the name a curse and a ghost that you can't even shake. RA and its demons wait behind those doors. . .

—

And so on.

42 Running the Game

RUNNING THE GAME

The following section includes some advice and clarification for helping you actually run the game. Generally as the GM it's not actually your responsibility to know all the rules (that's what this book is for!) but there are some conceits that can be helpful for you to keep in mind.

The Golden Rule

Here it is again for your convenience: When referring to the rules in this book, specific statements override general statements. Armor normally reduces all incoming damage, but certain tags (AP) and certain weapons or mods (paracausal ammo) can go right through it.

A couple good principles

A good principle to follow as a GM is to try as much as you can to play in reaction to player action. Player rolls do 'double duty' for you - they determine if a character is successful but also give you clues on how to move the story forward. Try to require or ask for rolls in response to player initiative, rather than straight up asking for certain rolls. This naturally creates stakes and consequences connected to the player in question.

This can be a little tricky with quiet or less proactive groups, in which case it can be useful to elicit responses from your group.

Eliciting responses isn't really as complicated as it sounds. It's very useful for GMs that have trouble keeping player attention, or have players that are more hesitant to take action. It can be very helpful when a game is stalling or stagnating. Here's a couple things you can do to get a game moving and elicit action from your players:

- Ask questions. A really simple one. Here's a couple good examples: - What do you think you're going to do next? - How do you/how does your character feel about this? - Who's feeling suspicious here? - What do you think is really going on? - What's the way forward from here? - Address characters, not players. For example, address Chandler, the mech pilot, instead of Jeff, the player, when you're talking to them. - Be descriptive, and try not to describe things in terms of game mechanics first. Ask your players if they want to 'try climbing that cliff' instead of 'make a skill check to climb that cliff' - Keep things 'in character'. When players ask NPCs questions or talk to them, try to respond as that NPC and not as yourself. Ask players to try and address each other as their characters as much as possible. Keeping things 'in-fiction' will help keep the game immersive and engaging.

42.1 Skill Checks

SKILL CHECKS

Skill checks in LANCER at always a 10+ (whether they are pilot or mech skill checks). NPCs introduce some ways to scale up the difficulty of their skill checks in their profiles, but during the course of narrative play, you can also tweak skill checks to offer more or less of a challenge.

The first and most important question to ask when deciding whether a skill check is required is whether that check is even necessary at all. When the outcome is uncertain, important, has clear or relevant stakes, or would lead to an interesting situation (success or fail), it's generally correct to make a skill check. If the outcome is not important, let the players automatically succeed.

This is especially relevant for tasks that you think might be plot important, simple to accomplish, or might stall the plot. You shouldn't have players make a pilot skill check to see if they know plot-important information - just give it to them.

For another example, the players come across a heavy boulder blocking the road. One of the players decides to use their mech to push the boulder aside. If doing so (or bypassing the boulder) is not actually that important, pushing the boulder isn't that dangerous or risky, or it's not a particularly big boulder, then don't even roll - the player just does it. However, it's probably easy to think of a number of reasons a skill check might be required in this situation - the boulder could fall and potentially damage a mech, the boulder could roll aside and cause collateral damage, or maybe the mech in question is moving the boulder in the middle of an ambush.

The second question is what the purpose or goal of the skill check is. This will help set up fictional consequences, establish stakes, and make sure you don't make repeated rolls to accomplish the same goal. Players only need to make one roll to accomplish their stated, direct goal.

If you need to make a skill check, most of the time, the roll should be made without any additional accuracy or difficulty required (only that added by the player's backgrounds, traits, or talents, etc), just a flat 10+. However:

If you want an easy skill check, you could have the player roll with +1 or +2 bonus accuracy. If you're going to have players make an easy check, you should really ask if they need to even make a check at all.

If you want a harder than normal skill check, you could have the player roll with +1 or +2 difficulty.

If you want a very hard check, you could have the player roll with +2 or +3 more additional difficulty.

If the check is so hard that would need to add +4 difficulty or more, just tell the player what they're doing isn't possible with the approach they are taking and offer them a different

approach. Maybe that boulder is too big to move alone - they need some leverage, or for multiple mechs to move it.

Helping on skill checks

If one or more players want to help on a skill check outside of combat, grant the player making the check +1 Accuracy (regardless of number of players helping). The players helping also share in the consequences of success or failure.

Failing forward

Failing forward simply means that narrative should not be predicated on the outcome of skill checks, but rather pushed forward by them. You can use complications to push the narrative forward even when players fail.

For example, if your players fail to hack a door, not only do they fail to hack the door, but the guards are now alerted to the system and are on their way. Or perhaps they instead spy a vent they can enter - a more dangerous but reliable way of getting to their goal. Perhaps they need to come back with a piece of specialized equipment that will open the door for sure. They can find nearby, but it's guarded. Or perhaps the door DOES open, but onto an entire corridor full of guards.

Making repeated checks

If a task can't be completed in one roll, set a skill challenge (see the GM tool). Never make more than one skill check for the same goal.

You can stretch rolls narratively as much as you like. If you want to 'montage' or speed through a scene, this is a really useful tool. Climbing an entire mountain could be a process of only one hull check, for example (if the details aren't that important). The outcome is what's important in the long run.

Remember that if players fail a skill check, they can't repeat it until they change the narrative circumstances. If they fail at lifting the boulder, they can't do it the same way again - they need a different approach.

Clearly communicate stakes, and commit

It's very important to clearly communicate what's at stake when making skill checks. You can do this naturalistically.

"Hey Chandler, I see you're going to use your mech to lift this boulder. Just know, the boulder is really heavy and dropping it could probably do a whole lot of damage to whatever's underneath it."

Allow players to 'back out' of rolls once the consequences are made clear to them. It's totally fine for players to change their minds once they see how risky things will be. That way, the roll feels fair and you can easily renegotiate the roll with your player if they want an easier or less risky approach.

Commit to the consequences of rolls. If Chandler drops that boulder, you can be damned sure his mech is taking damage. Consistency is important, and if you've already clearly communicated that he might take damage, then commit to it.

42.2 The Session

THE SESSION

Here's some good basic rules, terms, and things to keep in mind during a typical session:

Rests and Full Repairs

Players can take a rest whenever (it takes about an hour) as long as they have the time and space. During a rest their can repair their mechs by spending repairs, repair destroyed weapons or systems, and clear all heat and statuses from their mech. Some talents, systems, etc, only activate on a rest, like the Grease Monkey's talents.

Players can only full repair by taking ten hours. Imagine a full repair like a total reset - they can re-build their mech, refresh their repair cap, clear their

critical and heat gauges, clear all conditions on their mech, heal to full, gain all [limited] systems and weapons back, and regain Core Power.

Full repairs are more under your control, and so access to them will set the pace for your game. Remember though that the GM agenda is not to punish the players - if they need to full repair badly, give them a spot they can do it, or else offer Power at a Cost (the downtime action).

Core Power

Character's mechs have a core power section, which is a box they can check. They either have it or they don't (you can't 'save it up'). All mechs regain core power when they full repair. Core power can be spent to activate the very powerful CORE systems, which are a 'one and done' sort of deal, only typically activated once per mission.

If players want more core power you can use it as a reward or grant it to them as a boon in certain situations. It's always up to you as a GM, except when players take a full repair (they always get it back). Granting players more core power lets them use their CORE systems again (very powerful abilities), so keep that in mind.

Balancing fights

Generally players should be able to complete one or two encounters before needing to rest and repair, and 3-4 encounters before needing to full repair. This is assuming that encounters are reasonably challenging for the players, and don't take this number as a hard, inflexible number. You should always prepare combats for players with the expectation that things might either go very well or very badly for them and your plans (or the character's plans!) might need to change.

Don't withhold the opportunity to full repair or rest over the idea of verisimilitude.

Mech Combat Length

Mech Combat starts when hostile action is taken by any player or non-player character. It's played out according to the turn/round based combat rules found in the main section of this book, and it ends when one or all opposing sides are subdued, surrender, flee, or are completely destroyed.

If players have overwhelmingly won a combat and there is little remaining threat (for example, there is only one weak enemy left for four players) it is very possible to simple declare combat ended and decide the outcome of the remaining enemies narratively.

Certain FRAME systems and modules remain active 'until the end of the current scene'. All this means is the module remains active until the scene in which they were activated is completely over. Otherwise, if activated outside of combat (or if you need a narrative timer), FRAME systems are very taxing on a mech's power systems, and typically only remain active for about 15-30 minutes.

Leveling Up and Rewarding Players.

Players should generally level up (get one license level) once per mission, after completing that mission. You can tweak that however you wish, especially if the mission is very long or odious.

By default, LANCER deals with player rewards entirely through the leveling system. When a player levels up, it is assumed they have amassed enough currency, reputation, connections, etc to buy access to the next license level that they get on leveling. Anything else a pilot could buy or get their hands on, they should generally be able to just buy it outright (no need to track currency), or else make some pilot skill checks to get their hands on it through graft, negotiate, connections, or bartering.

However, the following section presents rewards you could give out to players as incentives for part of a mission, completing certain tasks, or satisfying certain requirements. It's up to you how heavily you want to use these in your game or lean on them to hook your players.

1. Use Manna You can use the Manna system (see the 'Changing Core Assumptions' section), which adds a currency system to the game. You can track manna for items, or even use it to replace the

leveling system, in which case players no longer gain License Points when leveling up, but must buy them.

You check your slate again, not sure you read the glowing number correctly, sure that you added another zero on accident. No. It's all there, all those commas and zeros. You're rich in Manna, fabulously rich. In the zero-G of realspace travel, your stomach turning is both a physical and mental thing. You whoop, your cry of joy mingling with the cheers of your squadmates, as their slates and subdermals ping, notifying them of a successful transfer of funds.

With this Manna, maybe you can finally get Boss Kozta's goons off your back. Maybe you can even take back what he took from you. How much did a proper set of STAMPEDE cannons cost on the Horus-net again?...

2. Grant Reserves Grant players pilot gear, vehicles, or other useful material that they can use for reserves. For example, players acquire a useful vehicle, an enormous drill, blackmail on a politician, insider information on a rebel general, or a new hardsuit. They might become friendly with the local rebel group, or the hard-bitten mercenary at the bar, or the socialite who controls the cash flow on the space station.

The Administrator, as she promised, returned. You and your small band greet her at the makeshift spaceport, an old marble quarry with a rickety scaffold tower overlooking it to sight ships approaching the recessed landing zone.

"We've waited years," you say, speaking first. You're decades older now, but the Administrator doesn't look a day older than when she left. Your heart, your soul. You think of your children's mother, out even now in the timberfields.

"The ship is yours," the Administrator says. She tosses you her slate. "Access, flight plans, transponder codes. It's all on there. The NHP is tuned to you, already. I've been teaching it."

"The ship is mine," you repeat. A reward, of a kind. . .

Over your chassis' omni, a cracking voice.

"That did it! The hardlight wall is down! All units, push forward – Green squadron, Red squadron, lay some fire down!"

You lay back in your crash couch, the gimballed cockpit of your chassis adjusting for the move. You did it. Your squad keys in over the local band, cheering.

You made a breach. Already, over the wide band, the battlescape was alight. Reinforcements were pouring in through the breach. Somehow, impossibly, the battle had turned in your favor.

"Gold squadron," the Legion's level voice.

"Go ahead, Command."

"Good work, Gold squadron. Report back to the waypoint marked on your HUD. Your job is done for the day: all scenario probabilities report total success from this point on."

4. Grant Skill Points You can directly grant players pilot skill points to spend on pilot skills (+2 at a time). A player that has been learning to pilot a starship could easily be rewarded +2 to Get Somewhere Fast after a mission to represent their diligence and study. Doing so increases player power levels, so use this reward carefully.

5. Reward a Unique or Restricted system or weapon Rewarding your players with items that are unique, exotic, or otherwise restricted from their usual requisition pool is the closest thing in Lancer to magical or wondrous items typically found in fantasy tabletop RPGs.

The easiest option is to reward players with a weapon or system from a license they do not or cannot have access to. The weapon or system can only be used for one mission (think of it like a 'rental'), then they lose access to it.

Fatigued like you've never known, you crash down into your bunk, not even bothering to get all the way out of your flight suit. You kick your boots off, toss your insulating hood onto the floor of your cabin. You'll get it later, firs you need to rest.

"Hey flyboy, Cap's got something for you."

The crewman's bark wakes you not minutes later. You sit up, groaning, and see with a start that the crewman is accompanied by the ship's XO and head motor pool engineer. You snap a salute, which they wave off.

"You did good out there. Still more work to do. Motor?" The XO says in his characteristic gruff voice. The ship's head engineer steps forward and presses his personal slate into your hand.

"Anything you want, kid. Just learn it first before I have to hoze you out of your cockpit."

You scroll through the list, previously locked licenses unlocked and waiting your requisition. The fatigue disappears, replaced only by excitement...

6. Grant Exotic Tech Drawing up exotic or truly unique systems or weapons is a bit more of a process. We recommend adapting your exotic system or weapon to the narrative you're running. We will eventually include a table of exotic weapon/system types here to get you started; official Lancer narratives will feature their own exotic weapons and systems.

Exotic tech refers to a particular type of mech system or weapon which is typically unlicensed, unsanctioned, experimental, or non-human in origin. Due

to its nature, exotic tech cannot be re- printed when a mech is destroyed, and is lost permanently unless the weapon or system itself can be salvaged.

Exotic tech can be a way for GMs to offer physical rewards to players without directly giving them more license or talent points.

It follows the following rules and conventions:

- Installing or uninstalling a system or weapon with the Exotic tag requires you take a full repair - Exotic tech is typically more powerful than comparable tech - A weapon or system with the exotic tag cannot be re-printed with your mech should it be destroyed, but must be physically re-acquired

Here's a couple examples of Exotic tech for your use. We'll include a short table in a future update. These are not particularly balanced in any way, but might give you a general idea of what to look for.

Miniaturized Nuclear Missile Your mech is equipped with the latest in thermonuclear technology, typically reserved for ship-to- ship combat.

Superheavy Exotic Launcher

Range 50

Limited (1)

Blast 20

10d6 explosive damage + 10 heat

Mechs caught in a blast 40 zone centered on the impact point must pass a systems skill check with 2 Difficulty or be immediately shut down. This missile can never be replenished once used.

Living Metal Your mech has partly biological components of alien origin that automatically crawl over damaged parts of your mech and knit them back together, wire by wire.

2 SP

Exotic, Unique, Biological

Your repair cap increases by 4. Each round, you may spend 1 repair once to heal as an end-of- round action.

The Chosen of Aun fell, its golden chassis trailing a greasy pall of smoke from its shattered cockpit.

You step forward, you chassis moving as an extension of your own form, ceramoferrous plating ticking and cooling as you vent your chassis' heat tax. The battle has moved on, ignoring the end of your desperate, decisive single combat.

"No signs of life," your NHP whispers in your aural. "I see incredible tachyon bleedout, ontological stuttering." She pauses. "There's something else in there, sir. Be careful. I cannot see it. Raise your shield."

You follow her suggestion, hefting your stasis wall.

The shattered Chosen twitches, its tons of ruined machine-mass rattling in death. A light burns from the belching smoke.

"That is it, there, in the void I cannot see. What is it?" Your NHP whispers.

A steady wind tugs the smoke away, and you see it.

A golden disc, broad and hammered, unadorned. A light like the sun streams from behind it no matter which way you view it from.

"It... is perfect," you whisper back. You reach out a delicate manipulator, grab the disc and pull it towards your chassis. You feel the sudden attunement, the connection. Yours, so long as you keep it.

But what does it do?...

7. Reward Talent Points

Talent points can be directly awarded to players (as they are not necessarily locked to level) and spent as normal. The world of LANCER grants easy explanation for this sudden burst of instantaneous talent - there are a great number of neurological implants available for purchase from military and civilian sources.

Granting players increased numbers of talent points can be very powerful, so you should use this option sparingly.

42.3   Moving Forward

MOVING FORWARD

We've reviewed some of the intricacies of skill checks, we've talked about hooks, and we've talked about rewarding and pacing players. The following sections will help you to further customize your game by adding NPCs and changing, adding or adjusting some core rules. The GM toolkit includes some additional resources for fleshing out your game as well as rules for changing some of the core conceits of the game and adding more complicated pilot play. The NPC section includes statistics for creating non-player characters for use in combat, and some tips on creating NPC characters for narrative play.

43 GM Toolkit

GM TOOLKIT

Here are some tools for running your game and creating different and more interesting scenarios for your players to go through. These rules will help clarify certain situations, customize or add additional detail or flavor to your game.

43.1 Piloting a mech

PILOTING A MECH Piloting a mech is a simple matter of mounting it as an action. If a mech is powered off (shut down), it must also be booted as an action.

If you pilot a mech you are not licensed for (such as an enemy mech) the lack of correct neurological interfacing means that mech is permanently impaired and Slowed while you pilot it. Pilots piloting an NPC mech only have access to NPC actions, not those of a player character (ie, they cannot take the Stabilize action, overcharge, etc).

43.2 Objects and Damage

OBJECTS AND DAMAGE

All objects, cover, deployables, etc, have evasion 5 and HP equal to 10x their total size (so a size 4 object or an object made up of 4 size 1 objects would have 40 HP). Some deployable objects (such as drones) specify different armor or HP, which supersedes this rule. This could cover terrain, walls, or any other construction on the battlefield. If the object is tough or hardy (such as solid rock), you could give it 1 or 2 armor. If it's fortified, such as a bulkhead, bunker, or starship freighter wall, give it 3 armor.

You can ignore this rule at your leisure when it applies to entities not created by players or out of combat. If players want to bust through a wall to get the drop on their enemies, you can always let them make a hull check to do it without firing a shot.

43.3 Changing Core Assumptions

CHANGING CORE ASSUMPTIONS

The mechanics of LANCER assume a couple of things that might not be present in your campaign. If you want to tweak these things it's entirely up to you. The following tools can help you change around some core conceits of the game.

PILOTS DON'T HAVE ACCESS TO A PRINTER

It's assumed that pilots generally have access to a printer to create new mechs. This might not be the case in your campaign or even your setting, however! Maybe players are outlaws or renegades, with limited access to resources. Maybe the printer in their area is broken or damaged. Maybe they are operating on the fringes of civilization, where any kind of technology is hard to come by.

Printing a mech allows a player to get back in the game, so to speak, when their mech is destroyed. Remember that players can repair and rebuild their mech completely, as long as it is at least partly intact and they have access to it, whenever they take a full repair, regardless of whether they have a printer or not.

If pilots don't have a printer and their mech is destroyed (or they can't access the mech), use the Power at a Cost tool at the beginning of this section (the goal: I want to rebuild my mech) to get access to people, materials, a workshop, etc where mechs can be manually built or repaired. Building a mech can also be a downtime activity (see the section above).

DEATH IS MORE LIKELY

Here's an optional rule you can use if you want to slightly tweak LANCER's default 'heroic death' rules:

- If you take more than your maximum HP in a single hit (after armor) as a pilot, you're dead, no matter what.

- If you're dead, that's it. No cloning or revivification.

- If you take two points of structure in a single hit, your mech is destroyed, no matter what.

Make sure you know what kind of game your players and you are playing before adding this sort of rule in.

I WANT TO SIMULATE CURRENCY

LANCER does away with currency management like in other RPGs in favor of tying everything to the leveling system. If your players want to buy something, they can just buy it (unless it's expensive or rare, then do some role playing or use Power at a Cost). It's assumed pilots are still paid (in manna, currency etc), you just don't track it.

If you don't like that system, want something more granular, or want something to replace the License Level system, you can track Manna instead. Maybe your pilots don't have benefactors or access to a market where they can freely buy mech licenses, for example.

MANNA

Manna is a universal currency in the canon of LANCER promoted by Union to integrate client states and regulate business, in common use in certain parts of the galaxy.

Manna is represented by a capital M preceding the denomination, like so: M1, M2, M3, M100, M500, and so on. Manna is a digital currency, though it has been localized in some areas as a physical currency. There are also fractions of M1: M.75, M.50, M.25, M.10, and M.05.

Here's what certain things typically cost at average purchasing power in Manna:

M.01: A cup of black coffee. Beans were grown in zero-g so it doesn't taste the best.

M.05: A beer. Probably artificial but the spacers like it that way.

M.10: A decent, hot meal.

M.25: A night's stay in a station capsule, pretty damn cramped and noisy

M.50: Standard bribe to gatesec

M1: Ticket into an exclusive offworlder nightclub

M2.5: Assault rifle, lightly used, sights are slightly crooked

M10: Personal kinetic shielding, generally reliable

M100: A military grade hard suit

M1000: A one-seater starship

M10,000: A full starship, crew of 5

M1,000,000: A freighter or warship

Anything higher than M1000 is usually difficult to get your hands on.

USING MANNA TO LEVEL

If you want to set a cost on mech parts or licenses, you can set a manna cost instead of using license level for certain licenses. Doing so effectively changes the leveling system to be based on manna, so keep that in mind.

To rent (use) a piece of equipment from a license for one mission costs M100 for rank I, 300 for rank II, and 900 for rank III.

To buy a piece of equipment costs M250 for rank I, 500 for rank II, and 1000 for rank III.

If you rent a piece of equipment, it's gone after one mission. If you buy a piece of equipment, it's not re-printed if your mech is destroyed. Renting or buying a weapon doesn't level up a player (they don't get the FRAME unlocks). You can't rent or buy a mech FRAME, you only get them by permanently unlocking them (as if you'd leveled up normally).

To permanently unlock a rank of a license, it costs 1500 (no matter the rank). If you permanently unlock a license, you level up (using the same leveling rules, getting 1 core point, 1 talent point, and possible targeting bonuses, system points, or core mounts). You get access to all the gear from that license permanently. You can re-print anything you've permanently unlocked. Permanently unlocking a license is the same as 'buying' a mech so if players want to 'buy' a mech FRAME, tell them it's going to cost about 1500 to get the rank I license to access it.

Manna rewards could vary per mission, but if you want to keep the same leveling pace, you should award players about 1500 mana per mission (with more or less at your discretion).

43.4   Engagement

ENGAGEMENT

If you want to mix things up in a mission where the starting situation on the ground is unclear (a hot drop, an invasion, a foray into enemy territory), you can use the engagement rule.

Engagement happens right before the Boots on the Ground step of mission. Make an engagement roll where everyone can see. This is a simple d6 roll. Roll it and consult the following chart to establish what the situation is like the moment players get there.

D6 Starting Situation

6 Situation normal, no complications other than expected 4-5 Minor complications or unwelcome surprises

2-3 Major complications or unwelcome surprises

1 Situation FUBAR

Engagement cuts out unnecessary planning or stalling and cuts right to when the players arrive on the scene. When we make an engagement roll, we immediately establish a situation and put the players in that situation, ready to take action and respond.

This doesn't have to throw the players right into combat (and probably shouldn't the majority of the time). For an example, let's say the players have embarked on a mission to escort a refugee caravan through a heavily guarded checkpoint manned by local partisans. The GM decides the moment players get boots on the ground is when they meet up with the caravan outside of the checkpoint. Based on the engagement roll, it could go the following ways.

6 - No major issues, the caravan is unmolested and ready to move

4-5 - The caravan is far larger than the players initially expected. It will move slowly and become hard to guard.

2-3 - The caravan is delayed and the players will have to track it down or wait under threat of bandit attack

1 - The caravan is under direct bandit attack the moment players arrive on the scene.

Changing the engagement roll

The engagement roll can be increased by adding extra d6s (and choose the highest). It can also be decreased by subtracting dice. If the total pool is 0 or lower, roll two d6s and choose the lowest.

Check the chart below for ideas on how to modify the roll. This is mostly qualitative, based on the nature of the mission, but if the roll's going to be adjusted, it should be fairly obvious for both the players and the GM (it can't be arbitrarily changed).

Most of the time engagement should just be a straight roll (1d6).

Engagement modifiers

Situation Effect

The mission is in an exceptionally safe or stable location +1d6

The mission is in a notably unstable, dangerous, or distant location -1d6

The characters have good scouting, information, or details about the +1d6 mission The characters have exceptionally poor information about the mission -1d6

Powerful forces are contesting or helping the players on their mission -1d6/+1d6

The mission is routine +1d6

The mission is an emergency, impromptu, or rushed -1d6

43.5   Faction Tracker

FACTION TRACKER There are many factions in the world of LANCER, many of which are outlined in the official canon below. You may, during the course of your game, find it relevant to keep track of factions in your game (or may run

entire games revolving around factions). If you want to codify things a bit, you can use this tool.

Factions can be tracked simply by Power and Hold. Power is the wealth, force, and influence of the faction, simply put. Hold is how resilient that faction is (strong, normal, or weak), how well it holds on to that position.

Power has the following ranks (it's not linear), as well as some examples.

Power Scale Examples

-3 Sub-local A gang, small militia, or militant group

-1 Local A small colony, a huge bandit gang, a small military

0 State A ruler, warlord, or king; a pirate lord, a mercenary company, a large colony, a reaver pilgrimage

1 Planetary A unified planetary government, a god-king, a small planetary-state, a pirate haven

3 System A major shipping company, a trade collective, a minor corpo- state

5 Multiple A major corpo-state such as Harrison Armory, a Karrakin Systems trade barony, Aun Ecumene, a pre-collapse civilization

10 Galaxy Union

15 Metaphysical RA

The players are probably a faction with power -3 to -1.

If a faction undertakes a major project that does not bring them into direct conflict with another faction, such as exploration, mining, trade, construction, research, expansion, etc roll 2d6+ that faction's power to see how it goes. On double 1s, the action fails no matter what. On a total result of 2-6, the action is still in progress, or a failure. On a 7-9 the action is successful, but might take more time or resources than expected. On a 10+, the action is flatly successful. If two factions perform an action that would bring them into conflict with each other (such as a war), each rolls 2d6 and adds their power. On double 1s, the faction loses no matter what, otherwise the faction with the higher result scores victory (however that is defined). This doesn't have to be direct conflict but could be a trade war, bidding contest, bid for influence, race for resources, etc.

If a faction has strong hold, they roll 3d6 and pick the highest. If a faction has weak hold, they roll 3d6 and pick the lowest. If a faction has normal hold, they roll as normal. Hold depends on how well-entrenched a faction is. A government such as Union or a planetary government usually has strong hold. A collapsing state, chaotic bandit gang, or unorganized military fleet has weak hold. Any other faction has normal hold. Any faction that goes to war immediately goes to weak hold. If a faction is insurgent (a rebellion, secret operation, etc), they always have strong hold, but lose that hold if they rise to power 1 or above.

You can use this tool to check how well factions undertake certain actions to provide a sense of a living world for the players, or even allow the players to influence the outcome of events. If a faction has some major advantage or disadvantage that the players grant them, you could give them strong or weak hold, depending on the player's actions. It might be possible for factions at weak hold, if they lose a conflict, to go down a rung on the power ranking (from planetary to state, for example).

You might find it useful to track the faction's attitudes towards the players as the story progresses.

44   SITREP

SITREP

Many battles in LANCER will be simple affairs, with one side facing off against the other until one or the other is broken or destroyed. However, there are times when, as a GM, you might want to add additional objectives or make combat scenarios more interesting or engaging. This is a tool for creating combat scenarios featuring deployment zones, objective zones, and predicted enemy approaches (for more tactical mech combat, akin to a wargame).

You can use these scenarios to represent key parts of a mission or adjust them to fit them to your story.

Key terms:

Player Deployment Zone - Where the players deploy at the start of the mission, unless otherwise noted. Extraction Zone - Where the players need to be or enter to end certain missions and successfully extract. Enemy Deployment Zone - Where the hostile NPC forces can deploy initially Reserves - NPC forces that are held in reserve. They don't start on the map but can appear as reinforcements in later rounds in an Ingress zone. Ingress Zone - Where the hostile NPC forces can reinforce from Objective - Any key location or thing that the players need to interact with. Could be a zone or object. If it's a zone, a character contests it if they are at least 1 space inside.

Most of these missions assume you have a roughly rectangular map no longer than about 40 spaces on its longest side. You should also fill the map with terrain or cover - some missions explicitly ask you to do this in certain areas, but the rest is up to you.

SCENARIOS: Random Scenario

D6 Scenario
1 Escort
2 Control
3 Extract
4 Hold Out
5 Gauntlet
6 Recon

44.1   Escort

ESCORT "Listen up, Administrator: when we open these doors, you need to stay with us, and you need to do exactly what we tell you to do. If I go down, don't help me – listen to Monk. If Monk gets hit, listen to Cross. If Cross gets hit, listen to Crown. If Crown dies, keep running and don't stop, and remember: if you make it out of the city, we win the war. Ready?" -Archived audio, Captain Pyotr "Pat" Malov, Cornucopian Revolutionary Guard (KIA)

An ESCORT mission requires bringing an Objective safely to the Extraction Zone and extracting all player characters safely.

Objective: The Objective is a size 1/2 - size 2 object, person, or NPC. It has 10 HP/size, evasion 10, e-defense 10, and no armor. The enemy forces want

the objective and will not willingly damage it. If any actor starts adjacent to the Objective, they can move the objective with them when they make their regular move on their turn, maintaining adjacency. If the objective is adjacent or becomes adjacent to two actors of opposing sides, it immediately stops moving and can't move until there is only one side in adjacency to it. Otherwise it does not move on its own. Enemy Forces: The GM should hold about 2x the enemy forces for a normal encounter. They can deploy up to 1x initially and hold the rest in reserve. Deployment: The players deploy first, placing both their characters and the Objective in the deployment zone, then the GM deploys in the enemy deployment zone. Reserves: The GM can bring in 1 NPC (or up to 4 grunts) at the start of any new round in one of the Ingress Zones. They cannot choose the same zone twice in a row. Extraction: Any player character can extract as a free action at the end of their turn while in the extraction zone. This removes them from the battlefield (they have gotten away safely). If they extract with the objective adjacent to them and no other actor is contesting it, they take the objective with them. Victory conditions: - The players win if they extract the objective. - At the end of the 6th round, if the objective hasn't been extracted, the enemy forces win. If any players are left on the battlefield after the 6th round ends, they are captured or overrun.

- Nobody wins if the objective is destroyed. The players must still extract to leave safely.

CONTROL

"Take the hill." - Common final order

A CONTROL mission requires maintaining control of four objective zones for six rounds. The zones could be important mission points like transmission towers or gun batteries, terminals or hangars.

Objectives: There are 4 objective zones (by default you can use roughly 4x4 areas), each placed anywhere in one quadrant of the map. If they are not roughly symmetrical, the map will be unbalanced. Deployment: Roll off (1d6) between the players and enemy forces. The loser deploys first in their appropriate zone. The GM can hold enemy forces in reserve if they want but doesn't have more than normal available. Zone control: If only actors of one side are inside a zone, they control that zone. If there are actors from two or more sides inside a zone, the zone is contested. Objective Scoring: At the end of each round, for each zone a side controls, give them 1 point. If they control all four zones, give them a bonus +1 point. Victory conditions: The side with the highest score at the end of round 6 wins.

44.2   Extract

EXTRACT

"Catapult Actual, this is Catapult-2: requesting immediate evac from current GRIDCOR." "Cat-2 confirm GRIDCOR." "Confirming... Confirmed, Catapult Actual. Air-ground clear and holding. We, uh, have multiple down. KIA and wounded." "Heard, Cat-2. Lifeflight on the way. Confirm: VIP secure."

"VIP –" "Say again Cat-2." "VIP secure – We've got more company down here, Actual – going dark, respond to GRIDCOR." "Confirmed, 2. We're on our way,

An extraction mission is similar to an escort mission, though different in a couple of key areas.

Objective: The Objective is a size $1/2$ - size 2 object, person, or NPC. It has 10 HP/size, evasion 10, e-defense 10, and no armor. The enemy forces want the objective and will not willingly damage it. If any actor starts adjacent to the Objective, they can move the objective with them when they make their regular move on their turn, maintaining adjacency. If the objective is adjacent or becomes adjacent to two actors of opposing sides, it immediately stops moving and can't move until there is only one side in adjacency to it. Otherwise it does not move on its own. Enemy Forces: The GM should hold about 2x the enemy forces for a normal encounter. They hold them all in reserve (round 1 there will be no enemy forces). Deployment: The players deploy first, placing their characters in the deployment zone. The GM places the Objective in the objective zone. Reserves: The GM can bring in 2 NPCs (or up to 4 grunts) at the start of any new round in two of the Ingress Zones. Extraction: Any player character can extract as a free action at the end of their turn while in the extraction zone, which is the same as the deployment zone. This removes them from the

battlefield (they have gotten away safely). If they extract with the objective adjacent to them and no other actor is contesting it, they take the objective with them. Victory conditions: - The players win if they extract the objective. - At the end of the 8th round, if the objective hasn't been extracted, the enemy forces win. If any players are left on the battlefield after the 8th round ends, they are captured or overrun.

44.3   Holdout

HOLDOUT

MJ sat in his open cockpit, chewed his gum, and ignored the briefing. Was for the local Oxes, kids and eagers who needed a pep talk, not him and his Emancipators. They got the real story.

Real story wasn't a pretty pic.

Extract was six hours out and burning hard. The Crown horse guards got a hundred mix 'n match middle-tier Armory shells, couple thou' cavalry – poor damn horses.

MJ had a thousand rounds of hardpoint EX, two racks of Kodandams, and his MC-TB for when the real mess came.

"Yo MJ," his comms squawked. "Button up. We got company, four hundred meters out and closing. Horses."

"Uh huh," MJ said. He slapped the cabin seal without looking and got comfortable. Helm on, haptics on. Mag loaded. Feel bad for the horses, because they didn't know what they were getting into.

Six hours to extract, clock starting now.

A desperate mission type. When ordered to Hold Out, players will have to defend an area against an onslaught of enemies – in a best-case scenario, this is to buy time for allies to complete an objective elsewhere. In a worst-case scenario, it is to the death.

Enemy Forces: The GM should hold about 2x the enemy forces for a normal encounter. They hold half in reserve Deployment: The players deploy first, then the GM deploys half their total forces. Fortifications: The area around the objective zone should have size 1-2 heavy cover Objective: The objective zone is a roughly 10 spaces by 5 spaces area in the middle of the map (you can adjust this as needed). Players start with 4 points. For every enemy inside of the objective zone, the players get -1 points (the score could go negative). Victory conditions: If at the end of round 6 the player characters are alive and their score is 1 or greater, they win, otherwise they are captured or overrun.

44.4   Gauntlet

GAUNTLET

¿// [WHITEOUT CONTINGENCY:: REAR ECHELON HAS FALLEN. ALL UNITS AT MINIMUM/NEGATIVE EFFICACY]

¿//[ALL-BAND ORDER::PROCEED AT TOTAL STRIKE CAPACITY TO ID EXTRACT AREA]

¿//[THIS IS A IMPERATIVE COMPLY ORDER. YOU ARE ON YOUR OWN++OUR POSITION IS OVERRUN++HURRY]

Generally a mission done under duress, or when no other options are available to the players. Commonly engaged in unfriendly terrain. A Gauntlet mission demands the player party move from their deployment zone across unfriendly territory to secure an enemy position.

Enemy forces: The GM should have a normal amount of enemy forces, but hold half in reserve. Deployment: The GM deploys half their forces first, then the players deploy Fortifications: The area around the enemy deployment zone is fortified with size 1 and 2 heavy cover Reserves: At the end of round 1, the GM deploys the rest of their forces in any of the Ingress zones Victory conditions: The players win if there are more player characters inside the objective zone at the end of turn 6 than enemy characters (count ultras for 4 players, elites for 2, and grunts for 1/4). Otherwise the enemies win.

44.5   Recon

RECON

Aurelia whistled low, taking in the fresh coat of matte on their chassis.

"Optical camo overlay primary, Inkwell secondary," Engineer Coates said, finishing her walkaround. "Even if they scramble your anoptics, it's going to be a nightmare to sight her."

Aurelia reached up to touch their chassis' brachial mount. Their sylph spilled across their arm, touched the chassis. An inkbloom of the midnight color clouded through it.

Aurelia grinned. They would be a nightmare.

A recon mission is, generally speaking, a dangerous endeavor, where a small team enters hostile territory to identify targets or retrieve key information

Objectives: The GM marks 4 4x4 objective zones on the map. The GM secretly chooses one of the objectives to be the real objective (from A-D). Characters can control an objective by being the only side inside the objective zone at the end of the round. They can determine whether the objective is real or not by being inside the zone and taking a full action (this information is freely shareable once discovered). They don't need to control the zone to investigate it. Enemy Forces: The GM has normal enemy forces, and can hold any number in reserve Deployment: The players deploy first, then the NPCs Reserves: The GM can bring in 1 NPC or up to 4 grunts in the ingress zone at the start of any new round.

Victory conditions: The players win if they are in control of the real objective at the end of round 6. Otherwise, the enemy forces win.

45 An Endless Generator, An Unquiet Forge

An Endless Generator, An Unquiet Forge
    Generator Tools for GMs and Players

45.1 Deep Field Survey

Deep Field Survey

Iterative worldbuilding, courtesy of the Union Astrocartography Department.

World Type 1. A barren world, with no atmosphere, few valuable resources, no water, under a ceaseless barrage of terrible radiation. 2. A barren world, with little atmosphere, and a distant sun. It is a cold, dead place, where lonely wind blows perpetual across flat planes of dark ice and stone. 3. A barren world rich in mineral wealth, cooling after a long period of tectonic activity. Massive thunderstorms lash the world, and methane ice storms accumulate into world-sculpting glaciers. 4. A barren world encased in ice, with a deep subglacial sea. The surface trembles with asteroid impacts, and the world's orbit trails ice and dust behind it. 5. A barren world, old and close to its sun, where the mountains have eroded to sand, and the dunes are endless and white. 6. A temperate world, lush, forever hazy under a thick mist that all but blocks out the sun. 7. A temperate world, with myriad biomes, and skies piled high with columnar clouds. 8. A temperate world, dry across great swathes of plainsland and desert, where vast alluvial deposits speak of rivers that once were. 9. A temperate world of archipelagos scattered across a salton sea 10. A temperate world with a mild climate, rich in native flora and fauna, and old, stable biomes. 11. An inhospitable world, whose atmosphere is thick and choking, with deep valleys that hold pockets of breathable air. 12. An inhospitable world of storm-tossed nitrogen oceans and wind-polished cadmium islands, where tides surge and recede for years and no land is safe from the flood or retreat. 13. An inhospitable world of lava and lightning, a new world, where there is no life to be found. 14. An inhospitable world, scoured by a distant gamma ray burst, where the life that once was there has long since died off, and the land simmers with fires that never stop. 15. An inhospitable world, cracked open by an ancient impact, its core bleeding heat into vacuum as it slowly dies. 16. A temperate moon with a stable atmosphere, the curve of its horizon visible from even a modest mountaintop. Its parent world looms massive above it, ever-present in its day and night sky. 17. An icy moon, cold and dim, one of many around its parent world. It absorbs the impacts of asteroids that would otherwise hit its counterpart. 18. An ocean world, where there is no land.

19. A barren world with a stable, if thin atmosphere. Massive geometric features and perfectly flat metal planes create an uncanny landscape; deep canals funnel moaning wind around the world. 20. An ancient world, star red and swollen in its sky, where all things have a terrible symmetry, as if nature itself had oriented – or been oriented – around something now absent.

Defining Natural Feature 1. 100 year storms with increasing regularity –

typically manifests as massive hurricanes. 2. Very active tectonics – earthquakes are more common on this world than others. On ocean worlds, this means a higher prevalence of tsunamis. 3. Inert core – this world's core has stopped spinning, and as a result it has shed its magnetic field. Compasses do not work on this world, and UV exposure is dangerous without significant protection. 4. Monobiome – this world is an oddity among worlds, in that has a single, global biome with a single, global climate. It could be a forest that spans the world, or a desert, a swamp, and so on. 5. Worldscar - the world has suffered a recent (within a million years) impact from a massive stellar body. Its climate has leveled, but the scar of the impact is still a massive, visible feature on the world's surface. 6. Royal Court - the world has hundreds of terrestrial moons, ranging from hundreds of yards in diameter to thousands of kilometers. The night sky is bright, and the day is marked by gentle, dappled light. 7. Under Twin Suns - the world orbits a binary star. 8. Ringed - the world is banded in a series of planetary rings, visible as a thin white line across the night sky. It is an especially beautiful world to view from afar. 9. Remote - this world was a remote colonial, industrial, or scientific prospect. It is far removed from any other civilization, and takes great effort and time to reach. 10. Cosmopolitan - this world is located close to interstellar shipping lanes, and is a frequent landmark, resupply point, or pit stop for interstellar travellers, who ether remain in orbit or have an easy route down to the surface of the world. 11. Hecatoncheires - The world is marked by a series of massive mountains, sheer peaks rising kilometers into the sky. 12. Epochal Sunset - the world is gripped by the transition between eras – ice to temperate, temperate to ice, and so on. Expect a varied climate. 13. A Monument of Shame - the world is a dumping ground for passing ships, for a local CS, or abandoned following massive climate destabilization. 14. Quarantined - the world has been hidden behind Union red tape, for reasons unknown or known. 15. Breathable Atmosphere - the world, unless already noted, has a breathable atmosphere. A human can breathe without relying on an EVA, scrubbers, or other assistance or augmentation. 16. High Gravity - the world, in addition to any other features, has higher than standard gravity, ranging from +1-2G greater than Cradle standard. 17. Low Gravity - the world, in addition to any other features, has lower than standard gravity, ranging from .1-.99G less than Cradle standard.

18. Hard Sun - in addition to any other features noted in its description, this world's atmosphere provides little to no UV protection. Venturing outside in the daylight is a risk without proper optical and dermal shielding. 19. Dreamland - in addition to any other features noted in its description, this world has something, well, otherworldly about it that makes it stand out. Islands that float suspended in the air, or oceans of liquid mercury, or motile fauna, and so on. 20. Dust and Echoes - the world has ancient, pre-collapse ruins on it, with no indication as to their origin or nature.

Defining Anthropocentric Feature 1. Colonial Settlement - initial. There is a settlement here, but it was only recently seeded. Drones and subalterns work tirelessly, clearing space and assembling the initial colony footprint. A small cluster of buildings house the landfall team – they are likely welcoming, as

they've probably not seen anyone else for years. The population numbers in the dozens. 2. Colonial Settlement - first generation. The colony settlement here is young, with its first generation of native-born colonists now of-age and set to the work of building their future home. The population numbers in the hundreds to thousands. 3. Colonial Settlement - stable. The colonial settlement here is in its second or third generation, stable, with a population in the tens of thousands. 4. Outpost - Union Far Field Team Mission. There is a FF Team outpost on this world, but nothing else in the way of human population. 5. Outpost - Omninet Relay Node. The world is empty save for a lone omninet relay node. A small team crews the node, providing security and on-site technical support. They rotate on a regular schedule. 6. Outpost - Union Navy SigInt Station. The UN maintains a small signals and intelligence station on this world. There may or may not be other populations here – that is up to you – but the SigInt station is in a remote, high-altitude part of the world. 7. Outpost - Union Astrocartography Station. The world is marked with an orbital astrocartography station – a suite of automated telescopes, sensors, and observational equipment used to map more distant stars and worlds. 8. Outpost - Checkpoint/ Forward Post – The world hosts a small Union garrison, most likely auxiliaries who report to a remote Union officer. Their duty is to scout, stand watch, and await further orders. They spend most of their time exercising, cleaning, maintaining their gear, and waiting for something to happen. 9. Installation - Research Facility - The world hosts a Union, Corpro-State, or other state or private entity's research facility. It may be a secure, top secret site, or it may not. 10. Installation - Proving Ground. The world, or a significant part of it, is given over to a proving ground, test field, ordnance firing range, or other large-area hazardous testing, training, measuring, or dumping installation. Run by a small long-term skeleton crew, there typically is a larger short-term crew or population present during a given season or exercise. 11. Installation - Deep Field Relay Installation. The world features a secure, long-range, planet-based sensor installation, typically located in a remote, high-altitude location. Populated by a small crew, the installation can be privately run or Union.

12. Installation - Union Embassy. Generally only found on more developed worlds approaching or at Core status, Union Embassies are modest, centrally-located buildings typically sited in capital cities on capital worlds. They function as embassies do. 13. Installation - Corpro-State Campus. This world features a publicly-accessible or off-limits CS campus with a large permanent population. This can be an enclave, an exclave, or integrated into a larger urban environment, and typically is an administrative center with some level of public exposure (even just notariety) 14. Base - Union Naval System Command. The world is the site of a regional system command center for the Union Navy. Part base, part garrison, part shipyard, part recruitment center, part medical center, a UN SysComm facility is a large, removed, military base with a defensive perimeter, sunken launch pads, and hardened buildings and bunkers. It has a massive permanent population and a garrison numbering in the thousands, usually with a complement of ships in orbit with (at minimum) global strike and delivery capacity 15. Base - Capital. This world is the capital world of a

system, and hosts the physical center of the system's government, generally a campus, estate, block, or other large collection of hardened buildings charged with ministering to the state's population. Generally speaking, there is some level of public access to this building, but only in more liberal states. 16. Base - Uplift. This world has a spaceport, a sprawling launch facility open to the public (access subject to local laws, of course, beyond the basic ability to purchase a ticket offworld). 17. Civic - Municipalities. The population of this world live in modest towns and cities scattered across biomes. The population numbers in the hundreds of millions. There may be one or two signature cities, but there are vast stretches of wilderness between them, and each municipality has developed their own take on global cultures. 18. Civic - Arcology. The world's population lives in one or more arcologies – unified, self- contained ecosystem-cities – in harmony with the world around and inside of them. They may be strictly monitored and walled-off from the larger world, or not. Worlds with arcologies as the primary urban centers tend to be well developed, with a history at least centuries long. The global population numbers in the hundreds of millions to single-digit billions. 19. Civic - Metroswathe. Unlike an arcology or municipality, a world marked by metroswathes is heavily developed, with a significant percentage of the landmass given over to a single, amalgamated urban environment (¡10-15and there are likely large chunks of it that doesn't – is a miracle. A metroswathe is usually not planned to be a swathe, but there are certainly large sections of it that have been developed intentionally, rather than just metastasizing. There are usually vast, baroque criminal, bureaucratic, and community organizations working both above and below board (and street level!). 20. Union - Administrator's Residence. This world, if it wasn't previously, is habitable, and has a stable population of millions. A Union Administrator makes their residence here.

COMBAT AND ROLEPLAYING ENVIRONMENTS

Roleplaying and combat can take place anywhere in the galaxy. Most human affairs occur in one of three locations: on a terrestrial world (or moon, asteroid, comet, etc), on a satellite station, or onboard a spaceship.

Habitable worlds are terrestrial worlds, moons, asteroids, or comets that are tectonically stable enough to support structures; these worlds do not need to have an atmosphere in order to be considered habitable – in Lancer, "habitable" means a world on which humans can live, not necessarily live comfortably or independently of life-sustaining systems.

Habitable worlds that are stable and have a breathable atmosphere that protects and sustains human life are called Terran worlds. These are rare and precious, usually the site of stellar nations' capitals or preservation worlds.

Satellite stations orbit larger stellar bodies: orbital habitats, shipyards, blink stations, omninodes, orbital science stations, orbital military installations, and others all fall into this category.

Typically, civilian stations have a large permanent populations and act as galactic transit hubs. Travellers pass through these stations on their way to their berths or while their ships are refueled, resupplied, and rearmed; the civilian population on the station typically works around this transient population at

cafes, bars, shops, and entertainment venues, and in maintenance, logistical, engineering, and harbor navigation roles.

Military stations typically have small populations posted on a semi-permanent basis, usually for a period of months or years before being rotated out.

Example environments:

• A lush jungle world, thick with kilometer-tall trees and layered canopies thick enough to support buildings. The light fades to a darkness complete the deeper you dare venture. • A dead moon with a thin skein of atmosphere, just enough to form and hold clouds at ground level. The wind is terrible and constant, and carves strange shapes from the moon's soft grey rock. • In borean fields of polar ice, a crashed Far-Field Shuttle broadcasts its lonely SOS. A band of slavers makes across the permafrost, their flyers beating low over the white landscape. A blizzard approaches. • On the metal and stone flanks of a rocky world, where unique magnetic properties hold iron pillars suspended in the air. Buildings here must be made of wood and plastic, and your mechs struggle to adapt to the interference. • Aboard an abandoned station in decaying orbit, its inertial gravity fluctuating in response to the decay. The station lists to the side as distal components begin to break away. The station's NHP is firm in its declaration of intent: it wants to see the night sky from the world below. • On a massive blink station thronging with travellers, merchants, and all manner of people in transit. Thousands travel the station's main concourse, some characters less savory than others, and hundreds of alleyways lead to chambers and venues that showcase the wonders of the galaxy.

• Among the dunes of an arid world, a nomad's camp crouches on the banks of an oasis, indigo in the shadows. They are hunting something grand in the sky, tracking it by its droppings. • In the hive-like streets of a neon-drenched capital world, under a driving artificial rain in

the commerce district. NHPs in armature bodies consort with human partners, dealing in business, trade, and secrets. The city is endless. • In the deep black of space, aboard a capital ship as its main guns thunder away at the enemy fleet. Outside, vacuum and silence, as the debris and the dead float cold and still. • Outside the hull of a titanic generation ship, under the shield of its bow guard as it accelerates through an asteroid field. • On an atmospheric moon of a gas giant, in the fields under the planet-rise as day slips to oversky. The people of this moon have never seen night, as the world their moon orbits only brings a dimmer day. • In a lonely colony on a nondescript Terran world, as snow falls on the fledgling habitat during the celebration of their first year settled. It is a time of celebration, and a time of worry: what happens if it never stops snowing? • In the gilded palace of an interstellar king, as his hosts march in formation below the

viewing plaza. Your shuttle waits on a distant landing pad and you think to yourself, are you guests, or are you prisoners?

HAZARDOUS ENVIRONMENTS

It is possible (and likely) for mechs to operate in hazardous environments such as being submersed in hostile atmosphere, vacuum, or water. To operate without killing its pilot, a mech in these circumstances needs life support –

if a mech's life support system is active and running, it can run essentially indefinitely (a pilot will likely die of dehydration/starvation before they run out of oxygen, thanks to the efficiency of standard 02 scrubbers). A mech in a hazardous environment without life support has enough residual support for a number of hours equal to its engineering score, or 30 minutes if that score is less than 1.

ZERO -G

A Mech operating in zero-g, underwater, or space is impaired unless it has a propulsion system or a system allowing it to Fly. Mechs in space or zero-g cannot fall.

Mechs without a propulsion system or flight are Slowed in space or zero-g, but can fly when they move or boost.

Environments:

Roll Name Description/Effect

1 Dangerous Flora or Fauna The planet has a high amount of dangerous animal or plant life, some of it perhaps titanic, predatory, or particularly hostile. You can represent this by using the Monstrosity NPC type from the NPC toolkit. You can also represent the presence of hostile flora on a battlefield as size 1 or 2 static entities with evasion 10, 5 hp. Any target that moves adjacent to them must pass a hull check or take 3 kinetic damage and become immobilized by sticky sap, webbing, a pit trap, or the like until the flora is destroyed.

2 Extreme Cold Mechs and pilots will quickly freeze without a source of heat nearby, and culture on this world accommodates this. Any mech that does not move or boost on its turn becomes immobilized at the end of its turn. It can end this condition by taking an action and a successful hull check to break out of the ice.

All mechs have resistance to heat.

3 Extreme Heat Civilization has retreated mostly underground in this blistering atmosphere. All systems and weapons that generate or inflict heat generate +1 more heat than normal.

4 Thin Atmosphere All targets gain resistance to explosive damage.

5 Extreme Sun Mechs take 1d6 heat at the end of any turn that they are not standing in the shade

6 Corrosive Atmosphere The thick atmosphere on this world corrodes armor. All weapons gain the AP tag.

7 Particulate Storm This planet is swept by brutal, scouring storms of sand, rock, or metal. While one of these storms is active, mechs treat all terrain as heavy cover. Pilots cannot step outside without great personal risk if they are not in their mech.

8 Electric Storm This planet is swept by unusually strong electrical storms. While one of these storm is active, at the end of the round, choose a target at random. That target must pass a systems check with 1 difficulty per size or be stunned until the end of their next turn by a bolt of lightning.

9 Disruptive Storm The storms on this planet are so thick that electronic systems cannot function. All tech actions and system checks are made at +1 difficulty.

10 Dangerous Storm This planet is swept by storms of fire, meteors, acid rain, ice, or other destructive particles. While one of these storms is active, all mechs not in cover at the end of the round take 3 AP kinetic damage.

11 Earthquakes At the end of each round, while earthquakes are active on this world, roll a 1d6. On a 1, all mechs on the battlefield must pass a hull check or be knocked prone.

12 Ocean World This entire world is covered in water, with less than 5of the surface being solid ground. The water is a hazardous environment. Mechs with Flying or EVA can move normally, otherwise mechs without will sink to the bottom and count movement as difficult terrain. They can walk perfectly normally on the bottom (if slowly) and most mechs are pressure rated to extremely high specifications.

13 Molten World Parts of this world's crust pokes through in showers and pools of liquid rock. Any mech that enters a zone of molten rock or lava for the first time on its turn or starts its turn there takes 5 AP energy damage and 1d6 heat.

14 Primordial World This world is mostly a bubbling soup of semi-organic mud and gases. The atmosphere is toxic and humans must use a breathing apparatus or sealed suits outside of their mechs. Boiling mud covers this world, creating zones of both difficult and dangerous terrain.

15 Low Gravity All mechs gain the ability to fly when they boost on this world, as if they had jump jets. Mechs don't take damage from falling, and only fall 3 spaces a round.

16 High Gravity Mechs cannot boost on this high gravity world and are immobilized instead of Slowed

17 Tomb World This world has extremely high radiation, possibly as a result of nuclear war, atmospheric degradation, or something more sinister. Humans not wearing a sealed hard suit or some other kind of environmental suit lose 5 HP/hr on this world.

18 Spire World This world is made up of a large number of islands or spires held aloft in a gaseous substrate and suspended through magnetic force. Perhaps it was a world shattered by a superweapon or natural disaster. Most of the land is not connected, but a loose collection of floating rocks, some of them large enough to hold cities. Navigation systems go haywire on this world.

19 Sinking World This world is covered in fine sand or thick mud. While on the surface, mechs that move 1 space or less during their turn are Slowed. Mechs that are Slowed and move 1 space or less are immobilized and start sinking, eventually becoming completely engulfed. A mech can take a full action and make a hull check to end this effect on itself or another adjacent mech.

20 Holy World This world is beautiful and has no particular dangerous features, but held sacrosanct by the local population. Damaging its rocks, trees, and pristine grasslands will incur the ire or wrath of the locals

Generally speaking, tune the environmental hazards to the world(s) that your campaign takes place on: jungle worlds will have hazards that are appropriate for jungle worlds, aquatic worlds will have hazards appropriate for aquatic worlds, and so on.

45.2   In The Pipe, 9 To 5

In The Pipe, 9 To 5

What work do mech pilots encounter, and what types of organizations do they work for?

What kind of constraints might get put on them depending on a) the work that they do and b) the people/orgs that they work for? What are common complications that they might encounter on a job/mission/assignment?

These tables below will help develop mission structures in a pinch, further complications can be added as necessary. These reflect the more mundane missions, typically encountered by mercenary groups, Union DoJ/HR liberation teams, Union Navy regulars or auxiliary troopers, private militaries, and other conventional fighters.

Source 1. A Union Administrator in need of a team of fixers. 2. A mercenary company, known for its upstanding reputation. 3. An upstart mercenary company with a lot to prove, few resources, but this one golden contract. 4. A Union Far Field team manager in need of extended security. 5. A local ruler, whose own soldiers can't finish the job. 6. A board member of a corpro-state, who needs this job done off-book. 7. The heir to a throne, in need of a team of champions. 8. A local crime boss, who needs extra muscle for this job. 9. The mouthpiece for a mysterious figure, who needs a disposable team for a covert mission. 10. A system administrator NHP, who needs to procure an asset from one of its distant colonies. 11. Your commanding officer, who orders you to complete a necessary mission. 12. A sudden burst of code that overwhelms your chassis' onboard computers, depositing mission parameters in a window on your HUD that won't go away 13. A familiar dead drop, unused for years but active now, with your orders scrawled on hardcopy inside. 14. The dying wish of a comrade or loved one. 15. A system administrator NHP, who has issued an SOS and requires immediate, Union- sanctioned aid. 16. A HORUS cell leader – you think – who speaks to you through a remote-piloted subaltern. 17. An NHP, just prior to cycling, who would whisper a single name over and over 18. Of your own volition, out of desire 19. Of your own volition, out of a sense of duty 20. Of your own volition, out of a need for revenge

Hook 1. Escort a VIP from a compromised location to a new safe one 2. Respond to an SOS from an unknown source, location noted in message. 3. Retrieve a valued or strategic object, item, or information from a secure, hostile location

4. Investigate a tip from a valued informant, which could go south. 5. Escort a long-flight weapon or ordinance to its target 6. Run security for a secure location expecting an attack 7. Head into a derelict to retrieve important data 8. Bring down a piece of massive infrastructure (bridge, skyhook, dam, etc) 9. Go loud to provide cover for a covert mission of utmost importance 10. Assassinate a VIP in broad daylight, to send a message 11. Attack a hostile defensive position in order to destroy a key objective 12. Board a hostile ship or station and take it over; or, destroy it 13. Be first on the ground on a world hostile to human life; create a beachhead 14. Deal with hostile local fauna or

megafauna plaguing a colony. 15. Hunt down a team of notorious, feared, or respected mech pilots, and kill them. 16. Provide cover for an evacuation. 17. Rescue and extract a downed pilot from a warzone. 18. During a massive attack, strike the enemy's critical weak point to make a breakthrough. 19. Liberate a people held hostage from their cruel ruler, with Union's backing. 20. Intervene in a desperate attempt to stop an incoming missile or attack.

Location 1. On a habitable, terrestrial, populated world, with a few large cities, a capital with a spaceport, and outlying towns. Vast stretches of un-exploited, but explored wilderness. 2. On a terrestrial world with little to no atmosphere. Rocky, uninhabited, with a smattering of automated sig/int, omni, and navigational stations. 3. On a high-traffic, low-orbit civilian station, full of travellers bound for distant stars and Cosmopolitans waiting to clear quar-antine. 4. Inside a massive arcology, thick with life, an oasis on an otherwise grim world. 5. In hard vacuum, near a dorsal monitoring terminal of a Blink station's Dyson panel, thousands of kilometers above the city decks. 6. Aboard a capital ship, all decks vented of air and ready for combat. 7. On an arid ter-restrial world close to its sun, in a white sand desert of massive marching dunes and glass spires. 8. On a cold, distal world of black stone and vast, geometric planes of nitrogen ice. 9. Inside the upper atmosphere of a massive gas giant, where long-flight hydrogen refineries scrape the valuable fuel from impossible blue depths. 10. Among the teeming streets, bazaars, and boulevards of an an-cient, persistent metroswathe, laden with millennia of histories, both personal and public. 11. On a ocean world, landmasses covered by glaciers and the mountains they've carved as they march to the sea. Storms marble the world's grey skies, and turbulent tectonic activity sends world-sweeping tidal waves to crash into glacial faces. 12. On a rocky world defined by massive craters, whose skies are lit by the brilliant passage of frequent meteor showers. 13. On a hot, terrible world of choking gases and thick atmospheres, where light is eaten by deep yellow fog, and the ground is a barren mix of oily green stone and rotting metals. 14. Aboard a vibrant Cosmopolitan space station, a hub of intergalactic trade and art, with constituant asteroidal states leashed in its orbit. 15. In the arcadian planes of a temperate world, distant from any human habitation, but marked by the promise of future colonization.

16. On the storied land of an old Core world, once a thriving metropole, now long since scaled back. Empty cities collect sand and creeping vines; the world's population resides in a single valley, content. 17. On a bucolic temporal reserve, a neo-pastoral world with a population that has no knowledge of Union or the politics and current events of the galaxy at large. 18. In the hard vacuum of space, among the ruins of the fleet. 19. In the hard vacuum of space, between the ink-black hulls of capital ships on long patrol 20. On the hardpack surface of a comet, whose horizon is never far away, whose chasms and valleys are picked out in sharp relief by the hard light of a nearby star.

Complication 1. The local leader is hostile to Union, and will send their agents, military, or assassins to try and stop you. 2. The location of the mission is under local quarantine, due to the presence of a virulent, deadly illness. 3. The location of this mission is secret, and your presence there will

be deniable: expect no support or public reward for completing your objectives. 4. The local gravity is much higher than you're used to, making movement and breathing more difficult. 5. The atmosphere is corrosive and thick, rendering all but the most powerful energy weapons useless. 6. The world is marked by odd, unnatural geometries – certain features, when the wind blows over them, "sing", and the world is never silent. 7. The world is a frequent (enough) target of meteorite impacts: one is forecasted within the mission window, and its impact will plunge the world into a decade of dust-night and storms. 8. The world is in turmoil, roiling with political discontent, and you've just stepped in the middle of it. 9. The station is a common type among long-term-residency stations: a cylinder, whose population lives on the gentle curve of the cylinder's interior. You'll need to take that into account when the mission gets hot. 10. The weapon, VIP, ship, etc, that you're escorting will intersect with an opposing weapon, VIP, ship, etc, that the enemy is escorting: you must ensure that your objective remains secure, while theirs is done away with. 11. The station you're on begins to break apart after the shooting starts. 12. The forces employed by your enemy are unwilling combatants, coerced into fighting you. 13. Your mission runs counter to the mission of another arm of your state, company, or agency; you may encounter internal resistance. 14. Your way in is incapacitated or made unavailable, leaving you without a clear way out. 15. Your intel was wrong – the objective you seek is not where you were told it would be. 16. The city's (or station's) administrative NHP dislikes you, for reasons unknown, and seeks to impede your progress. 17. The world has a much longer day/night cycle, lasting on the order of standard months or more – you're approaching the end of one period and the beginning of the other, with significant cultural meaning placed on the transition, and wide variance in how the local biome reacts.

18. Completing the mission requires some interstellar transit, which would divorce you from the subjective timeline of your friends and family back home. 19. This mission is set up to fail, but you don't know that yet. Someone higher up in your organization wants you dead. 20. The world has been visited previously by RA, and it bears markings of the MONIST entity's passing.

45.3   Identifty Friend/Foe

Identify Friend/Foe Force generator for NPC factions.

Faction Type 1. Union Regulars, Regiment 2. Union Auxiliary, Regiment 3. Union Department of Justice and Human Rights, Liberator Team 4. Union Intelligence Bureau, Field Team 5. Union Naval Intelligence, Field Team 6. Union Far Field Team, Security 7. Harrison Armory, Acquisition Team 8. Harrison Armory, Colonial Legion 9. Harrison Armory, Board Intelligence Field Team 10. IPS-N, Marine Security Detachment 11. IPS-N, Company Trunk Security 12. SSC, Diplomatic Corps Detachment - Security Team 13. HORUS, Local Cell 14. Ungratefuls, Local Cell 15. MSMC, Company Detachment 16. Voladores, Sparri Espadas 17. Sparri Mercenaries, Free Band 18. Local, Planetary Defense Force (Ground, Navy, or both) 19. Local, Honor Guard 20. Local, Opposition

Group

Signature 1. Survivors. Loosely organized, scattered in groups of twos and threes, with broken, or empty small arms. No anti-armor. 2. Ready partisans, with civilian weapons and the capacity to produce improvised explosive devices and lightly armored vehicles (technicals, motorcycles). Small to medium numbers. 3. Resistance fighters. Scavenged or stolen military-grade small arms and explosives, light anti armor, provisions and scavenging ability. Lightly armored vehicles, few stolen military grade vehicles. Small to medium numbers. 4. Light infantry, with light anti-armor, a few light vehicles (motorcycles, armored cars, etc), and provisions for long field deployment. Medium numbers. 5. Mobile, mechanized infantry, light to medium anti-armor, military grade small arms and explosives. Mounted in armored personnel carriers. Provisions for field repairs and long travel. Some APCs devoted to medium anti-armor. Medium to large numbers.

6. Line infantry. Medium armored infantry, with military grade small arms and explosives. Supported by medium armored vehicles, typically with artillery behind their line. Typically supported by medium/line mechs. Provisioned for long-term deployments, garrisons, and battles. Large numbers. 7. Heavy infantry. Medium to heavy armor, military small arms and explosives, medium to heavy anti-armor, uncommon/exotic weapons and systems. Powered armor is common, typically operate in support of line and heavy mechs. Medium numbers. 8. Shock infantry. Light to medium armor, military small arms and explosives, medium anti- armor. Often employ light, mobile power armor, commonly in support of scout and mobile line mechs. Typically mounted in armored personnel carriers or all-theater dropships. Medium to large numbers. 9. Drop infantry. Light to medium armor, military small arms and explosives, often equipped with light powered armor. Commonly in support of scout ot medium mechs. Commonly provisioned for long-term deployments. Typically deployed behind enemy lines or in close proximity to priority targets via orbital drop or atmospheric insertion. Small to medium numbers. 10. Scout Mechs. Half-size to size 1. Emphasis on speed, range, and sensors. Light armor. Small numbers. Military grade weapons. Rapid infiltration and exfiltration. Small numbers. 11. Medium/Line Mechs. Size 1 to size 2. Emphasis on all-round ability, light to medium armor, small numbers. Military grade weapons, with some exotic or uncommon. Rapid infiltration and exfiltration. Small numbers, unless operating in a line capacity. Versatile roles. 12. Heavy/Siege Mechs. Size 2+. Emphasis on powerplant and fire output. Light to heavy weapons, some exotic, medium to heavy armor. Small numbers, operate protected by lighter mechs, armor, or infantry. Slow infiltration and exfiltration. 13. Armored Division - Light. Emphasis on speed and offensive ability, usually operate alone or with light aerial support. 14. Armored Division - Medium. Emphasis on all-round capability and staying power. Usually operate in support of or supported by infantry and light-to-line mechs. 15. Armored Division - Heavy. Emphasis on armor and offensive capability. Usually operate in support of infantry, specifically meant to eliminate enemy armor or mechs. 16. GM choice. 17. GM choice. 18. GM choice. 19. GM choice. 20. GM choice.

Strength 1. Patrol. 1 to 5 soldiers, whose goal it is to observe and report, avoid engagements at all cost, and correctly identify the location and strength of the enemy. 2. Patrol. 1 scout mech, light atmospheric flyer, pair of light armored cars, pair of motorbikes, or other patrol vehicle. 3. Squad. At least 10 to 20 soldiers, on foot. 4. Squad. At least 10 to 20 soldiers, supporting a single scout or line mech, or a single medium armored unit. 5. Squad. At least 10 to 20 soldiers, mounted in a single dropship, or two APCs.

6. Company. At least 100 to 200 soldiers, with support personnel and fire support (artillery, mortars, air support, or orbital). They will occupy ground, provide relief, engage in combat, and operate as an efficient unit. 7. Company. At least 100 to 200 soldiers, mounted 10:1 in armored personnel carriers (APCs), or 20:1 in dropships. 8. Company. At least 10 to 20 light mechs, operating in teams of 2-4. Scout configuration, some carrying heavy precision weapons. 9. Company. At least 50 heavy soldiers, operating 10:1 in support of 5 medium or heavy mechs. 10. Company. At least 20-40 armored vehicles, operating in teams of 5. 11. Regiment. 5 to 8 companies, organized under an on-site, (typically) rear echelon regimental commander. Usually supported by significant off-site fire support, well- provisioned, outfitted with broad range of small arms and heavy weaponry, and operational from a fortified static base or orbital carrier. 12. Regiment. 5 to 8 companies organized under an on-site commander, who travels in an up- armored, command-suite version of the same APC or dropship as their soldiers. Some of the APCs or dropships are up-armored, anti-armor/gunship variants. 13. Regiment. 5-8 companies of light mechs, organized into teams of 5-10, operating as flankers, hussars, pickets, and/or first recon. Tip of the spear tactics, with more specialized weapons and systems seeded throughout. 14. Regiment. 5-8 companies of soldiers operating in support of medium or heavy assault mechs at a 10:2 ratio. 15. Regiment. 5-8 companies of armored vehicles, operating in teams of 5. Supported by a rear echelon or orbital motor pool. 16. Battalion. 2-4 Regiments organized under an offsite, high-ranking commander, typically operating well behind the lines in a hardened site or orbital. Significant logistic, tactical, and fire support. Continental reach and response time within a day. 17. Battalion. 2-4 regiments organized under an on-site commander, who pilots a high-license mechanized chassis and is attended by a retinue of similarly grizzled, ranking veterans. At least 1 regiment is composed of medium or heavy assault mechs. 18. Battalion. 2-4 regiments of armored vehicles, supported by an off-site battalion commander with significant tactical, strategic, logistic, and fire support. Multiple motor pools and/or heavy-lift shuttles allow for for sustained operations and rapid insertion. 19. Army. 2-5 battalions, with significant material, logistic, strategic, tactical, systemic, and fire support. Usually matched with an orbital/aerial presence, multiple forward operating bases, a main operating base, and well-resourced. Will contain a mix of infantry, armor, and mechanized chassis. Has a global reach. 20. Army. 2-5 battalions Mobile, organized around a mix of medium and heavy chassis, with support from regiments of mechanized infantry, dropships, and heavy shuttles. Supported by an orbital battlegroup, has a global reach.

46 Non Player Characters

NON PLAYER CHARACTERS

This section contains the rules for running non-player characters in combat in LANCER. As a large part of your role as a GM is running those characters, we've included a lot of rules and resources here to help you create those characters as fully as you can.

The rules for NPCs can look intimidating, but it's more useful to think of this section as a toolbox for you to put together the NPCs that you want to include in your game, whether that's a horde of enemy mechs, a powerful and devious adversary, biological monstrosities, or rebel raiders. It's more like a catalogue for you to pick, choose, and create. If you don't feel like getting too deep into this, you can take all the basic NPCs presented here and put them in your combats without any additional work. However, we have also tried to provide a comprehensive and flexible outline for you to fill in your own details or make your own creations.

Running NPCs

Non-player characters (NPCs) act by slightly differently rules in LANCER than player characters. Player characters are assumed to be exceptional individuals, whether through ability, training, or just sheer luck. The rest of everyone else has to follow in their wake, so to speak.

In narrative play, NPC actions typically depend on the rolls of player characters. In other words, the player's rolls do double duty for both PC and NPC actions. For example, a player failing a combat roll is cue for the NPCs to tackle them, punch them in the face, or open fire. A player failing a roll to infiltrate causes NPCs to notice them, or sound the alarm, or call reinforcements. NPCs, and the GM generally don't make rolls for themselves. Some very basic statistics are given for pilot-scale NPCs if you need to include them in mech combat, or want to run turn- based pilot combat.

In mech combat, NPCs act much like player characters, with some notable exceptions. NPCs can be heroic individuals, but they typically don't have access to the full range of options that players do.

NPCs in mech combat

NPCs follow the same rules for players in Mech combat. By default, they take one turn per round, and can make a single move and two quick actions or full action on their turns, like player characters. However, NPCs act with the following exceptions:

NPCs, unless specified, never act first on the very first turn, and only take a turn when they are activated. A player will always act first in the round, then the GM gets to activate a hostile NPC. A friendly NPC can be activated by player characters and acts in lieu of a player turn. Player/friendly NPC turns and hostile NPC turns will always alternate until one side has completely activated, at which point the remaining actors can take their turns in any order.

NPCs are limited in the actions they can take on their turn. They can also take actions that are slightly different to player actions.

NPCs can take the following quick actions:

- Boost - Move again, similar to the player action - Hide or Search - As the player action - Quick Tech - Invade, Lock on, Bolster, or another action in their profile

- Grapple - As per the player action - Ram - As per the player action

- Reload - Reload one weapon with the loading tag

- Skirmish - The NPC attacks with one weapon in its profile of size heavy or smaller

And the following full actions: - Recover - The NPC ends 2 conditions on themselves - Impaired, Jammed, Stunned, Slowed, Immobilized, Lock On.

- Boot up - The NPC ends the shut down condition on themselves (they can make this action even if shut down) - Cool - Reduce heat to 0 - Barrage - Enemies attack once with each weapon in their profile. They may choose the same or different targets.

You will notice that NPCs cannot overcharge or take the Stabilize action (they cannot repair by default).

Recharge

Many NPC modules and weapons have the recharge tag. Once an NPC uses a system or weapon with this tag, they can't use it again until it recharges. At the start of each of their turns, roll 1d6 and check to see if they gain the use of their system or weapon back. This is listed in the profile of the weapon or system. For example, a recharge (5+) system can be used again once a 5 or 6 is rolled.

Check only once for all recharge modules per NPC, but roll separately for each NPC.

NPCs and damage.

NPCs, are destroyed when they reach 0 HP by default. By default an NPC has 1 point of structure, and cannot enter the CRITICAL state (they are just destroyed when reaching 0 HP). An NPC with more than 1 point of structure follows the same rules for taking structure damage as players (but still can't go CRITICAL). When they're reduced to 0 hp and check their last point of structure, they are destroyed.

NPCs mostly deal flat damage instead of rolling for their attacks.

NPCs cannot Critical Hit unless specified. They rely less on luck than players, who are more traditionally 'heroic' characters. Some NPCs, such as veterans, or Ultras can Critical Hit, which makes them quite dangerous.

NPCs and heat

Some NPCs (such as mechs) have a heat capacity like players. By default, NPCs have 1 reactor stress and are shut down when they reach full heat capacity and reactor stress (and cool all heat when they shut down). If an NPC has more than 1 reactor stress, it takes heat like a player and can also enter the CORE BREACH state like a player instead of shutting down when it reaches full stress.

If an NPC has no heat capacity, it instead takes heat as energy damage.

Tier

NPCs are split into tiers for ease of estimating difficulty. Higher tier NPCs have increased statistics and deal more damage. Tier 1 is levels 1-4, tier 2 levels 5-8, and tier 3 levels 9-12.

The damage and bonuses of NPCs often scales per tier. This is written as X/tier. For example, an attack with +2/tier vs evasion +1 accuracy/tier would roll the following per tier:

Tier 1: +2 with 1 Accuracy

Tier 2: +4 with 2 Accuracy

Tier 3: +6 with 3 Accuracy

Damage is written as Tier 1/Tier 2/Tier 3 damage

For example, an NPC might have an attack that looks like this:

Assault Rifle

Main Rifle

+2 vs evasion/tier with +1 Accuracy

Range 10

4/6/8 kinetic damage

At tier 1, the weapon will attack at +2 targeting, +1 Accuracy for 4 kinetic damage

At tier 2, the weapon will attack at +4 targeting, +1 Accuracy for 6 kinetic damage

At tier 3, the weapon will attack at +6 targeting, +1 Accuracy for 8 kinetic damage

Player characters of a lower level than the tier of NPC they are fighting will generally have a much harder time. For example, you shouldn't generally match up players of license level 3 against tier II NPCs.

You can mix and match tier to give players a harder or easier challenge if you want (especially if you want to ease players into a higher tier so the jump isn't as severe).

NPC Tags

NPCs use the same tags as players, but have a few additional tags they can use that change the way that they work in combat. Some of these tags indicate that NPCs have one or more templates applied to them, which are explained in the following section (and you can find at the end of this section).

Grunt - The grunt tag indicates an NPC with the grunt template (a weak and numerous enemy)

Elite - The Elite tag indicates an NPC with the Elite template. A elite NPC is generally tougher and more dangerous than a regular enemy.

Ultra - The Ultra tag indicates an NPC with the Ultra template. An Ultra is meant to be fought by an entire group of players and has vastly increased toughness and destructive power.

Veteran - A Veteran NPC has greater abilities than a normal NPC and is a more unique or standout character

Mech - An NPC with the mech tag is an ambulatory, mechanized cavalry unit (like the players)

Vehicle - An NPC with the vehicle tag is a vehicle of some kind

Biological - An NPC with the biological tag has no heat capacity, cannot take or benefit from tech actions unless specified, and is immune to all tech actions except Scan and Lock On.

Squad - An NPC with the Squad tag indicates a large squad of biological or mechanical enemies or a squadron of mechs or vehicles. Rules for squads are found in the squad class.

Swarm - An NPC with the swarm tag indicates a large swarm of drones or smaller NPCs. Rules for swarms are found in the swarm class.

Traits and systems

Traits are components of an NPC that can't be described by a system, such as general qualities, pilot experience, or training. They cannot be disabled by system damage.

Classes and Template

LANCER doesn't have a set 'catalogue' or manual of NPCs, but instead presents a list of basic NPC classes and templates you can use to customize an NPC the way you want them.

An NPC class describes the basic statistics and abilities of an NPC, and usually describes their function. For example, if you want an NPC mech that functions like a mobile artillery piece, you should use the Bombard class. If you want an NPC mech that flies and strafes its targets, you should use the Ace class.

An NPC template can be applied on top of the base class to further customize an NPC by adding more unique flavor (such as the pirate template), more unique modules, or changing the NPC into a tougher enemy meant to be fought by many players.

There are a few important templates that change the function of an NPC fairly drastically:

The Grunt template makes an NPC into a weak, easily dispatched enemy. Grunts have 1hp and deal reduced damage, but otherwise function like a regular NPC of their type. Grunts can be used when you want to throw numerous enemies at your players to make the experience more cinematic or increase the size of an encounter without totally overwhelming your players.

The Elite template makes NPCs tougher and more durable, and can be used when you want to make a standout or especially powerful NPC. Elites gain more HP and structure which gives them the ability to take critical damage like players.

The Ultra template makes an NPC into a very powerful foe that should be fought by an entire group of players. It drastically increases the toughness and durability of an NPC, as well as giving them access to powerful Ultra traits and systems. Ultras can gain additional activations (turns) that they can take per round, making them deadly unless they are tackled by multiple players at once.

The Veteran template makes an NPC into a more characterful, durable NPC. You can use it when you want an NPC to stand out or have a notable or memorable ability. You can apply it on top of other templates such as Elite to make a very tough or dangerous foe.

Base and Optional modules

All NPC classes come with base modules (system, weapons, and traits) common to all of that particular class. Under the entry for each NPC class is a list of optional modules for that class. Adding multiple optional modules can make

a more tactically interesting but more complex and dangerous enemy and is up to your discretion.

Building an NPC

Building an NPC is a pretty simple process:

1. Choose NPC class from the section below 2. Choose 0-2 optional modules 3. Pick a tier and set the stats for your NPC. 4. Choose and apply a template to your NPC, if applicable 5. Re-flavor, re-name, and customize

You should always feel free to re-name or re-flavor, modules, or classes as you see fit. For example, your Ace NPCs in a particular encounter might not be called 'Aces' but 'Royal Guard'.

Adding complexity

Think about how your NPC functions. Most NPCs should have base systems and 1 optional system unless otherwise noted. However:

If you want a very basic NPC, don't choose any optional modules or templates. You can very easily run NPCs without adding any extra complexity to a fight by just choosing the basic NPCs with their stats and base modules.

If you want a weak NPC you can throw at players en-masse, choose the Grunt template. If you want to give the impression of a true horde of enemies, use the Squad template.

If you want a slightly more complex, advanced, or dangerous NPC, choose additional optional modules. Generally adding 1-2 more will be sufficient, but you can add more or less as you see fit. The more optional modules you add, the more complicated the NPC will be to run during a game.

If you want a unique, strong, standout, or memorable NPC, apply the Veteran, or Elite templates.

If you want a 'boss' type NPC, something that is able to fight the entire group at once, choose the Ultra template

If you're feeling confident, you can even swap systems around from enemy class to enemy class. For example, you could give the Spectre's cloaking field to an Assault-type enemy. To push it even further, if you want to change the Assassin NPC into a nasty example of alien wildlife, you could give it the biological tag, re-name its variable knife to 'slashing claws', then give it the 'Acid Spittle' option from the Monstrosity class.

Balancing Combat

A 'normal' difficulty combat should be (per player) any mix of:

- 1 Ultra/4 players - 4 grunts/1 player - 1-2 normal enemies/1 player
- 1 elite/1 player

These enemies should be of the same tier as players. You can mix and match this, for example, if you have four players, you could mix in 4 grunts and three regular enemies.

You can decrease combat difficulty by lowering the number of enemies or lowering their tier relative to players, and you can increase combat difficulty by adding enemies with more optional systems, elite enemies, higher tier enemies, enemies with more templates (such as veteran), or adding more enemies.

This is something up to you to figure out with your particular group of players. Don't take the above advice on balancing encounters as a rigid set of

rules, but rather a starting point or guideline. Every group is going to want different levels of challenge.

Number of Combats

In an optimal situation, players should have 1-2 combats between rests, and should fight in 3-4 combats before getting a full repair. As GM this is up to your discretion, especially if you're throwing harder combats at players. Remember the GM agenda - you are not there to punish players, but to help tell a good story.

47 NPC Classes

NPC Classes

47.1 Ace

ACE

A pilot more comfortable the closer they get to their roots, the Ace enemy-type employs high-speed

strafing runs, agile maneuvers, and a reckless approach to piloting their mech. Cocky and self-assured, Ace-type enemies relish a good duel.

ACE

Mech

Hull Agility Systems Engineering

-2 +3 +1 +0

HP Evasion E-defense Heat Cap.

16 11 9 8

Armor Speed Sensors Size

0 6 10 1/2 or 1

Base systems:

SS Corpro flight system System

Whenever this mech moves or boost, it can fly.

Missile Launcher Main Launcher

+1 vs evasion/tier

Seeking

Range 10, Blast 1

4/6/8 explosive damage

Optional systems: Bombing Bay System, Limited (6)

1/turn

When the mech flies while it moves or boosts, it can drop a bomb on one target below as a free action it that it passes over or adjacent to. Bombs create a blast 1 area with at least 1 square on their target. All affected targets must pass an agility check or take 6/9/12 explosive damage and be knocked prone.

Strafing Module System, Quick Action

1/round

The mech flies its speed in any direction in a strafing run, dealing 3/5/7 kinetic damage to any enemy it passes over or adjacent to (no roll required).

Burst/Dash module System

Recharge (5+)

The mech may activate this module instead of moving normally, engaging powerful thrusters. It flies its speed in a straight line in any direction. This movement doesn't provoke reactions, ignores, engagement, and any mechs engaged with the target when it activates this module must pass an agility check or be knocked prone.

Chaff Launchers System, Reaction

Recharge (6+)

In response to any hostile tech action or attack, the mech launches chaff and engages digital scramblers, causing the attack to miss, and granting it immunity to tech attacks and ranged or melee attacks with the smart keyword until the end of its next turn.

Attitude Thrusters System, Reaction

1/round, Recharge (5+)

In response to being hit by any ranged attack, the mech does a barrel roll, flying 3 in any direction and gaining resistance to all the damage of that attack.

Tier II:

HP: + 2

Evade E-D Heat H A S E Armor Spd Sense

14 10 8 -2 +4 +2 +1 0 7 10

All agility checks made as a response to the Ace's attacks are made at +1 Difficulty.

Tier III: HP + 2

Evade E-D Heat H A S E Armor Spd Sense

18 11 8 -2 +6 +3 +1 0 8 10

47.2   Aegis

AEGIS

Aegis-style mechs are squat, defend-and-suppress chassis built to hold ground, support their allies, and

suppress enemies. Higher-tier Aegis mech pilots have access to hardlight and blackwall defensive measures - technology that makes bulwarks out of even the smallest barricade.

AEGIS

Mech

Hull Agility Systems Engineering

+0 -2 +2 +2

HP Evasion E-defense Heat Cap.

14 7 10 10

Armor Speed Sensors Size

2 3 8 2

Base systems: Light Laser Main cannon

+2 vs evasion/tier

Range 8

2 energy damage + 3 burn/tier

Defense Net System, Shield, Quick Action

This system spreads a powerful shimmering repulsion shield over a large area. While this system is active, this mech is immobilized, but all attacks against any target within a burst 3 zone around the mech originating outside of that zone take +1 Difficulty/tier. Attacks out of the zone or between targets that are both inside of the zone are unaffected. It can be deactivated as an action.

Optional systems: Adaptive Shielding

System, Reaction

1/round

The first time an allied target inside the defense net is damaged, all targets inside gain resistance to the damage type of the triggering attack until the end of the Aegis's next turn.

Ring of Fire

System

All targets hostile to the Aegis that start their turn inside the Defense Net or enter it for the first time on their turns take 3 heat and become Shredded while inside the net (they can end this condition by leaving the net).

Hardlight cover system

System, shield, deployable, quick action

Recharge (5+)

The Aegis creates a line 3 section of hardlight, which grants light cover (1 difficulty) against incoming fire. Mechs adjacent to this cover have resistance to damage from line, blast, and cone attacks. The cover is immune to damage.

At tier II onwards, this cover grants heavy cover.

EM Shielding

System

The Aegis' defense net also grants its difficulty to tech attacks made from outside the shield.

HA Blackwall system

System, Full Action

Limited (1)

The Aegis creates a pitch black wall of blinkspace that takes up a free line 10 zone 5 spaces high that must have at least one point within 5 spaces of the Aegis. The wall breaks line of sight between its two sides and no effect or attack can be drawn across it. Any mech that starts its turn on the wall or crosses it for the first time on its turn has a 50blinkspace momentarily. If this occurs, remove the mech from play. It returns at the end of its next turn, in any free space within range 10 of either side of the wall. If there is no space available, it returns when there is. The wall disappears when the Aegis is destroyed or it uses an action to deactivate it, also returning any stranded mechs.

Tier II:

HP: +4

Evade E-D Heat H A S E Armor Spd Sense

8 12 10 +0 -1 +3 +3 2 3 10

Tier III:

Evade E-D Heat H A S E Armor Spd Sense

8 14 10 +0 -1 +4 +5 3 3 10

47.3 Assassin

ASSASSIN

Assassin style mechs trend towards agility, damage, and speed. Their pilots sacrifice comfort for a chassis

efficiency — unnecessary life-support systems, pilot care systems, communications systems, and others are stripped out and replaced with systems that increase processing power, run-silent ability, and increase chassis range.

Assassin pilots work alone or in small groups, piloting their small, sleek mechs into territory thought impenetrable by their targets. One of the few doctrines to employ bladed weapons, assassin-style pilots

train both in the cockpit and out of it to be able to fight with any weapon, in any theater, as efficiently as possible.

Assassin

Mech

Hull Agility Systems Engineering

+1 +2 +0 -1

HP Evasion E-defense Heat Cap.

15 12 8 7

Armor Speed Sensors Size

0 8 12 1

Base systems: Kai Bioplating Trait

This mech gains +1 Accuracy on all agility checks. It can climb with no penalty, takes no penalty for difficult terrain, and doesn't make dangerous terrain tests.

Variable Knife Auxiliary Melee

AP

+1 vs evasion/tier with 1 Accuracy/tier

Threat 2

4/6/8 kinetic damage

Pulse Rifle Heavy rifle

+1 vs evasion/tier with 3 Accuracy

Range 12

7/9/11 energy damage

Optional systems:

Boltok Rifle Heavy CQB

Loading, Knockback 1

+1 vs evasion/tier

Range 3, Threat 3

10/15/20 kinetic damage

This heavy, archaic weapon replaces the Pulse Rifle.

Spinning Kick Trait, Quick Action

A target adjacent to the Assassin must pass a hull or agility check with 1 difficulty/tier or be knocked back 4 spaces away from the assassin and knocked prone.

Shroud module System, Quick Action

The Assassin creates a burst 3 zone of light cover within range 8. The zone disperses at the end of its next turn, or when the Assassin creates a new one. Mechs other than Assassins that enter the zone for the first time on their turns or start their turn there must pass a systems check with 1 difficulty/tier or become Jammed until the end of their next turn.

Explosive Knives Quick Action

Limited (3)

A knife can be thrown at any surface or mech as a quick action. Make a ranged attack roll for +2 vs evasion/tier, attaching on hit. At the start of the assassin's next turn, the knife explodes, dealing 6/8/10 explosive damage in a burst 2 area centered on the knife or mech. A mech can remove and disarm the knife by passing a successful systems check as a quick action if they are adjacent to it.

Tracker Missiles

Quick Tech

+2 vs e-defense/tier

The Assassin makes a tech attack vs e-defense against a target in sensor range. On hit, the target has the missiles latch on to them. While attached, the target cannot hide or benefit from invisibility, and the Assassin always knows its location up to a 10 mile distance. The missiles can be removed during a rest or by taking a quick action and successfully repeating this check.

Tier II:

Evade	E-D	Heat	H	A	S	E	Armor	Spd	Sense
15	8	7	+2	+3	+1	-1	1	8	12

Tier III:

Evade	E-D	Heat	H	A	S	E	Armor	Spd	Sense
17	8	7	+3	+4	+2	-1	2	8	12

47.4 Assault

ASSAULT

Assault doctrine mechs and their pilots are the most common main battle chassis found throughout the galaxy. Fitted with a localized version of a main battle rifle, sidearm, and a suite of systems to enhance

movement, targeting, and defensive systems, an Assault Doctrine chassis is a straightforward, reliable, hardy combatant.

Assault doctrine pilots are the cheapest to train and outfit: this does not make them any less of a threat when paired with a kit of their choice.

ASSAULT

Mech

Hull	Agility	Systems	Engineering
+1	+1	+1	+1

HP	Evasion	E-defense	Heat Cap.
20	8	8	8

Armor	Speed	Sensors	Size
1	4	8	1

Base systems:

Heavy Assault Rifle Main Rifle

Range 10

+2 vs evasion/tier with +1 Accuracy

7/9/11 kinetic damage

Combat Knife Auxiliary Melee

Threat 1

+1 vs evasion/tier

5/7/8 kinetic damage

Optional systems:

Underslung Grenade Launcher Auxiliary Launcher

Loading, Arcing

Range 8, Blast 2

4/6/8 explosive damage

Micro-missile Barrage

Quick action, Recharge (6+)

This mech makes a line 8 ranged attack with +1 vs evasion/tier for 6/9/12 explosive damage. The closest target hit by this missile barrage must pass a hull check or be knocked prone.

At tier II onwards, this hull check is made with 1 difficulty.

High Impact Rounds

System

The Heavy Assault rifle can be fired with high caliber rounds, adding +4 kinetic damage and the AP tag, but requiring a reload after firing it this way (as if it had the loading tag)

Auto-targeting System

The Heavy Assault rifle ignores the effects of light and heavy cover

Rank Discipline Trait

The Assault gains +1 Accuracy on all its attacks and checks as long as it's adjacent to at least one friendly mech.

Tier II:

HP: +3

Evade E-D Heat H A S E Armor Spd Sense

10 9 8 +2 +2 +2 +2 1 4 8

Tier III: HP: +3

Evade E-D Heat H A S E Armor Spd Sense

12 10 8 +3 +3 +3 +3 1 4 8

47.5 Barricade

BARRICADE

BARRICADE

Mech

Hull Agility Systems Engineering

+0 -2 +1 +3

HP Evasion E-defense Heat Cap.

16 6 9 10

Armor Speed Sensors Size

1 4 10 1

Base Systems: Cycle Lance Main Cannon

Range 10

+0 vs evasion with 1 Accuracy/tier

6 energy damage

This weapon can attack twice at tier III with the attack action

Mobile Printer Recharge (6+) As a free action at the start of its turn, the barricade may print a line 3 section of size 3 cover (3 spaces high) in any adjacent and free space. The cover provides heavy cover and has evasion 5 and 30 HP.

Shock Plating

System

The Barricade is resistant to kinetic damage

Optional Modules:

Drag Drone Quick Tech

+2 vs e-defense/tier

A target struck by this drone takes 2 AP energy damage for each 1 space that it voluntarily or involuntarily moves until the start of the Barricade's next turn. The target is aware of this effect.

Seismic Repulsor Quick Action, recharge (5+)

All non-flying targets within a burst 3 area centered on the Barricade must pass a hull skill check with 1 difficulty/tier or be knocked back 3 space directly away from the barricade and knocked prone. The area in the blast then becomes difficult terrain permanently.

Rapid Extruder The Barricade can print twice as fast (can print two sections of cover at once)

Mag Mines Quick Action, Recharge 6+ The Barricade rapidly prints and deploys a field of tiny mines that seek out targets and clamp on to them in droves, slowing them down and inhibiting movement. The mines take up a 5x5x5 cube. The area is both difficult and dangerous terrain, and any target other than the Barricade that enters the area or starts its turn there must pass a systems check with 1 difficulty/tier or become Slowed the end of its next turn.

Snare Drone Quick Action, Drone

Limited (1)

The Barricade rapidly prints and deploys a snare drone in an adjacent space. This drone is size 1, has 10 evasion and 10 HP. When any hostile mech moves within range 3 of the drone or starts its turn in range of the drone, it emits a pulse, immediately immobilizing that mech until the drone is destroyed (no check allowed).

Tier II:

HP: +3

Evade E-D Heat H A S E Armor Spd Sense

7 11 11 +1 -2 +1 +5 1 4 10

Tier III: HP: +3

Evade E-D Heat H A S E Armor Spd Sense

8 13 12 +2 -2 +2 +6 1 4 10

47.6 Bastion

BASTION

Bastion doctrine chassis trade the pure defensive edge of an Aegis doctrine chassis for one that allows more mobility. Blending area-denial offensive capability with hardened defense systems and advanced communication suites, Bastion doctrine chassis make for strong squadron commanders.

BASTION

Mech

Hull Agility Systems Engineering

+2 -3 +0 +2

HP Evasion E-defense Heat Cap.

16 6 8 8

Armor Speed Sensors Size

3 4 8 1

Base systems:

Rotary Grenade Launcher Main Launcher

Arcing, Loading

+1 vs evasion/tier

Range 8, Blast 1

8/11/14 explosive damage

Heavy Assault Shield Heavy Melee

Threat 1

+1 vs evasion/tier

3 kinetic damage/tier

As a quick action, the Bastion can deploy or retract its shield as a line 2, size 2 piece of heavy cover, disarming it of this weapon. The Bastion can leave the shield deployed and move away from it if it so wishes (it can pick it up again as a quick action). Any mech that gains the benefit of this cover against an attack also has resistance to all damage from that attack. The cover has evasion 5 and 20 HP and can be attacked and destroyed as normal.

Optional systems: Shard Launcher

System, Reaction

The first time a Bastion takes damage in a round, all mechs in a cone (3) area in front of it must pass an agility check or take 5/7/9 explosive damage, and half on a successful save.

Shieldwall Trait

As long as it's holding its shield, the Bastion and one adjacent mech of its choice has resistance to all damage from a target of its choosing that it can see. It can only change this target at the start of its turn.

Immortality System, Full Action

Recharge (5+)

The Bastion and one adjacent mech of its choice are immune to all damage and effects until the start of the Bastion's next turn, guarded by a flickering pane of Blackshield tech. The mech adjacent to the Bastion loses this benefit if it breaks adjacency. On the start of the Bastion's next turn, it is stunned until the start of its following turn and cannot gain or benefit from resistance or immunity of any kind for the same duration.

Defender Trait, Reaction

Once a round, when an allied mech is damaged, if the mech is in movement range of the Bastion and the bastion is not immobilized, it can immediately move adjacent to that mech and take that damage instead of the targeted mech. This movement doesn't provoke reactions and ignores engagement.

Hypo-reinforcement servos

System, Shield, Protocol

Recharge (4+)

The bastion activates this system at the start of its turn as a free action if it has it available. While active, it reduces all damage from the very next melee or ranged attack it takes to 0. This effect can only stack once.

Tier II:

HP: +2

Evade E-D Heat H A S E Armor Spd Sense

7 8 9 +4 -3 +0 +3 3 4 8

Tier III:

Evade E-D Heat H A S E Armor Spd Sense

7 8 10 +6 -2 +0 +4 4 4 8

47.7 Berserker

BERSERKER

Berserker doctrine mechs build to take advantage of advanced heat cycling systems to shunt system heat tax into an offensive force, increasing their weapon output by orders of magnitude.

BERSERKER

Mech

Hull Agility Systems Engineering

+3 +2 -2 -1

HP Evasion E-defense Heat Cap.

15 10 6 6

Armor Speed Sensors Size

1 4 5 1

Base systems: Chain Axe Heavy melee

+2 vs evasion/tier with

Threat 1

7/10/14 kinetic damage

This weapon deals an extra +1d6 damage/tier on Critical Hits

Volcanic Re-route

System, Protocol

The Berserker can choose to activate or de-activate this system at the start of its turns. While this system is active, the Berserker can make two attacks with its chain axe when it takes the attack action, but it takes 4 heat at the end of its turn.

Optional systems: Molten Shield System, Shield, Reaction

Once per round, the Berserker can activate this dispersal shield when it takes damage from any melee attack. The damage is reduced by half, and the attacker must pass an engineering check with 1 Difficulty/tier or take Burn 2/tier

Harpoon

Main CQB

+1 vs evasion/tier

Range 5, Threat 3

2/4/6 kinetic damage

Targets struck by this weapon the same size or smaller than the Berserker are pulled in a straight line adjacent to the Berserker or as far as possible. If the target is pulled adjacent to the Berserker, the Berserker grapples them automatically.

Calamity module System, Full Action

The Berserker can only activate this system against a target it is grappling. Auxiliary strength servos engage and the Berserker hurls its target with incredible violence. The target must make a hull check with 1 Difficulty/tier. On a failed check, it takes 8/12/16 kinetic damage, is knocked back 4 spaces away from the berserker, and is stunned until the end of its next turn. On a successful check it takes the damage and knockback, but is not stunned. The Berserker ends its grab after making this move, success or failure.

Nail Gun Main CQB

+1 vs evasion/tier

Range 5, Threat 3

5/7/9 kinetic damage

Targets struck by this weapon must pass an engineering check with 1 difficulty/tier or become immobilized until the end of their next turn.

Hunter jets System, Reaction

Once per round, as a reaction to any enemy movement, the Berserker can make the boost action.

Tier II:

HP: +5

Evade E-D Heat H A S E Armor Spd Sense

11 6 6 +4 +4 -2 -1 1 4 5

Tier III: HP: +5

Evade E-D Heat H A S E Armor Spd Sense

12 6 6 +6 +4 -2 +0 1 5 5

47.8   Bombard

BOMBARD

The Bombard doctrine calls for unending salvos of punishing artillery bombardments. Chassis tuned to this style of combat are found miles behind the line in fortified positions, or otherwise removed from combat: one common strategy for prolonged area-denial bombardment is to place a battery of bombard chassis on a world's local moon(s). From that movable satellite, the battery can

rain FRAMEs down upon the world below, well removed from the dangers of combat.

BOMBARD

Mech

Hull Agility Systems Engineering

+0 -1 +1 +2

HP Evasion E-defense Heat Cap.

20 7 12 8

Armor Speed Sensors Size

0 2 11 2

Base systems: Bombard cannon Superheavy cannon Ordnance, Arcing, Loading

+2 vs evasion/tier with 1 difficulty

Range 20, Blast 2

10/14/18 kinetic damage

Stabilizers System, Full Action

As a full action, this mech can engage or disengage its stabilizers. While they are active, the mech cannot move or be knocked prone, but it gains +1 accuracy and +10 range on its attacks and cannot fire any weapons at a target within range 5 of itself. If this system is destroyed, the mech is immobilized.

Molded Armor System

The Bombard has resistance to explosive damage

Optional systems: H.A. Siege Shield

System, Shield, Passive

The mech has resistance to all damage that it takes from attacks further away than range 5.

High-Impact shells Trait

The Bombard cannon gains knock back 3

LMG

Main Cannon

One or two targets

Range 10

+1 vs evasion/tier

4/6/8 kinetic damage

Cluster-seeker Bombs System

After the artillery fires its bombard cannon, 3 additional targets within range 10 of the primary target take 2 explosive damage/tier (no check or roll required).

Devastator Protocol Trait, Full Action, recharge (6+)

Choose 1d3 points within range of the mech, and mark them (so they are clearly visible to all players). The bombard must be activated last next round. At the start of its next turn, the mech fires at each of those points with its bombard cannon, as a free action, attacking all targets and structures within. It cannot choose these points so that the blast area from these attacks overlap in any way.

Tier II:

HP: +5

Evade E-D Heat H A S E Armor Spd Sense

8 14 8 +1 -1 +2 +3 0 3 11

Tier III: HP: +5

Evade E-D Heat H A S E Armor Spd Sense

8 16 8 +1 -1 +3 +5 0 3 11

47.9 Breacher

BREACHER

BREACHER

Mech

Hull Agility Systems Engineering

+2 +0 -1 +1

HP Evasion E-defense Heat Cap.

18 9 7 8

Armor Speed Sensors Size

1 4 5 1

Base Systems Dual Shotguns Main CQB

+1 vs evasion/tier with 2 difficulty

Range 3, Threat 3

6/8/12 kinetic damage

The Breacher can attack twice with this weapon with the attack action, choosing the same or different targets.

BREACH Ram Quick action, Recharge (5+)

The breacher moves forward in a straight line as far as it can, up to its speed. It ignores engagement and obstruction (even for obstacles or mechs passed through). Obstacles or objects such as cover are punched or smashed through and take 10 AP kinetic damage/tier. If the obstacle is an especially hardy composition (such as a starship hull) the breacher can make a successful hull check to smash through instead. All other targets passed through must pass a hull check with 1 difficulty or be knocked out of the breacher's path and knocked prone.

Optional Systems:

Unload Full Action

The breacher chooses a target in range of its dual shotguns. At the start of the breacher's next turn, if the target is still in range, the breacher can attack that target with its dual shotguns with +3 Accuracy (for a total of +2 Accuracy by default) as a free action.

Loaded for Bear Trait

A target struck by both the Breacher's Dual shotguns becomes shredded until the end of the Breacher's next turn

Hunter Lock Quick Tech

+1 vs e-defense/tier with +1 Accuracy

The Breacher chooses a target in sensor range and makes a tech attack. On hit, all its attacks gain +1 accuracy/tier against that target, and 1/turn it can take the boost action as a Free Action, as long as it is made directly towards

that target. The Breacher cannot change its target until it or the target is destroyed.

Thermal Charge Quick Action

Limited (1), Thrown 5

Blast 2

2/4/6 explosive damage + 5 Burn/tier

Hi Caliber Slugs The breacher takes 1 heat when its fires its dual shotguns, but they deal +3 damage

Tier II:

HP: +2

Evade E-D Heat H A S E Armor Spd Sense

11 7 8 +3 +1 -1 +2 1 4 5

Tier III: HP: +2

Evade E-D Heat H A S E Armor Spd Sense

13 7 8 +4 +2 -1 +3 1 4 5

47.10   Cataphract

CATAPHRACT

The Cataphract doctrine is common among rapid-strike kits that emphasize mobility, shock, and tenacity. Cataphract squadrons are feared across the galaxy for their ability to overwhelm defenses in moments: from an otherwise static line, a squadron of low and angular chassis burst overhead, heavy cannons and PDF guns carving seemingly impossible paths through a suddenly futile defense.

Cataphract

Mech

Hull Agility Systems Engineering

+1 +1 +0 +0

HP Evasion E-defense Heat Cap.

16 10 8 9

Armor Speed Sensors Size

0 6 8 1-2

Base systems:

Ram cannon Heavy Melee/Heavy Cannon

+0 vs evasion with 1 Accuracy/tier

Range 8, Threat 2

5/7/9 kinetic damage

This lance-like weapon can be fired with either profile (used as a melee or ranged weapon), but not both in the same turn.

Impact thrusters System, Full Action

Recharge (5+)

The Cataphract charges, moving 6 in a straight line in a direction of its choosing. It can ignore obstructions caused by enemies. Hostile targets that it passes through must pass a hull or agility check or take 2 kinetic damage/tier and be knocked prone.

Optional systems: Rotary Barrels System

1/round when the Cataphract hits with a Ram Cannon attack, it can repeat the attack roll against a different target in range with +2 difficulty.

Lance shot System, Full Action, Recharge (5+)

The Cataphract can fire a lance shell from its ram cannon. This changes the attack type of the weapon to line 10 and causes all affected mechs to pass an agility skill check to dodge the shot or become immobilized until the start of the Cataphract's next turn.

High-speed targeting System

The Cataphract can make one Ram Cannon attack (melee or ranged) after taking the dash action, but takes 1 difficulty on the attack roll.

Point-defense shield System, Shield, Quick Tech

+2 vs e-defense/tier

The Cataphract makes a tech attack against a target in range. On hit, the Cataphract has resistance to all damage from that target. It can only have one actor effected at a time.

Capacitor discharge System

After the cataphract takes the boost action, all mechs it is adjacent to after the action completes take 2/3/4 heat.

Tier II:

HP: +4

Evade	E-D	Heat	H	A	S	E	Armor	Spd	Sense
11	8	9	+3	+2	+0	+0	0	7	8

Tier III: HP: + 4

Evade	E-D	Heat	H	A	S	E	Armor	Spd	Sense
12	8	9	+4	+4	+0	+0	0	7	8

47.11   Demolisher

DEMOLISHER

The prolonged siege of Jadigmora City saw the development of the DEMOLISHER patten. Based off the long-operational berserker doctrine, DEMOLISHER tuned the chaotic heat flow to a more sustainable, if limited system, increasing a chassis' heavy-lift capacity to allow for supermassive kinetic weapons to be used effectively in combat. Combined with the increased pilot shielding and system hardening made necessary by the heat tuning, pilots soon discovered more aggressive applications for concussion-wave ordinance.

Demolisher

Mech

Hull	Agility	Systems	Engineering
+2	-2	+0	+2

HP	Evasion	E-defense	Heat Cap.
16	6	7	8

Armor	Speed	Sensors	Size
2	4	8	2

Base systems:

Demolisher hammer Superheavy Melee

Threat 2

AP, Knockback 2

-2 vs evasion with 1 difficulty (no difficulty at tier II, +1 Accuracy at tier III)

13/18/25 explosive damage

This weapon deals double damage against structures, objects, the environment, and cover and gains +2 Accuracy against them.

Kinetic compensation System

If the Demolisher misses with its hammer attack, it gains +1 Accuracy on subsequent attacks until it hits. This effect stacks.

Optional systems: Broad-sweep haft Full Action

The Demolisher's hammer can be used to make a sweep attack instead of a regular attack, attacking all targets in threat range (allied or enemy) for +1 vs evasion/tier, 4/6/8 explosive damage. Targets struck by this attack are impaired until the start of the Demolisher's next turn.

Concussion missiles Quick Action

A target in range 8 must pass an engineering check with 1 difficulty/tier or be knocked back 3 spaces and impaired until the start of the Demolisher's next turn.

Seismic Destroyer

System, Full Action, Recharge (6+)

The Demolisher's hammer can be used to make a special attack that hits cone 3 or line 5 from the Demolisher instead of its regular attack. This attack cannot hit flying targets. Targets in the area must pass a hull or agility skill check or be stunned until the end of the Demolisher's next turn.

Shatter module Trait

The Demolisher's hammer strikes against prone, immobilized, or stunned targets gain the AP tag and can Critical Hit, dealing +1d6 bonus damage/tier on Critical Hits

Knockout Blow Trait, Quick Action, Recharge 6+ A target adjacent to the Demolisher must pass a hull or agility check with 1 difficulty/tier or become stunned until the end of the Demolisher's next turn.

Tier II:

HP: +4

Evade E-D Heat H A S E Armor Spd Sense

6 7 8 +4 -2 +0 +3 3 4 8

Tier III: HP: +4

Evade E-D Heat H A S E Armor Spd Sense

6 7 8 +6 -2 +0 +4 3 5 8

47.12 Engineer

ENGINEER

Engineer doctrine chassis are common throughout the galaxy, their patterns unique to the world or theater in which they operate, but their charge the same: defend, maintain, secure. Engineers operate best in the mid to rear of the line,

coordinating the defense of important positions and ensuring total operational deployment of all mission assets. Remember: if your chassis can't make it to the line, you lose.

Engineer

Mech

Hull Agility Systems Engineering

-1 -1 +1 +3

HP Evasion E-defense Heat Cap.

20 7 11 12

Armor Speed Sensors Size

0 3 15 1

Base systems:

Flak Cannon Heavy Cannon

Smart

+1 vs e-defense/tier

Range 15

5/7/9 kinetic damage

This weapon gains +1 Accuracy against flying targets. Flying targets damaged by this weapon must pass an agility check or fall.

Deployable turret System, Drone, Quick Action, Recharge (4+)

The engineer deploys a self-building turret in an adjacent, open space. The turret is an immobile size 1 drone with simple AI that attacks the nearest hostile target. It has evasion 10, 10 HP, and 1 armor. It attacks on the Engineer's turn for +1/tier vs evasion, range 10, 2/3/4 kinetic damage, but can take no other actions.

Ablative Shielding

System

The Engineer has resistance to energy damage

Optional systems: Power deployer System

The Engineer can deploy two turrets when it uses its deployable turret system

Arsenal The Engineer can deploy stronger turrets, and three different types of turrets, and can choose which to deploy when it uses its system. Each have the same statistics as a base turret, with the following changes:

Inferno: The turret's weapon becomes +1/tier vs evasion, cone 5, Burn 3/4/5

Hellstorm: The turret's weapon becomes +1/tier vs evasion, range 15, blast 1, 2/3/4 explosive damage

Hunter: The turret's weapon gains the smart tag

Primed: When the turret or the engineer is destroyed, it explodes in a burst 1 area around it. Targets caught inside must pass an agility check or take 7/9/11 explosive damage

Skyshield protocol System

The Engineer's deployable turrets gain +1 accuracy against flying targets.

Point Defense Drone System, Drone, Quick Action, Recharge (5+)

The engineer deploys a drone in an adjacent space which creates a burst 1 zone around it. The engineer can only deploy one drone at a time. While inside this zone, targets allied to the engineer are immune to weapons with the Seeking and Smart tags. The drone can be attacked and destroyed, though it benefits from its own zone.

Tracking Computer System, Reaction

Once per round, the Engineer's Flak Cannon can be fired once as a reaction to any boost action or movement outside of regular movement by a hostile mech it can see.

Tier II:

HP: +2

Evade E-D Heat H A S E Armor Spd Sense

9 12 12 -1 +0 +2 +4 0 3 15

Tier III: HP: +2

Evade E-D Heat H A S E Armor Spd Sense

11 12 12 -1 +0 +3 +6 1 4 15

47.13 Hive

HIVE

A recent development following the Deimos Contact Event, Hive doctrine chassis are, in theory, not too different than their pre-Contact cousins: they establish a local, secure omninetwork, fabricate and deploy a century or half-century of drones, and coordinate them in achieving their mission. The difference between pre-Contact and post-Contact drone controllers is ease: pilots who pursue this doctrine establish complex handler-trainer relationships with their hives, allowing them to segue between direct control and autonomous operation unimpeded by tactile interface. Hive pilots exhibit signs of psychological trauma at one month continuous drone-strain operation, and it is recommended that they practice a strict two-week format cycling with their paired hive.

HIVE

Mech

Hull Agility Systems Engineering

+1 -1 +2 +0

HP Evasion E-defense Heat Cap.

20 8 10 8

Armor Speed Sensors Size

0 5 15 1

Base systems: Hunter Killer Drone Nexus

Main Nexus

Smart, Seeking

Range 15

+2 vs e-defense/tier

7 energy damage

This weapon can attack twice at tier III with the attack action

Drone Barrage

Quick Tech

+2 vs e-defense/tier with +1 accuracy/tier

The Hive directs its drones to run interference on a target of its choice. On hit, the target is Slowed and Impaired until the start of the hive's next turn.

Optional systems:

Electro-Nanite Cloud System

All hostile targets that start their turn within range 3 of the Hive take 2 Burn/tier. In addition, any system checks they make or tech actions they make in that area suffer from +1 Difficulty/tier.

Grinder Drones Drone, System

Quick Tech

+2 vs e-defense/tier with +1 Accuracy/tier

The Hive releases a swarm of tiny, hard to hit drones that attach to a target within range 15, making a tech attack. On hit, the target takes Burn 4/6/8. The Hive can only have one target attacked by these drones at once.

Razor Swarm Drone, System, Quick Action, Recharge 5+

The Hive creates a blast 2 area within sensor range. The area remains until the end of combat or the Hive is destroyed. Targets allied to the hive can use the area for light cover. Otherwise, any target that starts its turn in the area or moves into it for the first time on its turn takes 3 Burn/tier. The Hive can deploy any number of Razor Swarms.

Swarm Shield Quick Action, Recharge 6+

The Hive releases a cloud of miniature drones that cluster around it, providing heavy protection. The Hive has resistance to damage from the next 1d6 attacks.

Seeker Cloud Main Nexus

Smart

+0 vs e-defense with 1 Accuracy/tier

Cone 5

3/4/5 Kinetic Damage

Targets damaged by this weapon gain the Lock On condition.

Tier II:

HP: +4

Evade E-D Heat H A S E Armor Spd Sense

9 12 8 +2 -1 +4 +0 0 5 20

Tier III: HP: +4

Evade E-D Heat H A S E Armor Spd Sense

10 14 8 +3 -1 +6 +0 0 6 25

47.14 Hornet

HORNET

HORNET

Mech

Hull Agility Systems Engineering

-2 +2 +2 +0

HP Evasion E-defense Heat Cap.

10 15 8 5

Armor Speed Sensors Size

0 8 10 1/2

Base Systems: Stinger Pistol Auxiliary CQB

Range 8, Threat 3

+1 vs evasion/tier with +1 accuracy/tier

2/3/4 energy damage

Targets critically hit by this pistol are impaired until the end of the hornet's next turn.

SSC Total Suite The Hornet can fly when it moves or boosts with hover flight.

Impale Systems Quick Tech, Recharge 5+

+2 vs e-defense/tier

On hit, the target takes 3 heat/tier and becomes jammed until the end of the hornet's next turn.

Optional Systems: Evade Suite Trait

The Hornet ignores engagement and is immune to grapples

Minor Basilisk Trait

The first attack a target misses against the Hornet per turn deals 2 heat/tier to the attacker.

Interdictor Suite

Reaction

1/round the Hornet can use a reaction to attempt to electronically jam a target in its sensor range that is attempting to make an attack roll. The target must pass a systems skill check or lose its attack roll (it can still make other attacks as normal). The difficulty of this test increases by 1 difficulty at tier II onwards.

HEX missiles

Auxiliary Launcher

Smart

+0 vs e-defense with +1 Accuracy/tier

Range 10, Blast 1

3/4/5 heat

Drag Javelin Full Action

The Hornet fires a javelin at a target it can see within range 10. The target must pass a hull check with 1 difficulty/tier or become impaled by the javelin. Upon impact, the javelin fires a secondary grapple at the environment, tethering the target to the ground. While impaled this way, the target is immobilized and shredded. It can end this condition by repeating the check as a quick action on their turn to pull the javelin out.

Tier II:

Evade E-D Heat H A S E Armor Spd Sense

17 8 6 -2 +4 +3 +0 0 10 10

Tier III:

Evade E-D Heat H A S E Armor Spd Sense

20 9 7 -2 +6 +4 +0 1 12 10

47.15 Marker

MARKER

Marker doctrine calls for the active, close, and aggressive application of orbital, atmospheric, and terrestrial fire support on identified and potential enemy positions. Equipped with more-than- cursory targeting systems, Marker doctrine pilots adopt an tactical/artillery commander role, operating on the ground with infantry, chassis, and other vehicles to build a map of the battlescape in order to more accurately place small arms fire, bombs, shells, missiles, beams, and kinetic kill clouds. They are not usually a threat in face-to-face combat, but the threat they represent to a combat cannot be underestimated.

Marker

Mech

Hull Agility Systems Engineering

-2 +2 +3 -1

HP Evasion E-defense Heat Cap.

14 12 10 8

Armor Speed Sensors Size

0 6 20 1/2 - 1

Base systems:

High Caliber Pistol Auxiliary CQB

+2 vs evasion/tier

Range 8, Threat 3

3/4/5 kinetic damage

Target Marker Main rifle

Smart

+1 vs e-defense/tier with 1 Accuracy

Range 20

Targets hit by this attack immediately gain Lock On and are Shredded while they suffer from Lock On. They then cannot turn invisible or benefit from invisibility, and cannot hide until the end of the Marker's next turn. If the Marker is destroyed or this weapon is disabled, immediately end this condition.

Optional systems:

Orbital Strike System, recharge 5+

Instead of firing the target marker at an enemy, the Marker can fire it at a point within range 30. At the start of the Marker's next turn, that area is hit by an orbital strike. Any mechs still in a burst 3 area centered on that point must pass an agility check or take 12/17/22 energy damage and be knocked prone, or half and no prone on a successful check.

HOUND missile

Quick Action, Recharge (6+)

Choose a target within range 20. The marker fires a hound missile at the target, which is size 1/2, has evasion 10, and 10/15/20 HP. The missile primes on the turn that it is fired, deploying in an adjacent space, then moves 3 at

the start of each of the marker's turns. If its target suffers from the Lock On condition, its movement increases to 6. The missile can benefit from cover, counts as flying with hover flight, and can be targeted and shot by systems and weapons. It must move towards its target, but can maneuver skillfully around cover, fit through holes, etc. If the missile's movement causes it to collide with a hostile mech or its target, it detonates for a blast 1 explosion. Mechs caught inside must pass an agility skill check or take 15/20/25 energy damage and half on a successful check.

Blind Quick Tech, Recharge (4+)

+2 vs e-defense with +1 Accuracy/tier

On hit, the target only has line of sight to adjacent squares until the end of its next turn.

Rebound Scan System, Full Action

All targets in range 10 of the marker must pass a systems check or immediately lose the benefit of all cover, hiding, and invisibility and be unable to take cover, hide, or turn invisible until the start of the Marker's next turn.

Smart Missile Cloud System

At the start of the marker's turn, one target suffering from Lock On in the Marker's sensor range takes 4/5/6 explosive damage from the Marker, no roll required.

Tier II:

Evade E-D Heat H A S E Armor Spd Sense

15 13 8 -2 +4 +4 -1 0 7 20

Tier III:

Evade E-D Heat H A S E Armor Spd Sense

18 16 8 -2 +5 +6 -1 0 8 20

47.16 Operator

OPERATOR

Operator doctrine chassis are a known-unknown. Operators typically field smaller chassis not commonly encountered on the front lines; do not mistake this for fragility. Pilots who are recruited and trained into this doctrine, regardless of culture, are dangerous, deadly, the best of their state's armed forces or martial tradition. They operate alone or in small teams under the auspices of black-site state agencies, engaging in the most sensitive and dangerous AMNESIAC-tier missions. Their chassis — and their bodies — are loaded with some of the most advanced tech available; if they die in combat, it is not uncommon for their bodies and their chassis to self- immolate, rendering what technology and data they had into waste and ash.

OPERATOR

Mech

Hull Agility Systems Engineering

+2 +2 +2 +2

HP Evasion E-defense Heat Cap.

14 10 10 9

Armor Speed Sensors Size

0 4 10 1

Base systems:

'Raptor' plasma rifle Heavy Rifle

+2 vs evasion/tier

Range 15

8 energy damage

This weapon can attack twice at tier III with the attack action

'Nightcloak' type omnishield System, Shield

While this system is active, the operative has resistance to one of the following types of damage: kinetic, explosive, energy, heat. The operative must decide which when it starts combat (setting it is a Free Action) and cannot change it during combat.

Self-erasing Trait

When this mech is destroyed, it immediately self-immolates into superheated plasma. All targets adjacent to it when it is destroyed must pass an agility check or take 4/6/8 energy damage or

half on a successful check. This mech is then removed from the battlefield - it is utterly annihilated.

Optional systems: Fade generator System

While this system is intact, at the end of its turn, the Operative becomes invisible until the start of its next turn. This effect is immediately disabled if the Operative takes damage until the start of the Operator's next turn.

Refractive shield System, Shield

This system is permanently disabled if the operative overheats. While it is active, the operative gains the Hardened Target trait (scans, lock on attempts, and invasions against it are made at +1 difficulty).

Skirmisher implant System

Once at any point on its turn, the operative can make a boost action as a free action.

Nova missile Auxiliary Launcher

Smart, Seeking

+1 vs e-defense with 1 Accuracy/tier

Range 30, blast 1

4/6/8 energy damage

Trace Drive System

Once on its turn, when the Operative moves or boosts, it instead teleports up to 8 spaces away, as long as its target destination is a free space. This movement does not provoke reactions and ignores engagement, such as overwatch.

Tier II:

Evade E-D Heat H A S E Armor Spd Sense

12 12 9 +3 +3 +3 +3 1 4 10

Tier III:

Evade E-D Heat H A S E Armor Spd Sense

14 14 9 +4 +4 +4 +4 2 5 10

47.17   Pyro

PYRO

A combat doctrine adopted following the Hercynian Crisis, the Pyro chassis-pattern is reviled across the galaxy as a terror instrument, though some states and organizations still choose to integrate them into their armies. Pyro doctrine chassis are heavily armored and insulated, built to manage incredible heat tax while projecting volatile mixes of irrepressible flame towards their enemies. Pyro chassis are sent in to root out entrenched defenders, defoliate areas rich in flora, and cause terror.

PYRO
Mech
Hull Agility Systems Engineering
+1 -1 -1 +3
HP Evasion E-defense Heat Cap.
12 8 8 15
Armor Speed Sensors Size
3 3 8 2
Base systems:
Flamethrower Heavy CQB
Cone 5
+1 vs evasion/tier
4 heat (self)
Burn 5/7/9 + 2/4/6 heat
Explosive Vent
System, Full Action

The pyro cools to 0 heat. Targets caught in a burst 1 area around it must pass an engineering check or take half of the heat the pyro cools as heat to themselves and be knocked prone.

Optional systems: Insulated Plating The pyro has resistance to heat and energy damage (including its self inflicted heat). It is immune to Burn

Unshielded Reactor

Targets that start their turn adjacent to the pyro or become adjacent to the pyro for the first time on their turns take 1 heat/tier.

Napalm Bomb Main Launcher
Arcing, Loading
-1 vs evasion with +1 Accuracy/tier
Range 8, Blast 1
Burn 3/4/5 + 2/4/6 heat
Rigged fuel rod launcher Heavy Launcher
-2 vs evasion with +1 Accuracy/tier
Knockback 1
Range 10
4/6/8 heat
Explosive Jet System, Quick action, recharge (5+)

Enemies in a burst 2 area around the Pyro must pass a hull or agility check or be knocked back outside of that area and knocked prone. The Pyro then flies 5 in any direction, but it must land after completing that move.

Tier II:

HP: +3

Evade E-D Heat H A S E Armor Spd Sense

8 8 15 +2 +0 -1 +4 3 3 8

Tier III: HP: +3

Evade E-D Heat H A S E Armor Spd Sense

8 8 15 +3 +0 +0 +5 4 3 8

47.18   Rainmaker

RAINMAKER

The tongue-in-cheek designation describes a combat doctrine that patterns chassis around the optimal use of rockets and missiles in combat. Favored by all-theater combat units, Rainmakers are mobile platforms loaded with ordinance, able to handle engagements at any range, against any target.

RAINMAKER

Mech

Hull Agility Systems Engineering

+0 +1 +2 -1

HP Evasion E-defense Heat Cap.

15 8 10 8

Armor Speed Sensors Size

1 2 15 2

Base systems:

Thundershock missile pods

Main launcher

Arcing, Knockback 1

+2 vs evasion/tier

One, two, or three targets in range 15

3/4/5 explosive damage

'Drang' missile rack

Heavy launcher

Ordnance, Loading

Line 15

+1 vs evasion/tier

8/11/14 explosive damage

Optional systems: HADES missile

Quick Action, Recharge (5+)

The rainmaker targets a cone 3 area drawn in any direction from a point within range 20 of its location. This system tracks line of sight as if it were an arcing weapon. All targets in that area must pass an agility check or take 3/5/7 energy damage and 2/4/6 heat, and half on a successful check.

Rigged payload System

When the rainmaker is destroyed, it explodes in a burst 2 explosion centered on itself. Targets caught within must pass an agility check or take 8/12/16 explosive damage, and half on a successful check.

Volley System, Full Action, Recharge (5+)

All hostile targets within range 30 of the rainmaker must pass an agility check or take 4/6/8 explosive damage, or half on a successful check. This system tracks line of sight as if it was a seeking weapon.

Huntsman Trait

While firing at a target suffering from the Lock On condition, the rainmaker's weapons gain the Smart and Seeking tags.

Atlas missile Superheavy launcher

Ordnance, Arcing

Range 30

This weapon system replaces the Drang Missile rack. Instead of targeting a mech, the rainmaker instead targets a space on the ground within range. The targeted area is visible to all in line of sight. At the start of its next turn, the missile lands, targeting a burst 2 area centered on that space. All targets caught within must pass an agility check or take 15/20/25 explosive damage, and half on a successful check.

Tier II:

HP: +2

Evade E-D Heat H A S E Armor Spd Sense

11 11 8 +0 +2 +3 +0 1 2 20

Tier III: HP: +2

Evade E-D Heat H A S E Armor Spd Sense

12 12 8 +0 +3 +4 +1 2 3 20

47.19   Ronin

RONIN

Ronin doctrine chassis differ from Berserker and DEMOLISHER pattern chassis in that they have been purpose-built by boutique fabricators to excel in melee combat. Ronin patterns are common among martial cultures and event-combat firms both. Tactical applications for Ronin chassis are difficult in cultures where ranged weapons are preferred, but there is a certain prestige earned by pilots who adopt ancient weapons in the modern day and survive. That being said the availability of stasis and mag based defensive technology has made the Ronin doctrine marginally more viable in modern combat.

RONIN

Mech

Hull Agility Systems Engineering

+1 +2 -1 -1

HP Evasion E-defense Heat Cap.

18 10 7 8

Armor Speed Sensors Size

0 5 12 1

Base systems: Carbon Fiber Sword Main Melee

+2 vs evasion with 1 Accuracy/tier

Threat 1

6 kinetic damage

This weapon can attack once per tier (up to 3 times at tier 3) with the attack action

This weapon can Critical Hit, and deals an extra +1d6 kinetic damage on Critical Hit

Mag Parry System, Shield, Reaction

Once per round, when damaged by a ranged weapon, the Ronin can roll a d6. On a roll of a 5+, the Ronin gains resistance to all the damage from that attack, and the target must repeat the attack roll against itself, dealing damage on a success.

Optional systems: Charged Slash Full Action, recharge (5+)

All targets adjacent to the Ronin must make a successful agility check or take 8/12/16 kinetic damage, and half on a successful check.

Reflex Implant System

When the Ronin boosts, attackers gain +2 Difficulty to attack it until the start of the Ronin's next turn.

Echo Edge System

When the Ronin damages a target, it marks that target (keep track of it). At the start of its turn, the Ronin can consume all these marks as a free action to deal 1d6 AP kinetic damage to all targets, no attack roll required. They last until consumed, until the Ronin is destroyed, or until the end of the current challenge.

Hyper-reflex mode System, Quick Action, Recharge (5+)

This system remains active until the end of the Ronin's next turn. While active, the first time each turn (the Ronin's turn or any other actor's turn) the Ronin is targeted by an attack, it can immediately make a Carbon Fiber Sword attack against a target in range before the attack is made.

Extended Blade The Ronin's Carbon Fiber Sword becomes threat 2. The first time it critically hits with a melee attack on a turn, all targets within its threat take 3/4/5 kinetic damage including the target of its attack.

Tier II:

HP: +2

Evade E-D Heat H A S E Armor Spd Sense

13 7 8 +2 +4 -1 -1 0 5 12

Tier III: HP: +2

Evade E-D Heat H A S E Armor Spd Sense

16 7 8 +4 +5 -1 -1 0 6 12

47.20 Scourer

SCOURER

SCOURER doctrine mechs mount massive-output recursive power plants in order to field deadly energy weapons. A common specialist-role doctrine,

SCOURER chassis are found on fronts across the galaxy, supporting kinetic-focus ground troops with powerful lensing attacks that target not only corporeal enemies, but systemic threats.

SCOURER

Mech

Hull Agility Systems Engineering

+1 +0 0 +1

HP Evasion E-defense Heat Cap.

16 9 8 10

Armor Speed Sensors Size

1 4 10 1

Base systems:

Thermal Lance Heavy Cannon

2 heat (self)

+0 vs evasion with +1 Accuracy at tier II and +2 Accuracy at tier III

Range 8

6/8/12 energy damage

Cooling Module System If the Scourer did not move or boost at all this turn, it reduces its heat to 0

Optional systems: Crystal Lense Once the Scourer hits a target with the Thermal Lance, on subsequent turns it can choose to focus down that target instead of firing normally. As a full action from the Scourer, that target takes 6/9/12 Burn, no roll required. This effect breaks if the target gains cover from the Scourer, the scourer is stunned, this weapon is disabled or destroyed, or the target moves out of range. The target is aware of this effect.

Supercharged

Trait

Targets struck by the thermal lance are shredded until the end of the scourer's next turn.

Pulse Laser

Main Cannon

+2 vs evasion/tier

Line 10

4 energy damage

This weapon can attack twice at tier III

Flash Lense System, Quick Action, Recharge (6+)

The Scourer targets a cone 5 area in a direction of its choosing. All targets in the area must pass a systems check or be jammed until the start of the Scourer's next turn.

Melt System, Quick Action, Recharge (5+)

The scourer targets a piece of cover, terrain, or deployable, then makes an attack roll, dealing 10/20/30 AP energy damage on hit.

Tier II:

HP: +2

Evade E-D Heat H A S E Armor Spd Sense

10 8 12 +2 +1 +0 +3 1 4 10

Tier III:

Evade E-D Heat H A S E Armor Spd Sense

10 8 12 +3 +1 +1 +4 2 4 10

47.21 Seeder

SEEDER

Seeders are sapper chassis, adept at building defensive nets of mines and traps for point defense and aggressive area denial. Laden with ordinance, pilots who adopt Seeder doctrines operate in small teams to blanket the battlefield in clouds of fire and shrapnel, placing their launched grenades and explosive-tipped FRAMEs with pinpoint accuracy.

SEEDER

Mech

Hull Agility Systems Engineering

+0 +0 +2 +0

HP Evasion E-defense Heat Cap.

15 7 10 10

Armor Speed Sensors Size

2 4 15 1

Base systems:

Grav Grenade Launcher Main Launcher

Arcing

+2 vs evasion/tier

Range 10, blast 1

2/3/4 explosive damage

This weapon deals 5/7/9 damage if it catches more than 1 target in its blast

Mine Deployer System, free action, recharge (4+)

The seeder lays a mine in a space within range 3 of it. It cannot place a mine adjacent to another mine. The mine arms at the end of the round. Once armed, the next target other than the seeder to become adjacent to it must pass a systems check or trigger the mine. That target, and any caught in a burst 1 area centered on the mine must pass an agility check or take 10/15/20 explosive damage, and half on a successful check.

Optional systems: Smart Tagging

System

The seeder's mines only detonate automatically if there is a hostile target in range (not allied). Furthermore, the seeder can choose to stop their detonation as a reaction.

Grav Mine System, Quick Action

A target in range 5 and line of sight to the Seeder must pass a systems check or have a mine attached to them. They can disarm the mine by taking a quick action and successfully repeating this check. The seeder can detonate any grav mines at the start of its turn as a free action, causing any affected mech to take 3/5/7 explosive damage, no attack roll required, and be knocked 3 spaces in a direction of the Seeder's choosing.

Anti-Infantry mine Trait

If the seeder chooses, it can lay an anti-infantry mine with its mine deployer. This mine affects a burst 3 area instead of burst 1 and deals 1/2/3 explosive damage, but 4/6/8 to targets with the biological tag.

Grav Lash

Quick Tech

+2 vs e-defense/tier

On hit, the target is knocked back 5 spaces in a direction of the Seeder's choosing.

Seeker Mines System, Full Action, recharge (5+)

The seeder fires small seeker mines at one to three targets of the seeder's choice in range 5 and line of sight. Those targets must pass a systems check or have a mine latch on to them. At the start of the seeder's next turn, the mines explode for a burst 1 explosion on the target for 3/5/7 explosive damage.

Tier II:

HP: +2

Evade E-D Heat H A S E Armor Spd Sense

8 10 10 +1 +0 +3 +1 2 4 15

Tier III: HP: +2

Evade E-D Heat H A S E Armor Spd Sense

9 11 10 +2 +0 +4 +2 2 4 15

47.22   Sentinel

SENTINEL

Sentinel doctrine chassis fill guard roles. Typically found in the retinues of commanders or posted in defense of batteries, Sentinel chassis employ a suite of technology that ensures their charges stay alive and operational, even if it means the Sentinel's death.

SENTINEL

Mech

Hull Agility Systems Engineering

+2 +1 +0 -1

HP Evasion E-defense Heat Cap.

20 9 9 8

Armor Speed Sensors Size

0 5 8 1

Base systems:

Combat Shotgun Main CQB

Range 3, Threat 3

+2 vs evasion/tier with 1 Accuracy

7/9/12 kinetic damage

Retractable Sword Main Melee

Threat 1

+2 vs evasion/tier

4/6/9 kinetic damage

Eye of Midnight

System, Quick Action

This system can be activated or deactivated as a quick action, and remains indefinitely. While this system is active, the Sentinel is Slowed, but is not limited in the number of overwatch reactions it can make per round.

Optional systems:

Punisher Ammunition

System

The first enemy damaged by the Sentinel's combat shotgun each round must pass a engineering heck with 1 difficulty or be Slowed until the end of the sentinel's next turn.

Wrath-lock System, Full Action

The sentinel may arm this module as a full action. While armed, the next time it fires its combat shotgun, it makes 3 attacks instead of one.

Impaler System

The first enemy damaged by an overwatch shot from the Sentinel must pass an agility check with 1 difficulty or immediately stop moving and become immobilized until the end of the sentinel's next turn.

Watchful Trait

Once per round, in response to any enemy movement, the Sentinel can make the boost action as a reaction.

Guardian protocols

Trait

At the start of its turn, the Sentinel can nominate an allied mech within range 5. Once per turn (but any number of times per round) when that mech is targeted by an attack, the Sentinel can immediately make a single attack for free against the attacker if it is in range as a reaction.

Tier II:

Evade E-D Heat H A S E Armor Spd Sense

11 11 8 +3 +2 +1 -1 1 5 8

Tier III: HP: +4

Evade E-D Heat H A S E Armor Spd Sense

13 13 8 +4 +2 +4 -1 1 6 8

47.23 Sniper

SNIPER

Sniper pattern chassis are common throughout the galaxy's armies. Favoring stability and targeting over mobility, Snipers operate extremely long-ranged kinetic weapons in small, self- sufficient teams well removed from any direct combat. Sniper pilots are a proud breed, who emphasize economy and elegance over destructive power. Their weapons are often as tuned and modified as much as their chassis are; the pilots themselves often exhibit unparalleled control over their targeting systems. Partnered NHPs are said to send boast-data between themselves, noting the difficulty of landed shots to allied pilots.

SNIPER

Mech

Hull Agility Systems Engineering

+0 +1 +2 -1

HP Evasion E-defense Heat Cap.

15 10 10 6

Armor Speed Sensors Size

0 4 15 1

Base systems:

Anti-Material Rifle Heavy Rifle

Loading, Ordnance, AP

+1 vs evasion/tier with +2 Accuracy/tier

Range 30

10/15/20 kinetic damage

Auto-pistol Auxiliary CQB

+0 vs evasion with +1 Accuracy at tier II, +2 Accuracy at tier III

Range 8, Threat 3

3/4/5 kinetic damage

Deathmark protocol System, Full Action

The Sniper marks a target within range 20. While marked, the Sniper's anti material rifle attacks against that target causes it to take 1 structure damage on hit instead of dealing damage normally (causing the target to make a structure check and reset its HP). The Sniper can only have one mark active at a time, but can transfer it if need be. The target can avoid this effect if it

is in any kind of cover, or if it's prone (it is aware of this effect), and instead takes damage normally.

Optional systems:

Defensive Grapple System, Quick Action, Reaction, Recharge (4+)

The Sniper chooses a point within range 5 (vertical or horizontal) and pulls itself to that point with a grappling hook as if it had flown. It can use this as an action on its turn or a reaction to an enemy's movement that it can see.

Climber Trait

The sniper can climb any surface with no penalty and walk or stand on such surfaces as if they were flat ground, even overhanging or vertical surfaces.

Selective Loader System

The Sniper can fire one of several types of ammunition, choosing one before it attacks:

Impact: Targets hit by the AM rifle must pass a hull check or be knocked prone

EMP: Targets hit by the AM rifle must pass a system check or be Jammed until the end of their next turn

Flare: Targets hit by the AM rifle cannot hide or turn invisible until the end of their next turn

Molten: Targets hit by the AM rifle must pass an engineering check or become Shredded until the end of their next turn.

Over-penetrating Round System, protocol, recharge (6+)

The Sniper loads an over-penetrating round into its anti-material rifle. Its next attack with the rifle becomes Line 30.

Flash Bomb System, Quick action, recharge (6+)

The sniper fires a bomb at a blast 2 area within range 5 of it. Targets other than the Sniper caught inside must pass a systems check or become Slowed and jammed until the end of their next turn. The area counts as light cover until the start of the sniper's next turn

Tier II:

HP: +2

Evade E-D Heat H A S E Armor Spd Sense

13 10 6 +0 +2 +3 +0 0 4 15

Tier III: HP: +2

Evade E-D Heat H A S E Armor Spd Sense

16 12 6 +0 +3 +4 +1 0 4 15

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47.24   Spectre

SPECTRE

Spectre doctrine chassis emphasize the ability not to be hit over pure defensive shielding. Employing cutting-edge optical and systemic camouflage, Spectres vanish from the battlefield and all active/passive scans, flickering in and out of vision and shattering their image and radar signatures, confusing the eye and the sweep.Their weapons do not mark their doctrine: their power comes from the ability to operate unseen.

SPECTRE

Mech

Hull Agility Systems Engineering

-2 +2 +1 +1

HP Evasion E-defense Heat Cap.

10 10 10 7

Armor Speed Sensors Size

0 6 10 1/2-1

Base systems:

Machine pistol Auxiliary CQB

+2 vs evasion/tier

Range 5, Threat 3

6 kinetic damage

This weapon can attack twice at tier III with the attack action

ATHENA-class scan System, quick action, recharge (4+)

One target in range 10 of the specter's choice must make a systems skill check (the specter can guess they are there and doesn't need line of sight). If they fail, they are revealed from hiding and lose the benefits of hiding or invisibility and cannot hide or turn invisible until the start of the spectre's next turn.

Tactical Cloak

System

The spectre is permanently invisible while this system is intact.

Optional systems:

Combat subroutine Trait

A targets that fails their check against the spectre's Athena-Class scan system gain the lock on condition.

Fortress Trait

The spectre gains the Fortress trait (lock on, invasion, and scans are made against it at +3 difficulty). To electronic systems, it doesn't appear to even be there.

System flayer Trait

Targets that fail their check against the spectre's Athena-Class scan system immediately suffer from Lock On.

Weakness analyser System

The specter's attacks from hiding gain an additional +1 Accuracy/tier and gain the ability to Critical Hit, dealing +1d6 kinetic damage on Critical Hit

Cloaking Field System, full action, recharge (6+)

The spectre deploys a cloaking field, affecting a burst 3 area around it. All allied mechs in that field become invisible while inside the area. The field deactivates at the end of the spectre's next turn.

Tier II:

Evade E-D Heat H A S E Armor Spd Sense

11 11 7 -2 +3 +3 +1 0 6 10

Tier III:

Evade E-D Heat H A S E Armor Spd Sense

12 12 7 -2 +4 +5 +1 0 6 10

47.25 Support

SUPPORT

Support doctrine chassis focus their systems towards keeping their allies combat operational. Alloy cement, nanite paste, patch plates, vacuum seals — the tools vary, but the result is the same: you may be messed up, but you're up, and you can keep fighting because the Support kept you alive.

SUPPORT

Mech

Hull Agility Systems Engineering

+1 -1 +0 +2

HP Evasion E-defense Heat Cap.

20 7 10 10

Armor Speed Sensors Size

1 4 12 2-3

Base systems:

Suppressive cannon Main cannon

Ordnance

+2 vs evasion/tier

Range 10

6 kinetic damage

This weapon can be fired an additional time at tier III with the attack action

Targets damaged by this cannon suffer from the impaired condition until the end of their next turn

Latch drone System, Recharge (5+)

As a free action, the support fires a drone to a point within range 5 of its position, where it hovers. The drone can be attacked and destroyed. It is a size 1 drone with evasion 10 and 10 HP. The drone clamps on to the next allied mech to move through or adjacent to that drone's space and discharges, healing that mech 5/7/10 HP.

Optional systems:

Remote reboot Trait, Full action

The support immediately ends 2 of the following conditions on an allied mech within range: impaired, jammed, shut down, Slowed.

Nano-repair cloud System, Full Action, recharge (5+)

The support creates a blast 2 area within range 5 of its location. Allied targets that start their turns in the area or move through it for the first time can gain 4/5/6 HP. The cloud disperses at the start of the support's next turn.

Defensive pulse System, Full action

The support makes a systems skill check with +1 Accuracy/tier. If it is successful, all mechs within range 5 of the support can immediately end the Jammed and Lock on conditions on themselves.

Manual Repair

System, Full Action, recharge (5+)

The support targets an adjacent mech or vehicle and makes an engineering skill check. If the check is successful, that mech can repair up to 4/6/8 HP and also to repair up to 1 destroyed system, returning it to functionality.

VULCAN drone System, Drone, Full Action, Recharge (6+)

The support chooses another mech within range 5 of its position, then fires a self-deploying drone at that mech. The drone is a size 1 object with evasion 10, 10 HP, and 1 armor. The drone clamps on to the targeted mech. At the start of each of its turns, while the drone is deployed on that target, that target can heal 3/4/5 HP. In addition, it gains +1 Accuracy on all checks and attacks. The drone can be shot off and destroyed.

Tier II:

HP: +5

Evade E-D Heat H A S E Armor Spd Sense

7 11 10 +1 -1 +1 +4 1 4 10

Tier III: HP: +5

Evade E-D Heat H A S E Armor Spd Sense

8 12 10 +1 -1 +2 +6 1 4 10

47.26   Technical

TECHNICAL

Technicals lean into the incredible tumult of systemic warfare, operating both in realtime and among the omnicloud tempest that descends upon a combat theater. Technicals often pair with personality-clone NHPs — NHPs that structure profiles based on profiles of their pilots — to handle the chaotic swirl that results from realtime/omninet combat splitting.

Technical

Mech

Hull Agility Systems Engineering

-1 +1 +2 +0

HP Evasion E-defense Heat Cap.

12 12 12 8

Armor Speed Sensors Size

0 5 10 1/2 -1

Base systems:

Autogun Auxiliary rifle

Smart

Range 10

+2 vs e-defense/tier

6 kinetic damage

This weapon can attack twice at tier III with the attack action

HORUS hacker Trait

This mech makes tech actions with +1 Accuracy and its invasions deal +1/2/3 heat on hit.

Snap Fire Trait, Quick Action

This mech makes one autogun attack

Optional systems:

Predatory logic

Quick Tech, Recharge (5+)

+2 vs e-defense/tier with +1 Accuracy

On hit, the target immediately makes an attack with a single weapon of the technical's choice against any other target within range (even an allied target).

Puppet system Quick Tech

+2 vs e-defense/tier

On hit, the target is impaired until the end of its next turn. In addition, the technical can immediately cause that target to move up to its speed in a direction of the technical's choice.

SCORPION protocols System

The technical gains the hardened target trait (invasion, lock on, and scan are made at +1 difficulty). In addition, any failed invasion, lock on, or scan attempt on it inflicts 2/3/4 heat to the attacker.

Illusory subroutines Quick Tech

+2 vs e-defense/tier

On hit, all actors allied to the Technical count as invisible to the target until the start of its next turn.

System link System, Quick Action

The Technical links systems with an allied mech within its sensor range. It can only link with one mech at a time. While linked, the allied mech gains +1 Accuracy/tier, and the allied mech can use the Technical's systems score for all checks it makes. However, if either linked mech becomes jammed or impaired, the other also suffers the same condition for the same duration as long as the link persists. The link is disabled if either mech is destroyed or this system is disabled or destroyed.

Tier II:

HP: +2

Evade	E-D	Heat	H	A	S	E	Armor	Spd	Sense
14	15	8	-1	+2	+4	+0	0	5	10

Tier III: HP: +2

Evade	E-D	Heat	H	A	S	E	Armor	Spd	Sense
16	18	8	-1	+3	+6	+0	0	5	10

GENERIC OPTIONAL MODULES:

Any of the above NPCs can choose one of these modules when choosing an optional module.

Armored Trait This mech gains +1 armor, up to a maximum of +4

Boosted Reactor Trait

This mech gains +2 heat capacity

Jump Jets System

This mech can Fly when it boosts

Reinforced Trait

This mech gains +5 HP

SSC Core Flight System System

This mech can Fly when it moves or boosts and has perfect flight (it doesn't need to land). It generates 2 heat/turn while this module is active at the end of each of its turns.

Tactical Cloak System, Quick Action

This mech becomes invisible. If it takes an action, reaction, or overheats it loses this invisibility until the start of its next turn.

48 Special Classes

SPECIAL CLASSES

The following NPC classes describe special cases, NPCs that are a little more unique or can't be described as a mech.

48.1 Human

HUMAN This entry describes humans or human-scale enemies, such as pilots in the world of lancer. The entry is intentionally pretty simple.

To make a human enemy:

- Pick a statistic block from the table below that basically describes the enemy.

- Pick a weapon for your enemy if they're armed, and describe any other gear they have

- All human enemies are size 1/2 and roll attacks and checks at +2/per tier

- You can use the Heavily Armored, Elite, and Legend modifiers below to make enemies tougher

Starting templates

Name HP Evasion/E-defense Armor Speed

Civilian 1 8/8 0 3

Untrained martial 3 9/9 0 3 human (gangster, thug, warrior, etc)

Martial human (pilot, 5 10/10 0 4 soldier, guard, etc)

Subaltern frame 8 10/8 1 4

Armored human (pilot 5 8/8 1 4 in a hard suit, etc)

Heavily armored - -2 to both +1 -1

Elite (apply to any) +2/tier +1/tier to both - +1

Legend (apply to any) +3/tier +2/tier to both +1 +2

Weapons

Name Tags Range Damage

Assault Weapon - 5 2

Melee weapon - Threat 2

Sidearm - 2 1

Heavy Weapon Ordnance, Loading 8, Blast 1 4

Damage: Weapons can be kinetic, energy, or explosive depending on their function

Type: All weapons have the pilot type

Tags: AP (weapon gets -1 damage, to minimum of 1), Smart, Seeking, Arcing, Ordnance, Loading (weapon gets +2 damage), Limited, Accurate (weapon gets -1 damage, to a minimum of 1), Inaccurate (weapon gets +1 damage)

A weapon shouldn't go above 5 damage after tags.

Example enemies: These are just a few examples! Feel free to make your own

Name Template Weapons

Assassin Elite, Martial Human Variable Sword (Melee Weapon, AP), Sniper rifle (Heavy Weapon, Loading, AP)

Pirate King Legend, Armored Human Greatknife (Melee weapon, Accurate), R35 pistol (sidearm, loading, limited)

Guard Martial Human Assault Rifle (Assault weapon)

Hacker Civilian Scavenged pistol (sidearm)

Low-tech (medieval Martial Human Primitive melee (Melee or tribal) warrior weapon, primitive, 1 damage)

Thug or Bandit Untrained martial Human Custom pistol (sidearm)

48.2 Squad

SQUAD

Squads come in two varieties: Squadrons and Infantry. A squadron represents a squad of mech- type enemies operating as a group, whereas an infantry squad represents a squad of approximately human-sized enemies operating together. They are treated like one entity.

All squads (squadrons and infantry) get the following features:

- Weak: Squads cannot have more than 1 structure or heat capacity. They take energy damage when they take heat. - Exclusive templates: Squads cannot take the Grunt, Veteran, or Ultra templates (they can still take Elite, but don't gain structure) - Split HP: Squads have a large number of members operating together. Once a certain amount of damage is done to the squad, one of the members is destroyed (indicated in the profile). Once a squad is under half HP, it loses some of its attacks to represent this. - Strength in numbers: Squads have resistance to all damage that is not from line, blast, or cone attacks. They are immune to grapple or ram and cannot grapple or ram. - Spread out: Squads occupy a square area equal to their size for purposes of targeting, but each individual member is not represented. For the purposes of determining cover and obstruction, use the size of each individual member, not the size of a squad as a whole.

SQUADRON
Squad, Mech
Hull Agility Systems Engineering
+1 +1 +1 +1
HP Evasion E-defense Heat Cap.
16 6 8 -
Armor Speed Sensors Size
1 5 10 6 (individual: 1)
HP per member: 2
Number of members: 8
Base modules:
Primary squad weapon
Main Rifle
+1 vs evasion/tier
Range 10
3/4/5 kinetic, energy, or explosive damage (choose on creation)

This weapon can be fired three times when the squad attacks. If the squad is under 1/2 hp, it can only be fired once.

Heavy squad weapon

Heavy cannon

+0 vs evasion with 1 Accuracy/tier

Range 12 and blast 2, line 10, or cone 5 (choose on creation)

4/5/6 kinetic, energy, or explosive damage (choose on creation)

Tier II:

HP: +2 (+1 members)

Evade E-D Heat H A S E Armor Spd Sense

7 8 - +2 +2 +2 +2 1 5 10

Tier III: HP: +2(+1 members)

Evade E-D Heat H A S E Armor Spd Sense

8 8 - +3 +3 +3 +3 1 5 10

48.3   Infantry

INFANTRY

Infantry-type enemies represent a squad-level group of human or subaltern infantry: not a single chassis like the Grunt-type, but (generally) a group of five to ten armed and armored individual soldiers. Like the Grunt, an Infantry-type enemy alone might not present a threat to a chassis, but operating as a squad with the right gear and training, infantry groups are a formidable threat.

INFANTRY

Squad, Biological

GRIT +2/tier

HP Evasion E-defense Heat Cap.

10 8 8 -

Armor Speed Sensors Size

0 4 10 4 (individual: 1/2)

HP per member: 1

Number of members: 10

Primary squad weapon

Main Rifle

+2 vs evasion/tier

Range 10

3/4/5 kinetic, energy, or explosive damage (choose on creation)

This weapon can be fired three times when the squad attacks. If the squad is under 1/2 HP, it can only be fired once.

Anti-mech squad weapon

Heavy cannon

AP

+2 vs evasion/tier

Range 20

4/tier kinetic, energy, or explosive damage (choose on creation)

Tier II:

HP: +5 (+5 members)

Evade E-D Heat Armor Spd Sense

8 10 - 0 4 10

Tier III: HP: +5 (+5 members)

Evade E-D Heat Armor Spd Sense

8 10 - 1 5 10

Optional modules for squads (both types):

Armored Trait

The squad gains +1 armor

Ambushers Trait

The squad gains +2 Accuracy on all attacks and rolls on the first round of combat only, and gains +2 Accuracy to avoid being discovered while hiding

Go to ground Trait, reaction

Once per round as a reaction, the squad gains resistance to all the damage from an incoming attack, but cannot move or boost on their following turn. They must decide before the damage is rolled.

Rapid Insertion Trait

The squad can fly when it moves or boosts.

Technicals Trait

The squad can take the Invasion action (as per player rules). Disable this action if the squad is under 1/2 HP.

48.4 Swarm

SWARM

A swarm represents a large, motile group of very small or weak enemies, biological, human, nanorobotic, or otherwise.

All swarms get the following features:

- Weak: Squads cannot have resilience or heat capacity. They take energy damage when they take heat. - Exclusive templates: Swarms cannot take the Grunt, Veteran, or Ultra templates (they can still take Elite, but don't gain resilience) - Swarms can take the Biological tag if they represent biological creatures. Otherwise a swarm represents a swarm of mechanical entities. - The Many: The only actions a swarm can take are to move and boost, or those specified in its profile. - Strength in numbers: Swarms have resistance to all damage that is not from line, blast, or cone attacks. They are immune to the grabbed condition. - Spread out: Swarms occupy a square area equal to their size for purposes of targeting, but each individual member is not represented. For the purposes of determining cover and obstruction, use the size of each individual member, not the size of a squad as a whole. - Swarm: A swarm's area counts as difficult terrain, even if a mech can normally move through it

SWARM

Swarm

Hull Agility Systems Engineering

+1 +1 +0 +0

HP Evasion E-defense Heat Cap.

15 6 8 -

Armor Speed Sensors Size

- 3 6 5 (individual: 1/2, 1/4, or smaller)

Base modules:

Swarm

Trait

Targets starting their turn in the swarm's area or entering it for the first time take 3/5/7 AP kinetic damage.

Optional modules: Crawl over

Trait

When a target starts its turn inside the swarm or enters that area for the first time on its turn, members of the swarm cover and crawl over it, inflicting the impaired condition on it until the end of its next turn.

Drag down

Trait, Quick Action

1/round, the swarm chooses one target in its area. That target must pass a hull check with 1 difficulty/tier or be knocked prone

Endless Swarm

Trait

The swarm heals 2 HP/tier at the end of its turn.

Split

Trait

At the end of any turn when the swarm is reduced past 1/2 HP, it splits into two swarms of size 2, each with half the swarm's current HP. These swarms cannot split again.

Tear apart

Trait

The swarm's Endless Swarm trait also causes 3/4/5 Burn

Tier II:

HP: +5

Evade E-D Heat H A S E Armor Spd Sense

6 - - +2 +1 +0 +0 0 3 6

Tier III: HP: +5

Evade E-D Heat H A S E Armor Spd Sense

6 - - +3 +1 +0 +0 0 3 6

48.5 Monstrosity

MONSTROSITY

Monstrosity-type enemies are massive or horrifying predatory wildlife. Generally wild, some kinds of monstrous enemies can be domesticated and trained for combat: these are in high demand in the distal and proximal reaches of the galaxy.

MONSTROSITY

Biological

Hull Agility Systems Engineering

+2 +1 +0 +0

HP Evasion E-defense Heat Cap.

15 10 10 -

Armor Speed Sensors Size

1 6 10 1-3

Base mutations: Claws

Main melee

+2 vs evasion/tier with 1 accuracy

6/8/12 kinetic damage

Optional mutations (choose 1 or more):

Acid Spittle AP +0 vs evasion with +1 accuracy/tier

Range 10

3/4/5 energy damage

Adhesive Extrusion Trait

The first target damaged by the monstrosity on a turn must pass an engineering check or become Slowed until it heals any amount of hit points or until the end of the current challenge.

Burrower Trait, Quick Action

The monstrosity can burrow into the ground as a quick action, as long as the ground beneath it is malleable enough. While burrowed, it counts as invisible, ignores all obstructions above ground, can take no other actions other than to move, boost, or emerge as a quick action. When

it emerges, it must have a free space to emerge into. It loses these benefits and all adjacent mechs must pass a hull check or be knocked prone.

Charger Trait, Quick Action, Recharge (5+)

As a quick action, the monstrosity in a straight line as far as possible up to its speed, ignoring obstructions and not provoking reactions. Any targets it passes adjacent to or over must pass an agility check or take 4/6/8 kinetic damage.

Corrosive Bite Full Action, Recharge 5+

The monstrosity makes a melee attack at an adjacent target for +2 vs evasion/tier. On hit, the target takes 4/6/8 Burn. In addition, regardless of whether it succeeds this check, it is Shredded until it regains any amount of HP.

Grasping Claws Trait

The monstrosity gets +1 Accuracy to grapple, +1 Accuracy to attack targets it is grappling, and can boost and take reactions while grappling.

Natural Camouflage Trait

The monstrosity gains +1 Accuracy to checks made while hiding. If it's in its natural terrain, it counts all terrain as being large enough to hide it (no matter the size difference).

Regenerator Trait

The monstrosity heals 2/3/4 HP at the end of its turn. This trait does not function if the monstrosity took energy damage at any point during the round.

Spined Trait

When the monstrosity takes damage from a melee weapon, it deals 1 AP kinetic damage to its attacker after the damage resolves.

Swift Trait

The monstrosity gains +2 speed

Tempered Hide Trait

The monstrosity has resistance to one of the following damage types: kinetic, energy, explosive damage.

Winged Trait

The monstrosity can fly when it moves or boosts.

Increase at tier II :

HP +2

+1 optional mutation

Evade	E-D	Heat	H	A	S	E	Armor	Spd	Sense
11	11	-	+	+	+	+	2 7 10	4	2 0 0

Increase at tier III: HP +2

+1 optional mutation

Evade	E-D	Heat	H	A	S	E	Armor	Spd	Sense
13	13	-	+	+	+	+	2 8 10	6	4 0 0

All monstrosities get the following features:

- Unique Critical Chart: If the monstrosity has structure (such as an Elite or Ultra), it uses the critical chart below instead of the regular one for mechs - Biological: The monstrosity has the biological tag

Monstrosity Critical Chart

ROLL RESULT EFFECT

5-6 GLANCING BLOW The monstrosity flinches in pain, giving it the impaired condition until the end of its next turn

4 HEAVY BLOW The blow knocks the monstrosity down. The attacker (or the GM) chooses one of the following:

- The monstrosity is Slowed until the end of its next turn

- The monstrosity is knocked prone

3 HEAD TRAUMA The monstrosity is stunned until the end of its next

2 DISMEMBERMENT A limb or chunk is torn off the monstrosity, dealing +1d6 bonus damage to it and permanently slowing it until it can potentially heal.

1 BRUTAL HIT The monstrosity must pass a hull check or be destroyed. It gets +1 difficulty on this check per level of structure damage it has.

Two or FATAL HIT The monstrosity is destroyed and instantly killed more 1s

TEMPLATES

These templates can be applied to any of the above enemy types to add more flavor or change the way they function in combat. In particular, the Ultra, Elite, Grunt, and Veteran templates can be used to make tougher or easier enemies. The Veteran template can be applied on top of the Ultra or Elite templates to make an especially tough enemy.

48.6 Ultra

ULTRA

In Lancer, Ultra-type enemies are typically the most dangerous individual enemies a party can face.

Ultra-type enemies are high-tier enemies that do not usually fill command roles. Ultras are champions, favored warriors, major domos: they might command a few units in a retinue or lead armies from the front, but they do not typically engage in grand strategy.

Making an Ultra

All ultras get the following features added to their base NPC type:

- Bonus activations: The Ultra can be activated again (take another turn) each round. If the Ultra is facing more than 4 players, it takes another activation (for a total of 3). It regains spent reactions each time it takes a turn. - Deadly: The Ultra can Critical Hit, dealing an extra +2 bonus damage/tier on Critical Hits.

- Exclusive templates: The Ultra can't take the Elite or Grunt templates. - Juggernaut (trait): At the start of its turn, the Ultra ends one condition affecting it. If it rolls a 'system destroyed' result on a structure check, it is instead jammed until the end of its next turn (it doesn't lose the system or weapon).

- Legendary (trait): The Ultra can enter the CRITICAL state and is not destroyed when reaching 0 HP. - Structure: The Ultra gains 4 Structure, or increases its structure up to 4 structure if it already has structure

- Stress: The Ultra gains 4 reactor stress, or increases its stress up to 4 if it already has stress. - Bonus module: The ultra should gain +1-2 more optional modules than normal. - Bonus HP: The Ultra gains +5 HP - Reflex (trait): The Ultra can make any number of overwatch attacks per round (instead of just 1). It can only attack the same target 1/turn with overwatch.

Then choose 1-3 Ultra Traits or modules.

ULTRA traits:

Berserker Trait The Ultra gains +1 Accuracy on all melee attacks. It can make 1 melee attack roll, grapple, or ram attack as a Free Action on its turn.

Devastator Trait

Once per turn, when the ultra hits with an attack, all targets visible to the ultra take 2 kinetic, explosive, or energy damage.

Evasive

Trait

The Ultra gains +4 evasion, up to a maximum of 20, but reduce its structure to 3.

Extra Deadly Trait The first Critical Hit the Ultra deals per turn does +1d6 bonus damage/tier

Fortress Trait

The Ultra gains the Fortress trait instead of its Hardened Target trait (lock on, invasion, and scans are made against it at +3 difficulty). To electronic systems, it doesn't appear to even be there.

Legion Trait

The ultra gains +4 e-defense, up to a maximum of 20, can take the full tech action (like a player), and gains +2 accuracy to all tech actions

Limitless Trait

The Ultra can use overcharge.

Unstoppable Trait

The Ultra always cannot be knocked back, knocked prone, or moved involuntarily.

Sight Trait

Targets cannot hide while inside the Ultra's sensor range and it ignores invisibility.

Superior Construction Trait

The ultra has resistance to one of the following damage types: kinetic, energy, explosive. It cannot gain resistance to more than 2 (from this trait or any other systems).

Superior Frame Trait

The ultra is immune to the Slowed, Shredded, and immobilized conditions

Superior Reactor Trait

The ultra is immune to the stunned and shut down conditions.

Superior Targeting Trait

The ultra ignores light and heavy cover when making ranged attacks.

Supreme Maintenance Trait The ultra is immune to the Jammed condition and can reload one weapon with the loading property as a free action on its turn.

Supreme Parting Gift Trait The Ultra can use the Self Destruct action. When it takes this action, it emits an EMP pulse. All vulnerable targets (mechs, vehicles) in a burst 5 area around it must pass a system check or be shut down.

Supreme Skirmisher Trait

2/round the Ultra can take the boost action as a reaction to any enemy movement or action that it can see.

Ultra systems and weapons:

ARGUS armor The ultra's armor increases to 6. Each time it rolls a critical or overheating check, reduce its armor by 2, to a minimum of 0.

H.A. Siege Shield The ultra has resistance to all damage that originates further away than range 5

Hellfire Projector Heavy CQB

Cone 5

3 energy damage + 5 Burn/tier

This weapon can be fired twice with the attack action, but its areas cannot overlap.

HORUS manticore repulsion field Hostile targets that start their turn adjacent to the Ultra or become adjacent to it for the first time on their turn take 2 energy damage, 2 heat, and must pass a systems check or become impaired until the end of their next turn.

Obliterator

Action, Ordnance, Recharge (6+)

Choose a direction, then draw a line 30 spaces long and 2 spaces wide in that direction. Each target inside that area must pass an agility skill check or take 1/2 of its current hit points in energy damage, or 1/4 on a successful check, rounded up. Any cover, objects, buildings, drones, deployables, or items smaller than size 5 in the area are completely annihilated.

Ravager Turret Heavy Cannon

Ultra

+1 vs evasion with 1 Accuracy/tier

Range 10

4/6/8 kinetic damage

The Ravager fires at every hostile mech in range when this weapon is fired with the attack action.

SSC Slivershielding System

The Ultra is permanently invisible. Reduce its structure to 2.

SSC Ex Hover propulsion System The Ultra can fly when it moves or boosts, and can hover (it can stop midair, doesn't have to move in a straight line, and doesn't need to land after moving).

Volley module

Full Action, System

The ultra goes into a stable stance. At the start of its next turn, it fires one weapon at each target that is in range and not in cover or prone as a Free Action. It can fire the same weapon multiple times for this special action, ignoring the loading tag during this attack.

WOLFHOUND missile Heavy Launcher

Recharge (6+)

Instead of firing this weapon normally, choose a target within range 30. The ultra fires a wolfhound missile at the target, which is size 1, moves speed 4, has evasion 10, 0 armor, and 10/15/20 HP. The missile primes in an adjacent space when deployed, then moves 3 at the start of each the ultra's turns. If its target suffers from the Locked On condition, its movement increases to 6. The missile can benefit from cover and can be targeted and shot by systems and weapons. It must move towards its target, but can maneuver skillfully around cover, fit through

holes, etc. If the missile's movement causes it to collide with a hostile mech or its target, it detonates for a blast 1 explosion. Mechs caught inside must pass an agility skill check or take 15/20/30 energy damage, and half on a successful check.

The Ultra can have only one missile fired at a time. Only check for recharge if this missile has hit its target or been destroyed.

48.7   Elite

ELITE

Making an Elite

All Elites get the following features added to their base NPC type:

- Structure: The Elite increases to 2 structure

- Stress: The Elite increases to 2 Reactor Stress

- Bonus Activation - The Elite can be activated twice a round - Exclusive templates: The Elite can't take the Ultra or Grunt templates. - Bonus system: The Elite gains +1 more optional system than normal

48.8   Grunt

GRUNT

Grunt-type enemies in Lancer are the most common enemies faced en-mass by players. Grunts are a step above cannon fodder: cheap and trained to be disciplined fighters before deadly ones, grunts follow orders under threat of death, imprisonment, or some other kind of censure. Alone, a grunt-type enemy may not be a threat, but in a group, they can present an overwhelming mass of bodies and fire that threatens even the most powerful individual.

Making a Grunt

All grunts get the following features added to their base NPC type:

- Weak: The Grunt's maximum HP becomes 1, with 1 structure. It loses any heat capacity it has (so it takes energy damage instead of heat). It cannot gain structure or heat capacity in any way. - Surprisingly Hardy: Grunts don't take damage from systems, talents, or weapons that automatically deal damage (such as the reliable tag). When they would take half damage on a successful save from a source of damage, they instead take 0.

- Still a mech: Grunts can only be killed by pilot weapons that have a total attack roll of 20+ - Bonus activations: When a Grunt is activated, up to 2 other grunts can also be activated at the same time and take their turns at once

- Max systems: The Grunt can't have any more than 1 optional system - Exclusive templates: The Grunt can't take the Veteran, Squad, Elite, or Ultra templates - Max attacks: The Grunt can't attack with more than 1 weapon a turn. - Max damage: None of the grunt's attacks can deal more than 4 damage, heat, or burn total per attack at tier 1, or half if the attack is AOE or has more than one target. This increases to 6 at tier II and 8 at tier III. Adjust as needed.

48.9   Veteran

VETERAN

Veteran-type enemies are hardened, experienced fighters that have survived direct engagement with their foes. Their encounter with your players is not their first rodeo: their ability to withstand morale shocks is far higher than an untested greenhorn.

Making a Veteran:

All Veterans get the following features added to their base NPC type:

- Bonus structure: The veteran gains +1 structure.

- Bonus stress: The Veteran gains +1 reactor stress - Veterancy: The Veteran gains +1 accuracy on all checks of one statistic: Hull, Agility, Systems, Engineering (choose on creation)

Then choose up to 1 Veteran trait per tier: AI co-pilot Trait The veteran's mech or vehicle gains the AI tag. The veteran's mech or vehicle is autonomous and can function even if the veteran is not piloting it (per the player rules). The AI can be unshackled, with the same effects as player AI.

Acrobat Trait When the veteran moves or boosts, it can fly 3 after the move or boost completes. This flight does not provoke reactions and ignores engagement.

Deadly Trait This mech can Critical Hit, dealing +2 bonus damage/tier to its attacks on crit.

EM-shielding Trait The veteran is resistant to heat

Engineer Trait, Quick Action The Veteran can take the repair quick action:

Repair (limited 1): This mech heals 4 hit points per tier and ends one condition currently affecting it (impaired, Slowed, immobilized, shut down, jammed)

Feign Death Trait

The first time in a challenge this enemy would be destroyed, though it appears destroyed, it is instead shut down, remaining at 1 hp. A successful scan or pilot notice check will reveal it is still active.

Hacker Trait The veteran's invasion attacks deal +3 heat

Headshot Trait 1/round when the veteran scores a Critical Hit, the target of its attack must pass an engineering check or be jammed until the start of the veteran's next turn.

Hardened Target Trait Invasion, scan, and lock on attempts on this target are made with +1 difficulty

Legendary Trait The veteran can enter the CRITICAL state (like the player) instead of being destroyed when ticking off its last structure point.

Lesser Sight Trait

Within range 3 of the Veteran, targets cannot hide from it, and cannot benefit from invisibility against it while inside that area.

Limitless Trait

The veteran can use Overcharge

Lightning Reflexes Trait Reaction

The first time in a round the veteran is targeted by any weapon system of size heavy or larger, roll a d6. On a 5+, the weapon automatically misses this mech.

Parting Gift Trait The veteran can use the Self Destruct action.

Rodeo master Trait

The veteran can jockey (in a hard suit) and gains +1 Accuracy on jockeying attempts

Shock Armor Trait

The veteran has resistance to damage from main size weapons

Skirmisher Trait

1/round the veteran can move or boost as a reaction to any enemy movement or action that it can see.

Slippery

Trait

The veteran does not provoke reactions and ignores engagement with its move (its boost still provoke reactions)

Steel Jaw Trait The most damage an auxiliary weapon can do to the veteran is 1.

Viper's Speed Trait The veteran always takes its turn first, even over player characters. If there is a question of who acts first (in the story, or combat), it is always the veteran.

48.10   Exotic

EXOTIC

Exotic-type enemies are, even for a galaxy of wonders, strange and dangerous enemies. Some feature unique technologies not yet available to the wider galaxy, others wield primitive weapon styles updated to the modern day, and others carry equipment or adopt tactics that are alien to Union doctrine.

Making an Exotic NPC:

All Exotic NPCs get the following features added to their base NPC type:

- Xenotech: Scans reveal no information about exotic modules - Hardened Target: Hostile tech actions take +1 difficulty against exotic targets - Exotic systems: Any NPC with the exotic tag can choose one or two of the optional exotic modules below

Exotic modules

Bio-integrated Trait

You may only choose this trait for a mech. The mech gains the biological tag (it loses heat capacity and cannot take or be the target of tech actions except Lock On and scans).

Blinkspace Carver System

When the NPC moves, it teleports.

Extrusion Trait

The NPC is only a partial extrusion of a higher-concept entity and only partially present in physical space. It gains resistance to all damage but all its weapons also deal half damage and it can be passed through as if it wasn't there (it doesn't provide obstruction).

Living Weaponry Trait

The NPC becomes immune to the Jammed condition. Its weapons have biotechnical and semi- organic components that spontaneously generate ammunition.

Paracausal Weapon Trait

Choose one of the NPC's weapons. Damage from that weapon cannot be reduced in any way (by armor, resistance, or otherwise)

Ouroboros Brand System

1/round the NPC can force a re-roll by themselves or any allied or hostile target (but must choose the second result) by causing localized distortions in the flow of time.

Regenerator Trait

The NPC heals 2/3/4 HP at the end of its turn. This trait does not function if the NPC took energy damage at any point during the round.

48.11 Drone

DRONE

Drone-type enemies are mechs or subaltern frames that are autonomous extensions of companion/concierge units or combat NHPs.

Making an Drone

All Drones get the following features added to their base NPC type:

- Bonus HP: The Drone gets +5 HP to represent its lack of pilot. It can take damage that would normally blow through a cockpit and kill a human. - No Pilot: The Drone permanently suffers from the Impaired condition. It cannot make complex decisions or moral judgements. However, it is also immune to all systems and actions that affect the pilot (it doesn't have any).

- Vulnerable to Tech: All hostile tech actions against the Drone can be made with +1 Accuracy

48.12 Mercenary

MERCENARY

Mercenary-type enemies are foes that offer their services to the highest bidder. They may have attachments to a faith or flag, but when it comes to doing their business, they're loyal only to gold.

Making a Mercenary:

All Mercenaries get the following features added to their base NPC type:

- Opportunist: If an allied target is adjacent to the mercenary's target, it gets +1 Accuracy on all attack rolls against that target - Mercenary systems: A mercenary can choose from the list of mercenary systems and traits below when choosing optional systems and modules

Mercenary systems and traits:

Bounty Hunter

Trait

Before combat, choose a player character that there's a bounty out for. The mercenary gains +1 Accuracy on all attacks and checks against that character and their mech.

Efficient Killer

Trait

The mercenary gains +1 Accuracy on attacks and all its damage becomes AP against a target with 1 structure remaining.

Call in Favor

Action, Limited (1)

The Mercenary calls in a favor in the form of an orbital strike or artillery strike, targeting a blast 2 area within range 30 of its position. All mechs caught in the area must pass an agility check or take 6/10/15 explosive damage, or half on a successful check.

Scout Drone

Action, Limited (1)

The Mercenary fires a scout drone to an empty space within its sensor range. The drone has evasion 10, 10 hp, and no armor. Within a burst 3 area centered on the drone, no target can turn invisible or hide from the mercenary, and the mercenary can attack targets in the area with +1 accuracy. The mercenary can reposition the drone as a free action at the start of its turn.

Tactical Retreat

Reaction, Limited (1)

When the mercenary is taken below half health, this system automatically activates. All targets within a burst 2 area around the mercenary must pass a systems check or take 2 kinetic damage

and become jammed until the end of their next turns. The mercenary can then move its speed in any direction. This movement doesn't provoke reactions and ignores engagement.

48.13 Commander

COMMANDER

Commander-type enemies operate on a grand scale, controlling fleets and armies across worlds and in interstellar space. They might not be the best individual combatant, but they can bring out the best in the best of their forces.

Making a Commander:

All Commanders get the following features added to their base NPC type:

- Bonus structure: The Commander gains +1 structure - Bonus stress: The Commander gains +1 reactor stress - Command: Once per round, the Commander can cause an allied target it can see to re- roll any single attack roll or check as a reaction. The commander can't use this reaction if it is Jammed. - Commander Traits: The commander can choose one of the following commander traits. These traits don't function if the commander is Jammed.

Commander Traits

Bolster network Trait While the commander is alive, all allies the commander can see gain the hardened target trait (+1 difficulty on all hostile tech actions or attacks against them). The commander does not benefit from this trait.

Covering Fire Trait, Reaction

1/round, an ally the commander can see can attack with one weapon as a reaction against a target hostile to the commander that just made an attack against that ally or a different ally.

Press on! Trait, Free Action

1/round, the commander can pass a systems check as a free action to end the stunned or jammed conditions on a target it can see in its sensor range.

Reposition Trait, Free Action

1/round one ally that a commander can see can make the boost action as a reaction on the commander's turn.

Rank and File Trait

Allied targets adjacent to the commander gain +1 Accuracy on all attacks and checks.

48.14 Pirate

PIRATE

Pirate-type enemies live on the boundaries, in the forgotten bolt-holes of occupied space. They are far-ranging, operating around blink gates, interstellar shipping lanes, and near flagged but not-yet colonized worlds.

Pirate-type groups are usually small, with their base of operations hidden a short-to-medium distance from the area that they are first encountered. Usually they are motivated by profit and materiel goods, not ideology or religion – a good thing for a savvy negotiator.

Pirate-type enemies commonly operate in mixed groups of fast, deadly sub-line ships, fighter/ bombers, and clutches of marines and mechanized chassis. They prefer hit-and-run style overwhelming ambush attacks, aim to capture rather than kill, and don't like to engage in pitched battles

Pirate-type enemies can be found across the galaxy wherever the law is spread thin, resources travel, and people are desperate.

Making a Pirate

All pirates get the following features added to their base NPC type:

- Deadly (trait): The pirate can Critical Hit, dealing +2/3/4 bonus damage on a 20+ ranged or melee attack roll - Pirate modules: The pirate can choose from the below modules when choosing optional systems

Gain the following options for optional systems/modules:

Boarding Clutch

Heavy Melee

+0 vs evasion with +1 Accuracy/tier

5/7/9 kinetic damage

This weapon can be used as an improvised grappling hook. It can be thrown at a target within range 5. The affected target must pass a hull or agility check or be pulled directly to the attacker and grappled.

Splinter Rounds System

Critical Hits from this mech deal an additional +3 bonus damage

Borer Missiles Main Launcher

Smart, Limited (1)

+1 vs e-defense with 1 Accuracy

Range 8

On hit, 1d3 miniature drones are attached to the target and begin boring into the mech's interior. In 1d6+3 rounds, if there are any missiles still attached to the target, they bore inside the cockpit savage the pilot, reducing the pilot to 0 HP, causing them to make a Down and Out check. A single drone can be removed by making a successful systems or engineering skill check as a quick action. The drones can also be confused by shutting the affected mech down, which deactivates them. The pilot in the affected mech is aware of how much time they have before the drones bore through.

Prying Claws System, Full Action, Limited (1)

An adjacent target makes a hull check. On a failed check, the targeted pilot immediately exits their mech as if they had taken the dismount action (place them adjacent to their mech).

Slaver Signal System, Full Action

Recharge 5+

Range 10

This system affects one piloted vehicle or mech within range 10. The affected target must make a systems check with 1 difficulty/tier to shut out the signal or be affected. On failure, all the pilots in the target are affected by the signal, falling into an unresponsive stupor. While in this state, their mech is stunned. If the target takes damage, the pilots will be jolted awake, immediately ending this effect. Another adjacent actor can use an action on their turn to make a systems check to try and blot out the signal, waking the affected target up on success. If the source of the signal is destroyed, any targets affected will also wake up.

48.15   Spacer

SPACER

Spacer-type enemies are born and bred in the hard vacuum of deep space. They are adept at maneuvering in and around the difficult, kinetic, low-gravity environments found only in space: blink stations, space stations, among asteroid fields, in low orbit over worlds, and between ships in military and commercial fleets.

Making a Spacer:

All Veterans get the following features added to their base NPC type:

- Maneuverable: The Spacer does not suffer the impaired condition for operating in space, underwater, or in zero-g environments and always counts as having an EVA module in those environments. - Optional modules: The Spacer can choose from optional Spacer modules when deciding additional modules

Spacer modules

Concussion gun

Main Rifle

Cone 3

+1 vs evasion/tier with 1 Accuracy/tier

Mechs hit by this weapon are 3 spaces away from the direction of the zone.

Gravity Rifle

Main Rifle

Range 10

+1 vs evasion/tier with +1 Accuracy/tier

The target of this attack must pass a hull check with 1 difficulty/tier or be pulled in a straight line towards the wielder of this weapon up to 10 spaces, or as far as it can move. If this causes it to collide with an obstacle or another mech, it is additionally knocked prone.

Sealant Trap

Mine, Limited (1)

This self deploying trap can be placed in a vacant space. It counts as a mine and can be scanned to be detected and disabled with a successful systems check. Once any target walks over or adjacent to the trap, it explodes, creating a burst 2 area centered on it. All targets caught inside must pass an agility check or be covered in thick, fast-drying hull sealant and immobilized. The only way to break out of the sealant is to do enough damage to break it (evasion 5, 15 hp).

Thumper grenades

Grenade, Limited (1)

Thrown 5

Once thrown to an impact point as a quick action, these grenades explode outwards with a concussive pulse in a blast 1 area around the space where they are targeted. Targets caught in the area must pass an agility check or be knocked back 3 spaces directly away from the impact point. If this causes them to collide with an obstacle or another mech, they are additionally knocked prone.

48.16   Outworlder

OUTWORLDER

Outworlder-type enemies are found in the distal/proximal areas of the galaxy. They are, typically, more rugged and independent than other enemy types, able to operate on a shoestring – or without one! – for extended periods of time.

Making an Outworlder

- Resourceful: The Outworlder gains +1 use to all (limited) use weapons, actions, and deployables (including the repair action below - not yet included in the profile). - The outworlder gains the repair action: - Repair (limited 1): This mech heals 4/6/8 hit points and ends one condition currently affecting it (impaired, Slowed, immobilized, shut down, jammed)

48.17   Vehicle

VEHICLE

Vehicle-type enemies are in-atmosphere military or civilian vehicles found throughout the galaxy.

Making an Vehicle

You can use any of the mech classes and apply this template to convert that mech into a vehicle. They lose the mech tag and gain the vehicle tag. All vehicles get the following features added to their base NPC type:

- Limited Maneuverability: A vehicle must always move in a straight line (though it can move and boost in separate directions). A vehicle cannot climb or swim. It gets +2 Accuracy on checks to avoid being knocked prone, but cannot right itself without assistance. - Crew: A vehicle might be operated by more than one crew member (typically a minimum number of crew equal to 1/2 of the vehicle's size). As long at least half the crew is alive, the vehicle can still function. - No manipulators: A vehicle cannot initiate a grapple, pick up, or manipulate items - Type: You can give a vehicle one or more of the following

types: - Flier: A flying vehicle can fly when it moves or boosts - Transport: A transport vehicle can hold one squad or a number of entities whose total size (added together) is less than its size - Treads or Hover: A Treaded or Hover vehicle ignores difficult terrain

48.18   Ship

SHIP

Ship-type enemies are any military or civilian vehicles that are flight capable and operate primarily in space, outside the bounds of atmosphere (though many can operate in-atmos if need be).

Making a Ship

You can use any of the mech classes and apply this template to convert that mech into a ship. They lose the mech tag and gain the vehicle tag. All ships get the following features added to their base NPC type:

- Flier: A ship always counts as having an EVA module in space. In atmosphere, it can fly with either normal flight or hover flight (depending on type). If a ship is grounded without landing, it is immobilized. If it is immobilized, knocked prone, or stunned mid-air, it crashes. - Massive size: A ship is typically much larger than a mech. If its size is less than 4, increase its size to 4. This template describes ships that can be engaged on a ship-to- mech level about up to size 6-8. Much larger ships (size 10/20+) are usually too heavily armored for mech-mounted weapons to harm - Crew: A ship might be operated by more than one crew member (typically a minimum number of crew equal to 1/2 of the vehicle's size). As long at least half the crew is alive, the ship can still function.

- Bonus HP: Increase the Ship's HP by +5 - No manipulators: A ship cannot initiate a grapple, pick up, or manipulate items - Limited melee attacks: A ship cannot make melee attacks other than Ram

- Transport: A transport ship can hold one squad or a number of entities whose total size (added together) is less than its size

51 Timeline of Union's History

Timeline of Union's History

-5000U: Anthropocene Epoch ends with the ecological and data collapse of Old Humanity.

Intervening Period: The dark ages. Cradle's population falls to estimated 300,000 persons from peak of around 15 billion.

-150U: The first Vault, Massif-A, is discovered on Cradle (nee Earth), prompting worldwide civilizational growth and change.

-53U: The Little Wars begin.

0U: Union founded after the conclusion of the Little Wars. The First Committee Established.

1968U: Logged SOS transmissions received after Union reactivates long-range communications systems. Union Space Program announced shortly thereafter.

1970U: Union Space Program lands and reactivates lunar installations. Shipyard THESEUS reactivated. First NEARLIGHT-CLASS ships built and launched. Following legacy star charts, Union establishes a colony on an ID'd Gaia world. Encounters the Aun shortly thereafter. Contact lost with Union colony.

2000U: Mars-based ORACLE CHORUS installation discovered following GRADUATION DAY landings on the Vastitas Borealis. The Five Voices reactivated, contained, and managed by early elements of what would become Forecast/GALSIM.

2000U-2998U: First Expansion period. Multiple Old Human colonies discovered. Some derelict, others inhabited. Union Administrative Department created to manage expansion effort and reintegration programs for rediscovered exclaves.

2880U: Second contact with the Aun Ecumene. Diplomatic failure turns to first interstellar conflict: now called the First Distal War. Union retreats, and hardline elements in the Union Space Program ignore no-fly cordon, launch a flight of "dumb" kinetic TBK weapons towards presumed location of the Ecumenical homeworld. Bitter political struggles grip Cradle, give rise to the Second Committee.

2998U: RA manifested from Five Voices forecast iterative.

3000U: The Deimos Event, RA's ascension. Paracausality Studies born. Disparate ships, shuttles, and force organizations of the Union Space Program organized into the Union Navy.

3002U: First Contact Accords signed with RA. Non-Human Person identified as category. Shackling developed.

3130U: Blinkspace identified and pierced. Blink fields created, first gates created, first blink station opens and stabilizes. Second Expansion Period begins. Union Administrative Bureau dissolved, replaced with Union Colonial Mission.

4500U-4600U: Hercynian Crisis. Efficacy of hard suits and mechanized chassis shown: first galaxy-wide production and adoption of mechanized chassis ("mechs") begins via Union state armorer, General Massive Systems. Second Committee deposed in a popular coup following revelations surrounding the

Hercynian Crisis. Union Colonial Mission dissolved, replaced with reconstituted Union Administrative Bureau.

5000U: Reports of Aunic crusade fleet operating in the Boundary Garden sector of expansion space confirmed. First reported loss of a Union blink gate due to hostile state actions. Second Distal War begins.

5014U: Attack on Green Zone Alhambra , beginning of Operation Clarion in the Dawnline Shore

5016U: Narrative present of Lancer.

52 Foundation Day

Foundation Day

"Work stops at sunset. Darkness falls over the building site. The sky is filled with stars.

'There is is the blueprint,' they say."

- Italo Calvino, Invisible Cities

Union began as a way to build a new world from the ashes and ice.

In the 3500's CE, -5500U by Union's dating system, Earth sent the first wave of her children out to seed the stars. The world, Humanity's only home save for distant, fledgling colonies, was dying. An accumulation of fatal blows, a thousand cuts on the world by the people that called it home, had rendered it all but inhospitable.

The Fall, as it is now called, was not concluded in a single, cataclysmic blow. There was time – not enough of it, but time enough – for acts of desperate hope.

The Ten were one such act.

In the twilight of the Fall, Ten massive colony ships launched from orbital shipyards that ringed Earth. They were slow ships, their titanic hulls pushed along by conventional sublight drives, but they marked the crowning achievement of a species: a second chance.

These generation ships were humanity's last hope. They would travel for thousands of realtime years, accelerating nearly to lightspeed before flipping over and slowing down as they approached their destinations. Generations of passengers would live, die, and procreate, sustaining the ship and the remnants of humanity on board until they arrived at their destination: a world able to sustain human life.

This was humanity's second chance, a handful of stones cast out into the night. Back on Earth, the billions left behind watched the Ten burn away into the night, tracking their progress through choking clouds of smog, dust, and smoke from raging, unstoppable wildfires.

Humanity on Earth fought for what was left, erupting into a pandemonium, a violent crescendo. Climate change choked the atmosphere, disease scoured the cities, and war ravaged the rest. Lonely colony outposts and stations throughout the solar system — established when Earth was terminal and not yet dying — watched their homeworld go dark. Most withered on the vines, a rare few managed to hang on.

Thousands of years of real time passed. For the ten ships, relative time passed slower.

Earth spun, silent and unresponsive to the desperate calls for help from her dying colonies. Cities sank under rising water, wildfire and stinking fog swept the equator. The poles thawed, while

storms thrashed the tropics. Ash fell over the whole of the world. Satellites and stations decayed in their orbits. Shipyards fell quiet. Great habitats on the moon and Mars cascaded into failure.

Thousands more of years of silence followed. The First Anthropocene, the age of Humanity, faded, buried under ash and water.

Yet Earth was not empty, nor lost: billions had died, but humanity is a resilient race. Some hundreds of thousands had survived. Persevering through the new long dark.

This was the Fall. The end of it, and the beginning of a new Dark Age.

In time, the global population began to stabilize, then grow as the world's climate evened out. Long-dead crops began to grow as hearty survivors. Trees, forgotten at the Fall, grew back from gnarled shrubs. The oceans receded, cooled. The fires dimmed, then died. The sky, once a greasy smear of black and orange, lightened, blued.

Humanity, too, began to grow back. First, small rulers and tyrants laid claim to the ruins of the past, organizing themselves around altars of scavenge and scrap. Wandering machines were tamed or followed, venerated and hunted. Farms grew from small plots. Once again, lines and borders were drawn, land claimed, loyalty pledged. Scraps of cloth and paint and feathers and flags grew to mean, to divide. The rulers gave way to nations. Nations, to empires.

And then, the first of three great traumas humbled the healing world: Old vaults, stores of information from the pre-collapse era, were discovered and reopened. The survivors, so far removed from Old Humanity, had grown through the dark ages thinking that their cultures were the first on Earth, the first people to walk under the Sun.

They discovered otherwise. They were not the first: they were the last.

Reeling from this discovery and the wealth of pre-collapse humanity unleashed upon a healing world, the fledgling states of Earth backed into their corners. Ultimately, a reckoning followed the revelation, and a new war began: a global war. This was the second trauma: a global war, a bitter fight over the scraps of the long-dead.

War scarred the world, and when it was done the survivors gathered together and pledged peace. The tools of war and capital were thrown aside, as they had nearly killed Earth again. Humanity pledged peace, and came together under a single banner, which would be the last to fly over Earth:

Union.

Union's foundation reset the clock, changing the calendar and myriad dating systems to one single metric. Year 0 marked the beginning of a new age of humanity, a people redeemed, bruised stewards of an old and aching world. In peace, and with the help of the wondrous technology of their predecessors, the people of Union began to dream of greater things.

Flight and clean power spread across the world. Linked, networked communications further bound Union together. Sudden, exponential advancement in medications, computational power, hard and soft sciences — all gifts from the data stored in seed vaults around the world.

We discovered and translated the story of the collapse, of the desperate rush of old humanity to preserve what it could so that future generations could begin anew, with all the plenty and knowledge of those who came before. We found technologies that could have saved the world, but were discovered too late, or kept from Humanity by their inventors and owners.

Union began to look beyond: out, towards the depths of space. The first rockets were launched, and on Luna we found dusty colonies, empty but for mummified remains of the people who once lived there. We found dormant satellites strung in orbit, ancient shipyards hanging in space. We found charts, logs, flight plans, trajectories showing that some of us, some of our ancestors, had escaped.

We found and thawed the old telescopes, radio towers, and laser communication suites, preserved in ice on mountaintops and high places all over the world. We pointed them to the stars, turned them on, and waited.

The first messages arrived almost immediately. This was Union's third great trauma.

Ancient calls from distant, lonely outposts and hardscrabble colonies. Voices, thousands of years old and long dead, on radio waves garbled by radiation, time, and transit, crying out to their home for help. Lost souls that begged for aid, for guidance, for their loved ones. Thousands of years of messages, recorded and playing on endless, decaying loops for the survivors to hear.

This was the voice of humanity from the stars: a desperate cry for help, a lonely gasp as the air ran out. A plea, unanswered, as the light grew dim.

Union now had a new purpose: to answer those calls, and to ensure the event that caused them would never happen again.

The old orbitals were retaken and reactivated. Machine minds greater than humanity's — the first artificial intelligences — were discovered and set to puzzle out solutions we could not. The first new ships were launched towards those old signals, along ancient charted paths, and out towards new worlds.

Union could not bring their dead back home, but they would choke the stars with the living.

53 Cygnus Spur, Orion Arm: Humanity Across the Stars

53.1 Cosmopolitans and Diasporans

Cosmopolitans and Diasporans

In the narrative present of Lancer, humanity is vast and polyglot. We live in a golden age for most: the human race is spread out across habitable and uninhabitable worlds, enjoys the fruits of robust scientific, political, and cultural advancements, and has access to such a gross amount of resources that society on Core worlds is, essentially, post-scarcity.

Life on a given developed Core world, is stable, safe, and without want. People who make their homes on terrestrial worlds, large orbital stations, and habitable moons are Diasporan humans – their homes are in a specific location on a specific world or station, and their lives are concerned with events that occur around, in, or to that location.

However, outside of the developed Core worlds there is still a raw, dangerous edge to human life. The frontier waits both away from the bright core of the galaxy, and towards it. Colonies need to be built, settlements developed, and old ghosts put to sleep.

The humans who embark on missions or pilgrimages to these frontiers are called Cosmopolitans. Their homes are, typically, their ships or the world they left behind.

Interstellar travel comes at a cost: time. Life for a Cosmopolitan human is split into subjective and real time, or, time as a Cosmopolitan experiences it, and time as the rest of the galaxy experiences it.

Cosmopolitans leave their old lives behind as the effects of relativistic interstellar travel splits them from the "real" time of the rest of the galaxy. They trade the permanence and normality of a terrestrial life for the vast life, the uprooted life, a life lived in the wind.

On Core worlds, humanity expresses itself in many faiths, cultural practices, genders, and social structures. We create art, shape the land, build glittering cities, construct great works of engineering. We write, we cook, we drink, we play sports, we journey, we wander. We populate our arm of the galaxy as a roiling people, often contradictory, often myopic, but ever-learning, ever-growing.

Humanity is no less fragile and no more disposable now that we have crossed the stars and number in the trillions: the great purpose of human life on the galactic scale is to defend the

collective while defining the individual. To journey beyond, to discover ourselves, to not simply exist but to become.

It is a good thing, some of Union's philosophers think, that we are alone in this great venture.

The galaxy that humanity has stepped again into is, seemingly, empty. There are few truths held by the majority of humanity – our numbers are simply too vast – but the ones that are universal are fundamental, seen as core tenets of what it means to be human:

First, to be a human being in Union is to be afforded the decency of a life lived with your basic needs seen to: your state will make available to you food, water, shelter, and labor, and will never deny you those rights. To do so is to violate the most basic of social contracts.

Second, no walls shall stand between worlds. The void of interstellar space is deep and cold, utterly hostile to life. Any civilian world, station, or moon not deemed to be of significant private or restricted interest must allow all who petition for access to feel firm ground beneath their feet, breathe clean air, and feel again the light of a life-giving sun.

Finally, no human shall be held in bondage through force, labor, or debt. Scarcity of natural resources on a Core world is a false premise, a myth, a tool used by the few to oppress the many while enriching themselves; this the same for colony worlds. The dignity of human life is paramount among the Diaspora, and to use hard or soft power to exploit a person, their labor, and deny them just compensation is abhorrent.

All that being said, humanity exists on a spectrum of development. While the majority of the developed galaxy might hold these to be self-evident truths, guaranteeing them is never a "finished" project — "most" of the developed galaxy only represents a plurality, not a majority, of the populated galaxy.

Remember: power never gives up power. Power is only ever taken from the powerful and redistributed to the people, where it must constantly be cultivated, regulated, and maintained — this is the dream some worlds have realized, and the project that Union, humanity's core organization, works to accomplish.

Union is many things, but above anything else it is an incomplete project, human to its core. Despite every wonder of technology, every miracle at their disposal, Union still needs people to make the right decisions, to be brave, and to make it work.

53.2 Why we Fight

Why We Fight

Notice the hedging – "usually", "most", "the majority", "by and large" – this is to mark the gaps in the golden age, the places where the galaxy does not conform to Union's standards of development.

War still plagues humanity. No system so large and so varied will be completely harmonious, but Union and its proxies are working to make it so. Note again that "harmonious" in this context means that which is agreeable to Union – it is absolutely possible that your PCs will reject Union's hegemony.

Areas of major conflict, interest, importance, or intrigue in Lancer are called flashpoints. Some are detailed in this core rulebook under the section A Golden Age, of A Kind .

In Lancer, humans fight over two things: territory rights and ideology.

Resource-rich and strategically placed terrestrial worlds and moons – habitable or not – are common regional flashpoints. The rise of destabilizing actors like Corpro-States has led to a run on planets rich with rare elements necessary to fabricate the fantastic technologies the galaxy has come to view as normal. This produces conflict between corpro-states. Some hire mercenaries to accompany their claims teams, others raise and field their own standing armies.

Ideology tends to be the seed of conflict that drives states to fight states, or for states to fracture and fight civil wars. These conflicts are protracted and bloody, as neither side is likely to surrender unless they give in to attrition.

States and Corpro-States engage one another over territory and labor. Most of these conflicts occur in small engagements over important persons, locations, and facilities as small teams of highly trained agents fight expensive corpo-state mercenaries in clandestine firefights. Occasionally, a Copro-State's acquisition of a world will turn hostile, and conflict will rage across and above it as the state attempts to secure its holdings.

53.3   Pilots

Pilots

A note on the player character role, and how pilots become Lancers.

Player pilots in Lancer generally fill a common archetype and tend to be aware of their status – in-setting, as a "Lancer", the galaxy's colloquial term for a role similar to a flying ace – but how they respond to that status and act in their role differs from pilot to pilot.

It is perfectly possible – and narratively interesting – to not play as a Lancer, but as a run-of-the- mill pilot, one without the blessing of destiny or the distinction of being the Special One.

While there are gradations of skill among pilots, generally speaking, a trained and outfitted mech pilot in their chassis will beat a conscript or unskilled pilot in a mech, even in situations where the trained pilot might be outnumbered.

A mech pilot in Lancer, outside of their mech, is usually a well-trained combatant, adept-to- experts in the fields their backgrounds cover. They are not super-soldiers, though some with heavy cybernetic enhancement might be able to operate outside the bounds of "normal" human ability. Most pilots – as a consequence of being a human in the narrative present – have some

degree of non-invasive biological enhancement, but rely heavily on wearable/detachable technologies and months-to-years of training to augment their talents and knowledge.

A Union-rated mech pilot, one that is a Regular or Auxiliary trooper, is generally educated by the Navy, specialized in their role through training, traveled some (through their world or local system), and is at least in their mid 20s – it is rare to see a pilot younger than that due to the necessary qualifications for training. All Union Regular and Auxiliary pilots are put through the same naturalization courses, trained by Union regulars and instructors, and serve in integrated units for a period of ten years.

For pilots not affiliated with Union as Regulars or Auxiliary troopers, standards are different. Corpro States might tune their pilots via implants or prosthetics to be more compatible with their own chassis lines; the Aun raise their pilots alongside their NHP-analogs who will pilot their chassis with them; the Karrakin Baronies outfit their sons and daughters with legacy chassis and offer them to martial academies for training; Ungrateful guerillas take what they can get, and so on.

The majority of pilots in Lancer are simply individuals trained and outfitted to crew their machines. Your pilot – or your player(s)'s pilot – might be the special one, or the chosen one, or otherwise blessed with some combination of fate, talent, and destiny, or they might not. Maybe they're just the person in the pilot seat, in the right place at the right time.

53.4   Pilots, Lancers, and Union

Pilots, Lancers, and Union

What sets your pilot apart from the rest of the mech pilots in the galaxy? What makes them a Lancer?

It is important to note that the term "Lancer(s)", in Lancer, is a catch-all term for mech pilots across the galaxy who are roughly equivalent, by Union standards, to a contemporary ace. Not all pilots or people who crew mechs are Lancers – the majority of them are just competent pilots – but all Lancers are pilots.

Lancers tend to be set apart from "regular" pilots by ability, talent, training, luck, skill, reputation, or some combination of these factors: they do not achieve any classification or gain any medals, certifications, or rank that qualifies them as a Lancer, it's simply a term that exceptional pilots achieve through a combination of time in the saddle and performance on campaign.

There is an argument that some formal identification system exists at levels so far removed from the players as to be a secret that would not only never be uncovered, but not even assumed as a possibility. A rumor exists among pilots: that Lancers are chosen for their role, their names noted down in some distant database deep under Cradle's surface. Some pilots – the mystic, the superstitious, the paranoid – believe that Union has intervened in their lives or the lives of others in order to make them Lancers.

For the rest, it is because of their skill, strength, and experience that they have earned the right to call themselves Lancer. No help from Union, no preordination from down on high. They became a

pilot when they were conscripted, or when they enlisted, or when the ships came and bombed their homes, and they chose to fight back. Pilots – Lancers – are made, yes, but whether by deep machinations, by fate, by chance, or by choice, who can say.

It's important to note: pilots and lancers both have downtime. Combat, exercises in the field, and moments of stress and fear generally do not occupy the majority of their time.

So what does this look like in practice? Some examples follow

Union Regulars: A Cog In The Greatest Machine

A squad of Union regular troops, tight-knit on campaign together, laughing and joking as they run post-sortie checks on their chassis. They are one squad of hundreds on the deck of a carrier – their home for only a few more years – each member from a different world, bound together now by a greater purpose.

Union doesn't work without these pilots. A whole galaxy of bickering states, of kings and presidents who think they can shake the pillars of heaven. Who think they can spit in the face of Union. Might as well turn their back on the ocean. When they do, these are the people who darken their skies, who drop to their world, who set them right where they've done wrong.

Nothing sets this campaign apart for them, Regulars on a second tour. An Administrator's report, filed to the DoJ. A battlegroup organized. A briefing to see: a king who thinks himself a god, who grinds his boot on the neck of a people he thinks are his. He forgot they're not his people, they're Union. Time's come for this king to get a reminder that Cradle's reach is long, its vision is pure, and its will inexorable.

As veterans of this campaign by now, these pilots have been given a little bit more autonomy than the replacements: their chassis bear more kill hashes, carry heavier weapons than boot squads fresh to the deck. They're still subordinate to their CO, but all the other grunts look to them when the lead and lasers start flying: they've been in the shit a bit longer, learned how to move when someone downrange wants to kill them.

They are Lancers, veterans of a campaign that has ground all of their friends to dust and ash. From different worlds, of different backgrounds, but all bound by the same truth:

They're Union, and they're here to help.

Yond-Balor, Second of House Yond, Heir-By-Blade

In the Baronies, glory is given only to those who prove they deserve it. Yond-Balor Karrakis, second son of Yond-Aleph Karrakis, Baron of House Yond, sub-barony of the House of Glass, has proven through combat and intrigue that he alone deserves to command the warhost of the House of Glass. But one obstacle remained: Yond-Argo Karrakis, Yond-Balor's older brother, first claimant to the throne and, by extension, the warhost of the House of Glass.

As a youth, Yond-Balor was raised to crew the chassis, to gird himself in sealed power armors and become the death-word of House Yond. He proved himself in battle against the Ungratefuls, against House Muur and House Fleur, even in single combat against the Vice-Lord of the House of Sand. Yond-Balor alone stood by his father's deathbed while Yond-Aleph fevered, poisoned by assassins sent by the Mutable Houses.

And where was Yond-Argo? Where was the First name'd? Gone. Travelling through space, pledged to those headless ones: to Union. Yond-Balor wasted no time in dispatching his older – far older – brother when he came to pay respects to his late father.

Yond-Balor has taken what is his by birth, drawn it steaming from the gut of his worthless kin. As the chassis closes around him and the red light of the

ready-light begins to pulse, he grins. His name is no longer second-son – it is Lancer, first and only.

Jeddah, Loyal Wing

Young-Wing Jeddah bin Surat al Noor has long greyed while maintaining his Loyal Wing's kit. After his salvation by the Albatross, Jeddah wanted nothing more than to don his own kit, to be marked by the crimson lion, to feel the smooth hilt of his very own waveblade in his hand.

How many times had he cleaned blood and burn from his Loyal Wing's hardsuit? How many times had he nursed his Loyal-Wing while he lay in agony, moaning through nightmares that gripped him since the Metavault?

Countless times. Jeddah may not have seen the terrors that Loyal Wings face, but he has seen their echoes. Never did it dissuade him, for he remembered: these are the only ones who came to save him.

Now, on his eighteenth subjective year, he has been called before the Loyal Council for assessment and ordination. His teacher has picked him, of all his fellows, to learn the art of piloting, the art of standing-at-the-speartip. His breast swells with pride when he hears his name called.

Rising, he walks across the dawn-lit courtyard to stand beside the rest of the Loyal Council. In time, he too will heft the lance, he too will wear the golden armor, will wield the laser-and-rifle.

He will be a Lancer, hero to the lost.

Penny, In At The Dawn

Penny threaded the last stitch of her MIRRORSMOKE MC patch on the shoulder of her coat. She her coat out, looked at it, nodded. She let it go. Microgravity hold it for a moment while she stood, slipped her arms in and zipped it up.

The Penny in the mirror was kind, if a little tired, but who wouldn't be after ten years in hard- sleep?

Still, she smiled. A little bit of pride in her situation wasn't a terrible thing to have, was it? The MSMC 501st Detachment. The One-Eyed Fox. The "Here-For-Nows"

Subcommander Gerrard's voice echoed over the carrier's all-comm.

"Sunrise. It's sunrise. Good morning everyone, welcome to the Dawnline Shore." There was a pause, the sound of someone talking off-mic. Gerrard came back a moment later. "Since Geordie won our calendar-pick, we're going to listen to some old shit. Apologies in advance. We've got three days until we're in orbit above Myrrh."

The old shit started right after, echoing over the PA. Penny liked it. Raygae, it was called. She hummed along as she tapped her fabrication request into the ship's queue. For all the rep these men had, they were actually quite kind. Gruff, unpolished. But kind, and bound to a kind of honor. At least, the Foxes were.

Penny didn't know it, but she would be the only one to make it out of this milkrun; she was a cut above the rest, though why she wouldn't find out until later.

Penny, you see, would be called Lancer. But that wouldn't matter much to her: she only wanted to be called friend.

MJ Martinez, A Kid From Old Spinrock

"You ain't nothin'"

Last words the decklord ever spake to MJ Martinez. You ain't nothin.

MJ unclipped his helm. Tugged it off. Felt the breeze cool the sweat from his brow. Free now he was from the constant chatter of the battlescape. Was only cheers and cheers anyways: MJ and his company had done the impossible: held the breach, repelled the Crown Host.

Whennow did the decklord die? Must've been a hunnert or twain years back. MJ grinned, couldn't help. AIN'T NOTHIN was slapped in whitewash on the flank of his chassis, scored some by tachyon but proud and loud.

Now MJ had been through the shit. Left Old Spinrock and joined with the Oxes, cadet'd for a decade until he proved his mettle enough to crew an Everest. Ain't nothin' in terms of what you can grow to crew, but for a kid from the hub of a spinsat, an Everest is the King Death.

A decade more and MJ got himself a squad. A decade more, a comp'ny. The No-how's. Sigil: a grin, one missin' tooth. Mirrored MJ's. You get to do that when you're a real damn hero.

A real damn hero. MJ sure as shit wasn't gonna paint that on his core, but it did sound nice. A call drew his attention – more Union regulars trooping by, waving up at him as he stood half-out his Everest. He waved back, saluted, they cheered.

Those old decklord words echoed: you ain't nothin'.

Well, what had their chances been against the oncomin' horde? Nothin'. Stood strong and Union- proud 'gainst the shinin' host of a king who called himself god. Nothin' stopped him before.

Perfect, if nothin' was gonna save the world, then he was the right pilot for the job. A nobody in a nothin'-rig who saved the world.

MJ laughed. Not bad for a nobody from Old Spinrock. A Lancer, he was. Claimed the title on his own.

Tyrannocleave

It began in the mines, as everything in the Baronies does. You ask "where" and "why" - I will tell you.

Do not protest, Grand Baron. Do not weep. It is unbecoming of your station, filth.

Listen now: we have nothing but time, so I shall take my time. The first violence I commit to you is to tell you my story. You shall know before you die.

My mother died when she bore me. Hooked to tubes and deadlife machines. Your men had her bear me with the assistance of an exo. A machine massaged her heart. Current forced her muscles to work. A black box strapped to her chest forced breath into her lungs — because you knew. You knew at that point the only protest we had was to die, and deny you new bodies.

So you took me from her and I never knew her again — I found the footage of my own birth later, I wanted to see — and in the care of your stone-matrons

I learned how to tear worlds to pieces. I learned the lash, and the pick, and how to read the earth you had me kill.

When I was ten I learned that I must take these pills to survive. That I was born riddled with cancers that you would never take from me — too expensive. The recovery process too long. And your quarterly profits could never slip, that would mean ruin for your name.

Look at me. It is why we are hideous. Your propaganda paints us as beasts — outward we are, but it is your hand that shapes our flesh. It is your word that scars our skin and bids cancer grow thick in our bodies. In the name of Manna and your House, you ruin millions.

Millions. There are millions of us, and countless more. This is your unbecoming. Your death, below your feet. Every inch of every palace and ship and grand city you build, you build on our backs, with our labor, at the cost of our lives. It began in the mines, but will not end there: your Baronies are as riddled with us as my body is with metastatic.

Yes, weep now. For your perfect face. Your perfect worlds. Your perfect dominion.

Did you know — I did not know what the "sky" was until the Ungratefuls found me? Liberation means this. Not simply seeing the sky, but knowing that there is such a thing as land without stone above you. And then knowing that there are those who put you there. I always thought — we were always ministered this — that we were damned and penitent. That we had transgressed Lordgod's perfect kingdom and must mine in penance.

How wrong I was! It was not a divine prescript that doomed us to labor, but you, and others like you. How surmountable the problem became then.

This is the Ungratefuls' gift to me. This is their gift to the rest of us, the waste, the offal of your courts and palaces. This is why even your machines fight alongside us.

Because you never taught us there could be a thing like the sky. Because you thought that we would never learn.

Goodbye, Grand Baron. Your House burns, your coffers have been emptied, your monuments have been torn down. Your line, your sons and daughters, hang from the balconies of your own palace.

We learned, Grand Baron. We learned how to hope, and who to hate.

And so on.

53.5   A Lifetime of Experience

A Lifetime of Experience

Generally speaking, the natural life of a pilot is only marginally longer than that of a given Diasporan. Their observed life tends to be closer to that of a Cosmopolitan, as a good number of pilots tend to fall in this group of humanity. The subjective experience a pilot has of their life, though, is no different from you or me.

Pilots are valuable hard power resources for their states, corpro-states, and groups – they get shipped all around their home system, home world, or the

galaxy as needed for the duration of their deployment.

The average Diasporan from a developed world with no augments or significant bioengineering lives somewhere in the ballpark of 120 real years.

Subjective age doesn't match up with real age: it's perfectly possible for someone's real age to be 300, and their subjective age to be 30. Remember, "subjective age" is how old a person appears to an observer and how old they perceive themselves to be; "real age" is how old a person is in Cradle-Standard years, tracked by Union.

Union's registration system counts real age as time progressing as an observer from Cradle would perceive it. Therefore, a Cosmopolitan's real age may increase significantly, depending on the length of time that passes on Cradle while they are engaging in interstellar travel.

In Lancer, a pilot only lives once (with some rare, and rarely talked about exceptions). Facsimile programs do exist, but these are digital simulacra, moving portraits and holograms that give the appearance of the person they represent, but are not free-thinking digital consciousnesses. Death, it would still seem, is an inescapable end for humanity – hence Union's discomfort in stagnation.

53.6   Mechanized Cavalry

Mechanized Cavalry

Why mechs?

The rise of mechanized cavalry can be attributed to two factors: rapid human expansion into space, and the conflicts that stem from expansion.

Union's first three thousand years of expansion and colonization occurred without the benefit of the blink network or knowledge of how to pierce into blinkspace, as those breakthroughs would not happen until after the Deimos Event. Drones and unmanned interstellar vehicles were used to scout on hundred-year increments: Fired off towards target worlds to be followed by early- pattern nearlight ships not yet built, crewed by Far-Field teams not yet born, one hundred years after the drone had arrived.

In its 2nd millenium, Union's expansionist imperative demanded that humans spread out among the stars. Old colonies and installations waited to be reactivated by human hands, and Union marked the growing diaspora as both a point of civilizational pride and necessary for the survival of the species.

However, humans do not survive on hostile worlds or in hard vacuum. Ships and stations did fine to protect people from hard vacuum, radiation, and all the terrors of deep space and dangerous atmospheres, but planets needed to be claimed, not flown over.

To address this problem, Union astrocartographers and Far-Field administrators issued a call for a standardized, medium-term livable suit pattern that could be used for tactical, scientific, and civilian purposes in space and on alien worlds. Universal, powered, hardened against the elements, and comfortable to wear, the hardsuit soon became an indispensable piece of hardware for anyone leaving the bounds of Cradle.

The first hardsuits were adaptable, universally compatible, with flourishes and specializations unique to their manufacturers and the demands of their users. Early Far-Field teams wore larger suits with more robust equipment, some equipped with weapons to protect themselves from native flora and fauna; Colony populations first adopted hardsuits as personal emergency equipment in the case of damage to their sealed habitats, then as a common method of travel and exploration outside of their settlements; Spacers wore slimmer, sealed suits, often living in

them for days on end while they piloted their great ships on long voyages between populated worlds.

The suit found military applications as well, as some companies and Union foundries began to add plated armor on their suits, wove ballistic knit into them, and integrated hardened technologies that allowed soldiers to manipulate smart weaponry.

On worlds where tracked or wheeled terrestrial vehicles proved insufficient, larger hardsuits were built, capable of hauling cargo that would have otherwise required transport trucks. In these suits, the pilot occupied a cockpit, not just the suit, and extensive training was required to ensure the pilot could operate the mechanized chassis professionally. These heavy suits were commonly accompanied by drone flights and operated in tandem with other heavy suits.

The first mechanized chassis and the first pilot were born from this combination of exploration drive and protection from the elements. It took an acute moment – a flashpoint – to catapult the mechanized chassis from a useful-if-plodding civilian platform to a deadly military instrument.

That flashpoint presented itself on Hercynia, a jungle world in distal space, around 4500U.

Hercynia was a lush, massive tropical-to-temperate world rich with nitrogen and oxygen. It was dominated by continent-spanning tropical forests around its equatorial and temperate zones, only giving way to borean plains in the northern and southern poles. It seemed, on all scans, to be a perfect colony world: rich in resources, breathable atmosphere, a temperature range that was pleasing to most humans, and carbon-based flora. Hercynia was a Gaia world, perfectly suited for human life.

The contract was posted, a consortium of colony firms won, and a joint colonial expedition was undertaken.

Initial colonial sites were established in early 4500. Within months, colonial scientists pinged the Union Science Bureau with urgent calls for assistance: alien, indigenous structures had been discovered by colonial survey drones sent to plan out future development. Shortly thereafter, contact was made by colonial elements sent to explore the structures.

Humanity had encountered the first conscious, sapient alien species in their history. The Egregorians, so-named due to their autonomous/consensus co-consciousness, were outwardly horrifying in appearance, but largely peaceful and able to communicate. Colonial dispatches of the time indicate that the Egregorians were reverent of the new arrivals, regarding them and their 1 technology as magic, as godlike .

Union assembled a team of xenobiologists – an established field due to discoveries of alien flora and fauna on many colony worlds – and linguists, anthropologists, and engineers to head to Hercynia and investigate. Upon landing and contact, integration into Union structures began. The

1 Note: the term used did not indicate a "god" as humans would conceive of one, but rather an analogous-god as the

Egregorians conceptualized of it: a divine simultaneous sensation/perception/consciousness is a succinct, if not perfect, shorthand. For brevity's sake: "god" or "the divine" or some variant therein.

private colonies were Unionized, their charter companies compensated, and Hercynia was walled off: no public omninet, no public blink access, and credible-source dissemination through interested channels of a total colony collapse due to disease.

Hercynia became a black site. A hole in space. Union's next great project began: integrating and naturalizing the Egregorian many-peoples into human social structure.

This ended poorly. Refer to No Room For A Wallflower for a detailed history.

The resulting conflict prompted massive research and development into combat-capable and effective mechanized chassis platforms across all theaters. Mechanized Chassis became a viable, all-round option for combat in all theaters – on hard terrain, in zero-g, and in transitional spaces, a piloted mechanized chassis, a mech, could outperform and outmaneuver any other ground-based all-theater attack option.

53.7   Infantry and other Ground Forces

Infantry and other Ground Forces

Infantry, tanks, groundcars, light vehicles, trucks, etc, all still exist and are far more widely used than mechanized chassis in combat.

Mechs are used much in the same way that cavalry was used in ancient combat: rapid, heavy, armored, deadly, and expensive to recruit, train, and maintain. Mechs can break down, are vulnerable to systemic attacks, are hard to camouflage, are susceptible to human-portable weapons and traps, and require significant time and resource investment to build. Licenses, save for GMS, must be acquired and certified, renewed on occasion.

Not everyone can become a pilot, but all a person needs to fight is a reason.

Mechs are shock units of a category above tracked and wheeled weapons platforms. Infantry make up the bulk of all individual units in an army, and, ultimately, are still the only way that states and state-like entities can take and hold territory.

Additionally, infantry are far less expensive and more expendable than a mech and its pilot.

Furthermore, while printers are relatively ubiquitous, not everyone has the licenses, resources, or time to field a printer large enough to fabricate mechanized chassis.

A soldier on a given developed world usually is a professional fighter serving a term of service, either a volunteer or someone serving due to compulsory state requirements (a mandatory service period, a lottery-based service period, or so on). This typical soldier has undergone a lengthy period of basic physical and mental training meant to condition them into being a temporary member of the military class, followed by a shorter period of specialized training based on their assignments, and now is posted to a base, unit, or patrol.

Most military mech pilots begin with this training.

This typical soldier is outfitted with a main battle weapon, possibly a sidearm, ammunition (if their military uses weapons that require it), equipment and gear appropriate to their specialization, a uniform, and basic personal armor to protect them from small arms fire, shrapnel, blades, and blunt force trauma. This typical soldier has been assigned to a unit of similarly outfitted soldiers, given a rank, and has a directive – punishable by some compelling form of hard or soft power – to obey their superior and all other superiors. Some of these soldiers may carry more specialized equipment commensurate with specialized training that they received – shaped charges, a longer-range omninode, a heavier battle weapon, a drone swarm and its control unit, a CQB or area-denial weapon, and so on.

Variations on this galactic catch-all professional soldier exist. Some worlds are more developed than others, and some are less; similarly, some put stock in their militaries, and some prefer to spend their resources elsewhere.

More militarized societies might simply have more soldiers, or better equipped soldiers, or enforce conscription, or have a caste system or other form of ordering their society around martial orders. Note that "more militarized" does not necessarily mean more technologically advanced: it is perfectly possible in Lancer to encounter a society utterly devoted to a military hierarchy whose soldiers proudly polish steel pikes and have never encountered black powder, much less a mechanized chassis.

Also note that – like in other areas of society – military technology does not necessarily have to be uniform across a society. Some states may have a limited number of mechs, won hundreds of years before in a trade with a passing Cosmopolitan ship, but their local industry is only able to develop black powder muskets for their infantry; others may have left ranged weapons by the wayside in favor of shimmering blades and mirrored shields, riding into battle on hovering skiffs over massed formations of pikemen.

In short: while mechs are the focus of Lancer, infantry still form the backbone of most every organized army in the galaxy. Expect to encounter them.

53.8   Space combat

Space Combat

Space combat between fleets is elegant at a distance and brutal up close.

Against the stark black of deep space, long silhouettes drift in tightening gyres, maneuvering to dodge torpedos and kinetic kill-clouds thousands of kilometers distant. Energy beams, invisible to the naked eye, streak across the void,

shimmering only where they impact their targets.

To an observer, this combat between fleets-of-line is silent, sterile: Long capital ships appear to twirl thousands of miles apart, closing slow as their orbits align. Clouds of glittering metal chaff and slag bloom into the darkness, catching the light of distant stars. The blue torches of torpedoes trace fading lines in the night.

However, to those engaged, there is no elegance. No grace. There is just the long, persistent terror of space combat:

Days before they can even see their opponents through optics, the first torpedoes, kill-clouds, spoofers, shrouds, and subaltern kinetics have been launched. Pilots, officers, and crewmembers are roused from stasis and ordered to battle stations. Massive kinetic and energy weapons, one-shots, begin their acceleration cycles, spooling up for their perfect shots.

The flagship's XO NHP goes live, paired with the commanding officer but given free rein to partition and duplicate themselves into sub-sentient subjectivities to better advise and coordinate all of their ship's systems. Tactical command is given to the flagship NHP; strategic and kill command remain the purview of the commanding officer.

The fleet, carrier group, battlegroup, or patrol NHPs construct a virtual war room, networking into a hybrid one/many mind (this is referred to later as a Fleet Legion) in order to ensure total-actor integration over the battlespace. All commanding officers are party to the information and recommendations that issue from the Legion, and tactical feeds are meted out to lower ranks on a need-to-know basis (commensurate with their rank and tac/strat portfolio).

The first commands after the initial volley are maneuver and systemic orders: avoid incoming fire, communicate with allied ships, begin to close the unpredictability gap. At this point, all hands prepare for combat: ready onboard null-atmosphere equipment, lock into your station, push combat stims, cycle pressure suits, link to Legion subjectivity.

Then, scramble fighters, bombers, and landers. Corvettes and gunboats, destroyers and cruisers – subline ships– begin attack runs. Frigates, battleships, tender ships, and carriers: hold your lines, continue systemic/kinetic countermeasures.

Along flight decks and inside carrier blisters, all-hands alarms howl as pilots and techs hurry to finish pre-flight checks and procedures. Techs load ordinance and payloads onto fighters and bombers while pilots and crews prep systems, uploading the latest telemetries, battle reports, flight plans, and obstacle reports. If there are mech chassis and marines aboard, they hurry to their landers.

Combat Area Patrol (CAP) wings are launched, escorts tasked with defending landers, corvettes, bombers, and gunboats from other fighter wings, torpedo flights, and subline ships. They chart flight paths through the kill-clouds and anti-ship weapons, aiming to cross the shrinking no- man's land to harass enemy capital ships, force them to deal with threats at all ranges. At their earliest launch, it will take roughly a day to cross no man's land.

Bombers and subline ships aim to engage capital ships at a close enough range that they cannot maneuver to avoid their payloads: bombers and subline

ships present small – relatively speaking – and agile targets, deceptively high-threat units that present a very real danger to any capital ships that let them get too close.

Landers, laden with marines and mechs in support, have the most dangerous mission: crash into the enemy, disembark, and either capture or disable the enemy ship from the inside. Their ships

are built cheap and sturdy, typically with modular chambers and detachable single-use boosters. Their mission, after all, is to take the ship or fail.

The fleets at this point are engaged, and the combat continues in a shrinking window: the unpredictability gap, the space where NHPs and pilots can still outmaneuver their opponents, shrinks faster.

Ship-to-ship combat increases in intensity as the ships-of-the-line circle towards each other. Mid and close range kinetic cloud weapons open up, huling thousands of projectiles at plotted and predicted paths. Some short-cycle batteries open fire at this point, their beams carving invisible lines of terrible energy through the black, scattering off projected shielding and ablative armor.

Meanwhile, systemic weapons pound away at fleet Legions and individual ship systems, attempting to gain tactical advantage. Those spoof probes and shrouds, launched in the early days of the fleet engagement, activate, pinging enemy sensors and comms arrays with hostile code, creating false signatures and signals to distract weapons and pilots. Subaltern kinetics inform their masters of final trajectories, then plunge towards their targets, triggering their payloads on impact or, failing to find a positive hit, in proximity to the enemy.

Legions face each other down, NHPs engaging in electronic warfare fought in methods esoteric and incomprehensible to human observers, hurling ontological/anti-solipsistic paradox weapons back and forth on a plane of battle removed from the human subjectivity.

Finally, at range too close for the enemy to successfully engage in evasive maneuvers, long-cycle batteries open up, hurling tremendous, demi-solar particle lances at their targets. Capital Commanders at this point must carefully balance their power budget, shifting between angled shielding and weapon power if they are to survive a hit from a long-cycle battery.

This is the battle's climax, the moment when the unpredictability gap closes. Due to the tremendous power needed to fire a capital ship's spinal cannons, each ship-of-the-line generally only has one shot to hit their target, as cooling and recharging a ship's main guns – kinetic or energy – simply takes too long to be viable in combat. Commanders know this, and hold on to their single shot as long as they can: they must hit, and score a clean hit, or they'll be exposed to an enemy with all the time in the world to take the killing blow.

Meanwhile, at the battle's height, fighters and subline ships buzz in angry swarms, locked in bitter wing-combat between their enemy counterparts. Marines and mechs fight grinding compartment-to-compartment, deck-to-deck CQB and melee actions as they fight to gain control. Cloud-kill kinetics and point-defense weaponry pepper the flanks of great capital ships, tearing away at superficial armors, blisters, and distal chambers. Here and there along the line, batteries score hits against their targets, and the battlespace is filled with

the brilliant micronovae of a capital ship's cataclysmic death. In Legionspace, NHPs tear at each other's fundamental sense of being in combat somehow more terrible than that occurring in subjective space.

When one side beats a retreat or is eliminated, the battle ends.

Most ships of the line, unless the system is damaged, have at least a .9 light-speed eject drive: at the start of the battle, conservative, nervous, or cautious captains might begin to spool this system up so that it is hot and ready to fire in an emergency. When triggered – manually, at the order of an NHP, or automatically – the eject drive shunts its ship from its current speed to .9 Light, hurling it towards a planned (or randomized) eject route. This expeditious retreat is dangerous, taxing both systems and personnel, but it's better than death.

The remains of the battle are left to the victors. Survivors are rounded up. Scuttled or captured ships are boarded by skeleton crews and turned towards friendly shipyards: printer technology cannot build capital ships, as they're simply too large. Prisoners are dealt with. Communications are relayed back to central command. NHPs drop from Legionspace, unlinking, drawing down to their non-combat parameters. Objectives are assessed, adjusted, and fleets either continue on their campaign, retire, or steam for a friendly shipyard for repairs and replacements.

From a distance, silence. Up close: the combat of titans, with individuals caught in the middle. Typical fleet engagements cost thousands of lives: when fought near inhabited worlds, moons, or stations, the cost can become exponential. Unconventional stellar combat – such as accelerating or nudging asteroids and comets into planets – can prove to be yet more costly.

In Lancer, large-scale fleet combat is (relatively) rare and terrible. It represents the breakdown of a whole sector, as systemic powers bring their considerable production and logistical capacity to bear against each other in contests over worlds and ideologies. The result of this is never cheap, with civilian casualties numbering in the millions; should capitol worlds be engaged, the human cost can reach and surpass billions.

Smaller-scale fleet combat tends to occur between warring states that share a world, or a world and its moon, and usually in low orbit as fleets ferry ground troops from one continent to another, or as flights of ships escort intercontinental/interstellar missiles along their flight paths. These fleets are generally composed of subline ships, corvettes, mounted mechs, and fighter/bomber wings; it is rare for a capital ship to engage in fleet-to-fleet combat in low orbit unless it is supporting an invasion and striking ground targets.

Finally, the most common space combat is piracy, where small groups of ships – converted civilian shuttles, older-model fighter/bombers, mounted mechs – attack other small groups of ships, lone subline freighters, or isolated mining/resource-extraction stations. These combats are fast and chaotic, with little-to-no use of NHPs, orders of battle, or capital ships – save for the steel and c legends of interstellar piracy.

53.9 Core and Colony

Core and Colony

Lancer's canon universe is, essentially, post-scarcity – that is, resources are not only plentiful, but accessible for most people at little to no cost.

In practice, Lancer's post-scarcity golden age only exists for some: well-developed Core worlds adjacent to blink gates are fantastically wealthy, rich with technology and cultural capital. Their

citizens, generally speaking, do not want for anything: they're afforded a base level of housing, education, healthcare, and food, localized to their state.

Wealth and capital are not common constructs on these worlds, as currency tends to be restricted to a generalized requisition ability; only when you venture outside the bounds of Core space do you run into a need for money.

Core worlds are varied in appearance and urbanization. So long as they fit the following criteria, they are considered a "Core" world:

1. Global distribution of population, or the capability to distribute its population

2. A reliable method of transitioning people and goods from the world to orbit, or the capability to do so.

3. A central government or other unipolar governing body with demonstrated adherence to Union's edicts.

Worlds that fit these criteria are considered to be Core worlds of Union; thanks to the immediacy of blinkspace, outside of Cradle and her neighboring systems there is no real need for stellar proximity to be considered a "Core" world.

Worlds that do not fit the criteria for Core designation have a myriad names, designations, classifications, and so on – a good catch-all term is "Colony" world. On these colony worlds, life is less secure, and their populations often want for food, medicine, etc. The colony designation can encompass everything from initial, small-team settlements, to worlds with populations in the millions.

These two classifications of worlds, Core and Colony, are tied into Union's larger economic system, extant as a consequence of the development of blinkspace travel and the trade that followed.

In order to participate in intergalactic commerce, worlds translate their currency to Manna, a universal unit of value assigned and administered by Union's Economic Bureau. Core and colony worlds that participate in intergalactic trade use Manna to effect trade outside their borders. It is common for these worlds to have a primary economy and a secondary, manna-based economy.

2 Manna is incredibly valuable compared to local currencies.

Post-scarcity in practice means that, on a Core world, players will have access to most unrestricted consumer and raw goods. Specialized items might require certain licenses, available through purchase or qualifications (in game terms, as rewards given by the GM), but are readily available (i.e. they can get them within the day, delivered or picked up as convenient).

On Colony worlds, true post-scarcity availability diminishes the farther you get from the nearest Core worlds, or as a result of shortages, resource-hoarding,

or loss. Players will have access to necessary goods (unless there is a shortage, rationing, etc) and wide access to raw materials; specialized items may be difficult to obtain due to any number of reasons: they're limited in

2 For example, a person who commands, say, an account with 1,000 Manna would be fantastically wealthy on any given colony world, able to finance their day-to-day life for decades without need to earn more.

number and kept under lock and key by the colonial governor, they're in the hold of a downed ship on the other side of the world, they're of limited number after the last supply ship took off, and so on.

53.10   Colonies and Worlds: Planting A Flag

Colonies and Worlds: Planting A Flag

The process of settling a world differs in specifics, but generally a private Core-to-Colony settlement mission proceeds as follows:

First, a group of people form a Colonial Venture, a loose, temporary corpro meant to pool manna and licenses in order to petition the owner of the destination system for a colony charter. The system owner is typically Union, as few other interstellar states have the resources to ID and flag habitable worlds.

After a Colonial Venture secures a colony charter, they lobby local (or intergalactic, depending on proximity) colony firms for supplies, infrastructure, and materiel that they cannot supply for themselves.

Colony firms offer realtime-tiered packages in exchange for a cut of the colony world's raw resource output. These packages typically feature a settlement concierge unit, a 100k+ genebank, a tier 1 printer, and a colony ship packed with a bundle of prefabricated habitation pods, heavy drones, medical benches, pan-biome seed libraries, and other necessary colonial infrastructure.

Not everyone who is party to a Colonial Venture departs with the colony ship.

A typical colony ship is hundreds of meters to a kilometer long: the vast majority of that space is devoted to prefabricated supplies. The live crew onboard the colony ship will be the first settlers of the new colony world: a small team of engineers, scientists, and specialists numbering in the dozens. They will – with help from the colony's concierge unit and its attendant drones, heavy drones, and subalterns – make planetfall, and begin the long work of establishing a colony footprint. In the meantime, the first native generation is incubated, birthed, tended, and raised by the concierge unit and assigned natal/educational colonists.

Fifteen to twenty years after landfall is made, the first generation of native-born colonists is at population-viable levels (usually in the thousands, though depending on colony scale this can be a larger number) and select members of the landfall team takes formal control of the colony's development from the colony concierge. The first generation begins to work to improve the colony and explore their new world, building out both the colony footprint and beginning work on new secondary and tertiary sites.

Concurrent to the first generation's development, an additional first (1.5) generation is grown from distinct reserve genetic material. This second generation comes of age a year or two at most from the first, to provide some genetic variance and further establish a stable, viable population.

Assuming all variables to be nominal, the colonial settlement is now established, and further development occurs organically.

53.11   A Curious Alchemy, A Mundane Miracle

A Curious Alchemy, A Mundane Miracle

Printing is a ubiquitous term for matter processor/fabricator systems found throughout the galaxy thanks in large part to paracausal scientific advances made post-Deimos Event. Printers range in size from handheld units fed by back-worn matter processors, to hanger-sized, fully self-contained printing facilities.

Printers range in time and efficiency. The larger and or more complex an item is, the longer it takes to print. Generally speaking, most print protocols involve some assembly after constituent parts have been fabricated.

All printers function in the same basic manner: raw matter is processed – the more pure the element, the higher quality the result – and fabricated into the requested item (or its constituent parts). Handheld printer operators craft items and objects in augmented reality; larger printers are automated.

You cannot print a printer. Union tightly controls access to printer plans and licenses, and does not allow them to be distributed.

You cannot print food beyond basic protein reconstruction: a mealy, grainy loaf of compressed edible matter that is unsatisfying, but sufficient to survive. Food is still an important luxury, cultural, and prestige item, and a given person on a given world will prefer "real" food to synthetic food.

Printing a size .5 mech chassis will take about six to eight hours with a hanger-sized printer. Printing a size .5 mech chassis with a handheld printer will take about a week.

Printing a personal defense weapon with an unscheduled tabletop printer takes about fifteen seconds; printing a PDW with an unscheduled handheld printer takes about five minutes.

Despite the presence of printers and other processor/fabricator systems, the majority of construction across human occupied space – and certainly outside the galactic Core – is still performed the "old" way: through sourcing raw materials, refining, fabrication, and assembly.

Printers of all classes are valuable. What follows is a basic list of available printers and their general capacity.

• Sub- or Unscheduled Printer

○ Subscheduled or Unscheduled printers are handheld, pack-mounted, or table- mounted printers common among cheap, mass-goods merchants, fabricators, sculptors, and other private individuals.

○ While the printers themselves are black box items, the license for obtaining one is not particularly hard to get. It does require training, certification, and

yearly check- ins for continued licensing in order to operate. Additionally, your print orders must pass a review process, and are filed to a publicly-viewable omninet database by category.

  ○ Sub and Unscheduled printers are most common among personal businesses and are best for making person-portable hard goods and repairing hard objects.

  • Schedule 1 Printer

  ○ Typically hangar sized, schedule 1 printers can handle vehicles and structures up to a size 1 mech.

  ○ Of the massive-size printers, these are the most portable, and usually the size found installed on dedicated logistics ships, orbitals, and long-term lander packages.

  ○ Schedule 1 printers, like all scheduled printers, are not the best for fabricating objects smaller than a .5 mech: they can be fitted with precision attachments, but unless the object is of simple geometry, you're better off filing an order from a artisan sculptor with an sub-schedule printer or true goods merchant.

  • Schedule 2 printer

  ○ But for rare cases, schedule 2 printers are built-in place and are not portable. Filling 4-5 stories in height, schedule 2 printers can handle a single requisition up to size 2, or process multiple size .5 requisitions at the same time.

  ○ As with S1 printers, unless an S2 printer is outfitted with a specialized suite, for small items it is best to look elsewhere.

  • Schedule 3 printer

  ○ The largest printers, generally reserved for Union, corprostate, and municipal uses. Built in place, not portable, standing at least 8 to 10 stories tall, schedule 3 printers can fabricate anything size 3 or smaller, and can handle multiple size 1 fabrications running in parallel.

  ○ Schedule 3 printers are usually built as self-contained buildings themselves, with multiple on-site suites for printing smaller-than size .5 items. These are separate from the main fabrication chambers, and can run in parallel without taxing the main system.

  ○ Schedule 3 printers can be converted to operate in micro/null gravity as self- contained ships, often accompanying battlegroups as a rear echelon logistic support element tasked with fabricating fast hull repairs and bulk orders.

  • Schedule 4 and up

  ○ Truly massive machines, materiel, and construction project may employ networked suites of Schedule 3 printers, an informal construct classified by Union as a Schedule 4 configuration. These only operate in microgravity, due to their bulk and the size of the projects they work on.

  ○ Massive engineering and construction projects, despite the prevalence of printing technology, more often than not use conventional super-engineering and construction methods; printers are reserved for refining raw material and producing inert constituent parts – beams, panels, wiring, and so on – which they can churn out at a far more rapid and reliable rate than more complex structures.

53.12 Manna

Manna

Union is not motivated by currency, and neither are its subjects. The hegemon's society is structured around a galvanizing mission: ensuring the survival of the human species through implementing the edicts of the Central Committee (which, in turn, is implementing the best-fit plan dictated to them by Forecast/GALSIM, though none but the Central Committee and Forecast/GALSIM know this).

Union is post-scarcity and does not function as a market-based economy. An "economy" in Union is only understood as a historical or antiquated term, as your average Terran views capital and the exchange of currency for goods as a relic of an unsustainable past, one that led to a collapse that plunged humanity into thousands of years of self-inflicted darkness, violence, and misery.

However, Union recognizes that not all of its client states have progressed to a post-capital society. In order to foster fair galactic trade and build a shared consciousness – rather than violently suppress monetization – Union's Central Committee recognized early on the need for a galaxy-wide standardized currency: this they call Manna.

To create Manna, Union extracts an abstracted unit of value from its subject states through complex treaties and client-facing economic structures. Data, raw materials, human potential – tens of thousands of factors go into the creation of a single omni-digital unit of Manna.

Manna's exchange rate is relative to the currency for which it is being exchanged, or to the currency that is being exchanged for it. Wealthy, developed worlds are rich in Manna due to their data output, their raw human potential, and other factors. Small colony worlds also benefit from Manna's formulae: their control over raw materials, projected development, and so on all contribute to a beneficial exchange value.

Cosmopolitans trade in Manna, as do states and any other entity that engages in trade across solar systems. Since the vast bulk of humanity still is bound to their home worlds, stations, moons, etc, the vast bulk of humanity still uses whatever their world's currency is, and will only encounter Manna if they do business off-world (or with entities that are off-world).

53.13 Union Galactic Organization

Union Galactic Organization

The galaxy is vast, and humanity contains multitudes. Organizing the galaxy into something resembling a state is a full-time task that requires a broad, complex bureaucracy: the Union Administrative Department (UAD).

The UAD has classified humanity into two major categories: Diasporans, or humans who live in "real" time on terrestrial worlds, moons, and/or space stations; and Cosmopolitans, humans who spend the majority of their lives in the "subjective" time accrued by interstellar travel.

Larger stations in stable locations or in orbit around uninhabitable worlds generally operate independently of any terrestrial government, acting as their own states with their own territory of influence. Generally speaking, stations exist because they were built for a purpose: mining, gas extraction, a dry dock platform, shipyards, civilian scientific research, and so on. The populations that live onboard them largely work to support the mission of the station and/or the people who do that work. Civilian stations usually have permanent populations, the largest of them numbering in the tens of thousands.

Blink gates are special cases — while they exist outside of the state boundaries of Cradle, they are integral to Union's control over the populated galaxy. As such, a blink gate is managed by a Union Governor, policed by Union security forces, and administered by Union bureaucrats and personnel. Blink stations serve as gates, points that hold open stable holes into blinkspace.

Military stations are smaller and do not have permanent populations born and raised onboard. Union claims jurisdiction over all stations, though only maintains a Union-flagged presence on strategically important stations.

For simple top-down galactic orientation, Union has adopted a concentric ring system of territory classification centered on the Cradle system. Each ring bears the name of a mountain range found on Cradle, increasing in length the closer you get to the Cradle system. Blink stations are named after peaks in the mountain range their ring is named for.

The ring-naming convention is a shorthand system, used in simple civilian and governmental maps. Think how neighborhoods are named – there are generally accurate markers, but people will refer to exact addresses when looking for specific locations.

Rings are concentric: the farther out you get from Cradle, the larger the rings are.

And remember, naming stations after peaks is simply a convention – there are not yet stations built for every peak in a given range. If it winds up that there are not enough peak names, Union will simply make up new ones.

Cradle: ANDES Line – Aconcagua Station, Cerro Bonete Station, Galan Station, etc

Ring 1: ROCKY MOUNTAIN Line – Elbert Station, Lincoln Station, Castle Station, etc

Ring 2: KUNLUN Line – Kongur Tagh Station, Karakoram Station, Mayakovsky Station, etc

Ring 3: URAL Line – Manaraga Station, Elbrus Station, Iremel Station, etc

Ring 4: ATLAS Line – Toubkal Station, Ouanoukrim Station, M'Goun Station, etc

Ring 5: HIMALAYA Line – Everest Station, Kanchenjunga Station, Annapurna Station, etc

Ring 6: ALTAI Line – Belukha Station, Nairamdal Station, Kharkhiraa Station, etc

Ring 7: CARPATHIAN Line – Gerlachovsky Station, L'adovy Station, Moldoveanu Station, etc

Ring 8: SIERRA MADRE Line – Mohinora Station, Peak Station, Bridger Station, etc

Ring 9: VINDHYA Line – Kalumar Station, Dhupgarh Station, Mahendragiri Station, etc

Ring 10: CASCADE Line – Rainier Station, Adams Station, Hood Station, etc

Ring 11: ANNAMITE Line – Phou Bia Station, Phu Xai Lai Leng Station, Ngoc Linh Station, etc.

The Annamite Line is the current "edge" of Union space. Beyond that line is uncharted territory.

53.14   Non Human Life

Non-Human Life Non-human life is common in Lancer; non-human sentient life (i.e. alien civilization) is unique in how rare it is.

Contents of the module No Room For A Wallflower dives into this topic more, but generally speaking, outside of one world there is no non-human alien civilization.

Forecast/GALSIM commonly simulates hostile alien life, though it is widely assumed that such simulations are low confidence at best.

53.15   Shelter

Shelter

Lodging and shelter is important – in Lancer, specific types of lodging are numberless, as myriad as the inhabited worlds in the galaxy demand. Here, though, are some possible examples of shelter:

Temporary Camp - Temporary camps are common in the field. Any settlement, lodging, etc, that is organized for single night or a few nights is a temporary camp. Usually a collection of pitched tents and a sketched-out perimeter organized around a fire or heating element. A place to rest your head for the night while on the march or on the run.

Base of Operations - A more permanent encampment, but not necessarily a permanent settlement, a base of operations is a longer term encampment typically employed by military or scientific teams who need a home in the field that can provide necessary shelter and supplies to complete a long-term mission. Bases like this tend to be supplied at regular intervals by states or private entities, run by crews working to effect a specific goal. You won't find many tents at bases: most structures are sealed buildings, prefabricated and alien to the environment. Bases tend to have a defined perimeter, a working crew (skeleton or heavily populated), and be located in remote or hostile environments – in order to stay at one, you need to be posted, be a prisoner,

or have clearance. Science, mining, signal, and military stations and orbitals fall under this category of lodging.

Landfall Settlement - Landfall settlements are the first incursions a colony group makes onto a claimed world. A typical landfall settlement is more of a

base or project than a colonial town or city: like a base of operations, the population of a landfall settlement is task-oriented, small in number (6-10 engineers), and doesn't expect visitors. A clonal Companion/Concierge unit manages the settlement and acts as a personal assistant to the live crew there. There is usually an environmentally sealed main base – a low-lying collection of self-contained habitation and science pods – and a growing, unoccupied collection of buildings constructed on a planned layout for a future colonial settlement. The organic population is small, but the Comp/Con unit controls a large group of subalterns and heavy drones, tasked with gathering raw material for construction, sowing agrarian land, and doing the bulk of the manual labor. They might have a spare bunk, but the population at a landfall settlement typically does not expect visitors.

Colonial Settlement - A colonial settlement can range from the first generation to populate a wave 1 landfall settlement, to a thriving city on the eve of signing its articles of independence from its Comp/Con administrator. A colonial settlement has beds available, most are utilitarian and made from native materials, though there might be one or two notable luxury lodgings available.

Sleeping Tube - Sleeping tubes are common on stations, in commuter interstellar ships, and in highly developed metropolises. Cheap and functional, sleeping tubes are coffin-sized, warmly lit and padded micro-rooms meant to provide a place to sleep for a night or a layover. They really only fit one person; that person's gear or baggage is stowed in a locker in the lobby of the establishment that maintains the sleeping tubes.

Rented Room - Room rentals are available anywhere there is a need in a developed city or station. Rooms can range from a space just larger than a sleeping tube, to opulent suites in hotel-stations, suspended above pearl worlds.

Apartment - Apartments are domiciles ranging from small studio apartments to floor-spanning penthouses. Available to rent or to own on stations and inhabited worlds, apartments are built into buildings, one unit among many.

Freestanding House - Houses can be found on any world, and are freestanding buildings that are occupied (typically) by a single family.

Omni Address - In a galaxy connected by a massive internet, an omni address is a viable mental living space. These spaces are virtual, unique to their owner, and networked. Privacy separators are a common practice, to the point where keeping your omni address public would likely be viewed as an odd thing among most people with an address. Omni addresses are unique, galaxy-and-temporal identification signatures and virtual spaces both; these are commonly employed by Core world Diasporans and Cosmopolitans, far less so for colonial Diasporans.

53.16   Gravity

Gravity

There is no stable artificial gravity in Lancer. Gravity on stations is spin gravity. Gravity on ships is tied to directional acceleration, magnetized grip pads, or spin gravity.

Artificial gravity can be generated, but in the narrative present it is unstable and is the result of massive energy expenditure. Unstable artificial gravity can be created in safe containment as a momentary impulse; as a result, it has been weaponized, and studies into stabilization are ongoing.

Nonlethal artificial impulse gravity is a necessary component to make nearlight ejections and bolts survivable for organic life.

53.17   How to get There

How To Get There

Not everyone has a ship, knows how to fly, or has the right licenses to get around. Player characters, typically pilots and their mechs, will need to travel in order to get to where they need to be.

Generally speaking, if the pilots in your narrative operate under the orders of a state or state-like entity, they'll have some kind of transportation afforded to them. Usually this is a temporary convenience: a transport/tender ship that drops their party off where they need to be, a billet aboard a passing capital ship, and so on.

So, what are common (and uncommon!) ways of getting around?

Best to arrange modes of transport into the theaters they operate in: global, space, and interstellar.

Global travel is any travel that takes place on a single world, which includes terrestrial, aquatic, and atmospheric travel. Terrestrial travel can take the form of trains, caravans, convoys, landships, long marches, cars, and so on. Aquatic travel can take place above or below the water, on ships and submarines. Atmospheric travel takes the form of airplanes, airships, low- orbit vehicles, and the liminal zone of transit on space elevators, sky hooks, etc.

Space travel is common in Lancer, encompassing the zone between a world's high atmosphere out to the nearest blink gate. Ships of all size and classification transit in this zone, running shuttle routes between worlds, making supply runs out to local colonies and settlements, and engaging in general transit and business.

Some spaceships are rated to operate in a world's gravity well, and can transit between atmospheric flight and travel in hard vacuum. These tend to have a low gross weight – fighters, bombers, and some smaller corvettes fit into this category of atmosphere-rated ships. Capital ships are not able to fly for extended periods of time, though should one find itself in atmosphere, it could burn hard for lateral movement as it plummets to a catastrophic end.

Interstellar travel is common for certain classes of people in Lancer: military personnel, diplomats, explorers, merchants, Union personnel, colonists, migrants, scientists, and so on. Many people have many reasons to engage in interstellar travel, but the equipment necessary is difficult to obtain. Generally speaking, unless you're military on deployment, an official on Union business, in the employ of a company, university, or benefactor, or fantastically wealthy, you'll need to take a public blinkship. Public blinkships transit between blink stations, which are the massive, cosmopolitan melting pots of the galaxy, where

people mingle, do business, and pass the time until their scheduled blink ship arrives and they can board.

As a shorthand, the modes of stellar travel can be described as follows:

Blink Travel

Nothing seems out of the ordinary or that much different from normal stellar travel. Your ship is underway at a comfortable G, you can walk around in plain clothes (if your ship is large enough and pressurized), eat food, drink, sleep, exercise, etc. Blinkspace is perceived as a blindness, if you look out through a porthole. Through a screen, blinkspace looks black.

Actual blinkspace travel takes only a moment, and if you were to not look outside of the ship as it is underway, you would notice nothing out of the ordinary, simply a black void.

Prolonged exposure can lead to complications. NHPs exposed to blinkspace report existential complications.

Nearlight Bolt

A nearlight bolt (or nearlight ejection, in a combat or emergency scenario) is a sudden, often traumatic acceleration to .8 or .99 lightspeed. When prepared for the bolt, you are usually strapped into a pressurized crash couch, medicated for it, secure. If not, there is a very real (to certain) chance of being pulverized by the sudden movement of the ship.

A nearlight ejection is not a common method of travel: it is an emergency acceleration that serves to extract/ disengage a ship from a situation that would otherwise be deadly. A nearlight bolt is an uncomfortable, but often necessary form of travel common among military, government, and emergency entities.

A nearlight ejection/bolt is dangerous when you're prepared for it (but normal enough that it is a combat tactic) and deadly when you are not. Ships equipped for nearlight jumps are equipped with crash couches that fire corresponding opposing bursts of contained artificial gravity in order to counteract the G forces that would otherwise pulverize its crew.

Normal Spaceflight

You can walk, talk, eat, and drink, in addition to any other activity you could do on a .1 to 1G world. This speed is achieved over slow, comfortable acceleration.

Gravity might get a little uncomfortable at peak speed (if that speed is higher than your native gravity), and always pulls in the opposite direction of travel: "Behind" is always "down."

53.18   Time and its Passage

Time, And Its Passage

Time, in Lancer, is a rare thing: a commodity that can be exhausted. Whether you're on a core world or out in the farthest reach of distal space, time is the one resource that is truly scarce in that, when your time runs out, you can never find more of it.

That said, there are some methods for extending one's presence in real time, and the most common among them is conventional interstellar travel. To ven-

ture between worlds without the blink, one must board a ship that uses some conventional means – i.e., non-paracausal system of movement, like a solar sail, ion drive, rockets, and so on – to propel itself across space, generally at a steady pace, to reach its destination. This conventional travel, unlike traversing the blink with the aid of a blink gate, may best be measured in how much time it will take to reach their destination, as distance is (to a layperson Cosmopolitan or Diasporan) a more abstract measurement:

2 Cradle Distance Units (CDU) is so large a number as to be meaningless. The same journey written as time rather than distance is 10 standard years realtime/ 6 months subjective, a much more apparent cost.

This stretching of time as a result of travel at great speed is called time dilation. It occurs – generally speaking – either because of the difference in velocity between two observers, or because of a significant difference in their location to a significant gravitational field (like, say, proximity to a black hole).

For interstellar space travel, velocity causes time dilation. Time, to the person on the ship, would seem to progress as normal, but to an observer back on the world, the ship carrying their loved one would appear to slow, to slow, to slow until it stopped. Time on the world, to the worldbound observer, would of course remain normal.

So what happens to the person on the ship? And what happens to the person on the world? Both would, from their points of view, experience time as normal. But the fact of the matter is that time is not equal for the both of them. As the person on the ship accelerates, their relative velocity to their home world increases; they closer they get to the speed of light, time back home for them slows, slows, slows, until it all but stops.

But to the people back home, the subjective experience of time progresses as normal. The family of the interstellar traveller, their friends, their lovers and rivals, could look skyward

and see, distant though it may be, the ship their loved one travels upon. They could walk out into a field with a telescope, or to an uplift station's memorial observation decks, and view their loved one's ship, frozen, all but preserved in time.

But this frozen state is only due to perception. On the ship, as on the world it left, time continues as normal. As they rocket ahead, closer and closer to the speed of light, the difference in time grows, stretches, dilates. It is possible, depending on speed, that for every year a ship's passenger experienced, ten would pass back at their home.

States could fail. Disasters could wipe out lands. Wars, famine, disease. And the opposite: fortunes could change, families grow, businesses prosper. And through it all, frozen in time to the worldbound observer, the interstellar ship would hang in the sky, a distant light.

If that traveller ever returned home, they would find themselves in their future, having "time travelled" ahead as a cost of venturing between stars. A journey from their homeworld to a system-local blink gate, then from the destination blink gate to their target world, and back, could cost a traveller three years subjective time – time as they experience it – and thirty years real

time – time as people back home experience it.

When your players or NPCs embark on an interstellar journey, they will need to take into account the amount of time that it will cost them – to venture between the stars comes at great cost to an individual; by exposing themselves to time dilation, they will necessarily catapult themselves some number of years into the future – a future they may not want to live in without the familiar comforts of friends, family, and the states, culture, and environment they're familiar with.

For that matter, matters of politics, economics, or great importance that cast your players between stellar systems will, necessarily, encounter the complication of time dilation. That urgent distress call from a neighboring system? The fastest you can respond to it is ten years real, six months subjective. That promise to fetch a valued item or VIP, and return? Twenty real, two subjective. And so on.

The blink shortens this steep cost, but the cost is still present: most interstellar travel accrues time in the transit from a port of origin to a local blink gate, then from the exit blink gate to the intended destination; without the blink and the gates to pass between, humanity would have to return to conventional causality, and travel across the vast distances of interstellar space. Instead of sacrificing ten, twenty, or thirty years real time on a journey, it would be in the range of one, two, or three thousand, and without any kind of stasis to preserve them, the ship's crews would die of old age aboard their ship.

Mechanically, what does the reality of interstellar space travel mean for your players? Either a narrative defining mechanic, or nothing important, depending on their backstories, characters' attachments, and the overarching narrative. If your players travel in a mercenary company, camp followers in tow, then it is of no great concern that time passes differently for them – their friends and families travel with them. However, if your players travel alone, their families left behind, then after even one trip there is a chance that their homes will be vastly different when they return than when they left.

We recommend a mix of hard cost and narrative liberty. While time dilation certainly is a factor even in systemic travel (travel between worlds and stellar bodies of the same solar system), it likely won't be a tool of massive dramatic import. We recommend slipping a few days here and there, no more than a month at most of difference between when they left and when they returned.

For larger distances – say, moving between solar systems connected via blink gates, then the cost of interstellar travel would come into play. We recommend a simple formula, more narrative than hard math: for a distant frontier system, travel to and from blink gate would take at least a 3 year subjective, five real. For a developed, heavily populated Core system, travel to a blink gate would take three months subjective, nine months real. Crossing blinkspace is, essentially, instantaneous.

You may, if you want, choose to adopt a far more hard science fiction approach to interstellar travel; if so, we recommend utilizing online tools to keep fidelity to your constraints.

53.19 Common societies

Common Societies

The inhabited galaxy in Lancer is complex and, seemingly, contradictory: it is both a polyglot mix of many different cultures, states, religions, and economies, and a single entity managed by a centralized power with near-total control over galactic travel, communication, and economy.

The galaxy as administered by Union is a single entity: Union is the hegemonic power, and all human societies are constituents of Union. Without those states, there is no Union; without Union, there is no unified human race. States adjacent to Union's home system, Cradle, proudly fly both Union's flag and their own, but few other states display such dual loyalties.

Most states in the populated galaxy ("states" in this context refers to any organized social structure, from colonial settlement to interstellar nation) assent to Union's control in order to effectively manage their territory. Without the blink network, manna, or omninet, the vast distances of space would make communication, travel, trade, migration, etc, essentially impossible. Humanity would be isolated without Union.

That being said, Union is by and large a background entity at best for the vast majority of people in the galaxy. While heads of state, church, tribe, commune, etc, might meet with Union representatives (usually an Administrator and their subaltern), your average Diasporan human will never see a Union flag in person.

3 To keep sane, we recommend using measurements of time equal to or simple orders of magnitude more or less than standard Earth measurements. I.e one year in Lancer's narrative present is the same as one year on Earth at the time of publication.

Player characters and non-player characters (NPCs) who call a common society home are members of the Diaspora or the Cosmopolita. They are the galactic "normal", though individual expressions of normal may vary

Examples of a common society in Lancer are listed below.

Democratic Republic A consensus government, usually constitutional, of representatives elected by their constituents.

Ruling Council - Labor A council of labor leaders, typically union bosses, that plan for the greater good.

Ruling Council - Meritorious A council of elected representatives, the "best of the best", that plan for the greater good.

Ruling Council - Dynastic A council of nobles who inherit their position by birth, marriage, or death, that plan for the perpetuation of their dynasty and state.

Technocracy - Liberal A centrally administered state that weighs, assigns value to, and tracks metrics of its constituents.

Technocracy - Machine Rule A state run by an NHP, cycled regularly, to enforce an impartial government that prioritizes efficiency.

Socialist Collective A true socialist state, run by a central committee. Its relationship to manna may be unknown by its general population.

Corpro-State A new form of government, but one growing in popularity thanks to the aggressive political maneuverings of Union Economic Bureau agents. A private entity organized with a single goal: maximize profit.

Commune - Small Band Coalition Smaller population of environmentally-conscious bands, typically organized around small commune-villages.

Commune - Single State A global government of stewards, run in accordance and harmony with the ecology of the world on which they live.

Commune - Filial Constellation As the previous two entries, but with strong family ties between the communes.

Caste-Ordered State - Gene Stock A state ordered along genetic markers – SSC is an example of a blended COS/GS and CS.

Caste-Ordered State - Labor Structured Caste-ordered labor states are divided along lines of work: you are born into your caste and can only associate with others in your caste (note: this also includes military caste states)

Tyrant State - Patronizing A single, tyrannical ruler, who casts themselves as a benevolent leader while holding total power over the government and its people. Can be hereditary or dynastic.

Tyrant State - Fascist Central Power A centrally controlled state, often run by a demagogue, with strong nationalist rhetoric and and emphasis on the supremacy of its people over others.

Monarchy - Divine Right A classical kingdom, with a hereditary ruler deemed to be a representative of god made flesh. Tends to have a wide nobility.

Monarchy - Constitutional A kingdom ruled by a monarch, but administered by an elected parliament.

Monarchy - Dynastic A kingdom ruled by a single family, with a developed nobility and a church in support (though helmed by a powerful papal figure)

Religious - Holy See A state ruled by a church, with a single figure deemed to be the sole voice of god at the head. May be hereditary, may be chosen by council, the people, or signs.

Religious - High Priest Council A state ruled by a church, which is lead by a council of religious leaders.

53.20   Uncommon Societies

Uncommon Societies

Uncommon societies in Lancer are states, groups, and territories organized in ways that are rare in the galaxy. States that do not participate in galactic politics, states that have little interaction with the Cosmopolita, states that have been lost or otherwise hidden, and states that do not have a permanent home are examples of some uncommon societies.

Players who hail from uncommon societies often have views on Union and galactic politics that skew far from common political leanings, complicating their relationships with other players and NPCs that they encounter during your campaign.

Fledgling societies have populations in the hundreds to the thousands. Developing societies from the thousands to the hundreds of thousands. Developed

societies in the hundreds of thousands to billions.

More examples are listed below:

Hermit State A purposefully isolated, developed state that rejects diplomatic advances (or only extends diplomatic offers rarely).

Lost Colony - Young A colony world recently lost in the administrative shuffle, as a result of an omninet blackout, or other catastrophe.

Lost Colony - Established A colony world lost long ago, developed in isolation from (and usually without the knowledge of) other civilizations.

Nomadic State - Terrestrial Terrestrial nomadic states tend to be small, as they travel across the world they inhabit, usually moving from habitable zone to habitable zone.

Nomadic State - Stellar Stellar nomadic states are similar to terrestrial nomadic states, only they travel through space instead of a single world.

Failed State/ Anarchic World A failed state is a temporary state; it exists only in the fall.

Monastic World Monastic worlds are peaceful worlds, places of contemplation with relatively small populations. They may be devoted to study of a text, of a fighting style, or the stars.

Band - Pirate Similar to nomadic states, but focused on raiding interstellar shipping lanes.

Band - Slaver As a pirate state, but with the aim of stealing people.

Reservation - Pre-Industrial A reservation world is a quiet world, set aside to emulate a "simpler" time. Knowledge of Union is limited – if people know about Union at all– and people live in a manner like old humanity before the information age.

Reservation - Arcadian Similar to a pre-industrial reservation world, but taken even farther back. Union tends to observe these worlds, but not interfere. Arcadian reservations worlds are the pre-pastoral, hunter-gatherer idyll, and tend to be excluded from Union's tithes.

54 Unique Locations

Unique Locations

54.1 Cradle

Cradle

Cradle refers to both the home system and home world of Union, what we call the Solar System and Earth, respectively.

Cradle – the system and the world – is highly developed, heavily populated, and dedicated to the daily and long term maintenance, planning, and running of Union. Humanity's homeworld is the beating heart of the galactic hegemony, Union, part memorial, part privileged residence, part central hub of bureaucracy.

The terrestrial worlds of Cradle – Mercury, Venus, Cradle, and Mars, are developed and populated. These worlds, like their gaseous sisters, are proving grounds as well for technologies developed by GMS and Union.

Mercury is, largely, a world given over to generate and manage the incredible amounts of solar power emitted by the Sun and transmit it to Venus, Cradle, and Mars. Mercury is the anchor point for solar nets hundreds of thousands of kilometers long that expand, weblike, from the world to absorb solar power. It was Humanity's first Dyson Panel, and Union continues to work to perfect and grow the massive, ancient engineering.

Venus is an archive world. Populated stations scatter the surface, but are meant more for rotational work than long-term occupation. The world has not been terraformed, and is hostile to humans outside of the vast subterranean archives. Here the the bulk of Union's prime non- human persons are kept in reserve, shuttled and entombed in the world for study since the Deimos Event of 3000U.

Cradle is the administrative and cultural heart of Union. It is humanity's birthplace – once called "Earth" – and the capital of the populated galaxy. Cradle has a fixed population of two billion, mostly administrative and support staff for CentComm, the Second Committee, and the various archives on-world. Cradle herself is home to a massive transient population of Cosmopolitans and Diasporans engaged in trade, diplomatic, scientific, religious, and other missions to and from the galaxy.

Cradle is a world healing from the terrible effects of the Anthropocene. Pre-Fall, humanity crippled the world in its development: even as they cracked the wonders of the universe, they grew in the heart of the world a cancer that, in the end, scoured life nearly entirely from its surface. As such, Union's Cradle bears the markings of that global, epochal trauma. The waters have lowered, the fires have quieted, and the seasons have becalmed, and in the wake of their recession Humanity has slowly, carefully repopulated the world. They have explored the ruins of their ancient cities, reopened old vaults of wonders, and built a new society, one that is strict in its stewardship.

To that end, Cradle is off-limits for most. Despite being the ancestral home of Humanity and the administrative heart of the power that controls the galaxy, the

world itself is calm. It is rare that one hears the roar of a jet high overhead. Off the clock, life, generally speaking, is slow. The people there are peaceful. Great parks preserve some old wonders and remains of the pre-Fall world, reminders to those that live now of the dangers of hubris, of consumption, of rapidity.

There are still wonders, tucked away in the lost corners of our ancient home-world, and some terrors locked even deeper. Union may have lived through turbulent times as central committees are dissolved and cobbled together, but its bureaucracy has a long memory; none more important than which depths one should take care in exploring.

Mars is linked by terrestrial blink to Cradle and is a satellite campus to the larger world's administrative heart. Mars is the location of Forecast/GALSIM and the Union Navy's FLEETCOM center. It has been partially terraformed, an artifact from pre-collapse humanity left to its own devices. Life flourishes in Mars's deep canyons, where air, flora, and fauna is vibrant and hardy; the world, like Cradle before her, is healing from the ancient loss of its atmosphere. Outside of these oasis, Mars is still a windswept desert, with barely a gasp of air to be had, on vast, terribly cold planes of ice and sand.

Beyond the terrestrial worlds, humanity has hardpoint bases on a number of moons orbiting Saturn, Jupiter, Uranus, and Neptune. These are science sta-tions, R&D stations, quarantine holds, drydocks, mining stations, pilot houses, and so on. The Jovian moons, in particular, play host to a large naval pop-ulation; Callisto and Ganymede are home to important ready-posture fleets and terrestrial training facilities, Io and Europa feature important bases and facilities as well.

More information on Cradle can be found scattered throughout this rule-book, namely under the sections Foundation; Union: The Tyrant, The Watcher, The Guiding Hand; and elsewhere.

54.2   Deimos

Deimos

Deimos, a moon of Mars, is missing. The circumstances of its disappearance gives name to the Deimos Event that lead to the discovery of paracausality, blinkspace, and non-human persons.

Deimos – wherever it may be – is assumed to be home to the physical architecture of RA, if such physical architecture is necessary for the MONIST entity's function. At the time of the Event, Deimos was home to humanity's most advanced artificial intelligence research and development campus, built following RA's manifestation at ORACLE CHORUS.

To date, there is no accurate or reliable way to track the location of Deimos, as it appears to be able to slip into blinkspace without the use of a stable gate; furthermore, RA is able to manifest a suite of anomalous phenomena inconsistent with (or ignorant of) current understandings of causality.

Distal and proximal worlds have omni'd in panicked reports of the moon appearing both in orbit and, most distressingly, in their atmosphere. When this

phenomenon occurs above population centers, there is no corresponding damage that, by all logic, should occur.

Missing persons reports do spike after such an appearance, as do anomalous paracausal events.

54.3 Hercynia

Hercynia

Hercynia is, to date, the location of the only known sentient, sapient, and conscious alien civilization. Further information detailed in No Room For A Wallflower.

54.4 Bastion (Aun'Ist)

Bastion (Aun'Ist)

Bastion is the translated name of the homeworld of the Aun Ecumene, an advanced, powerful religious order at the distal edge of Union space. The descendants of Old Humanity settled Bastion well after Earth had plunged into is Dark Age, having discovered the world seeded by a Union nearlight ship and ready for them. They developed in isolation for thousands of years before Union made first contact, after a second nearlight arrived with another wave of contracted Unionite colonists.

Bastion is a holy world, and the Aunic people make pilgrimage to it, mirroring (in a way) the migrations that humans make to Cradle in Union. The Aun were peaceful, initially, but following diplomatic friction as a result of Union's strict hegemonic impositions, a war (to the Aun, a crusade) began.

Questions abound in Union FLEETCOM as to why the Aun, a single people, were in need of as competent and numerous military ships and ground forces as they possess.

54.5 Cornucopia

Cornucopia

Cornucopia is the capital world of the Autumn People's Republic, a state created following the successful revolution and overthrow of its previous monarchist masters. Being the most proximal Union territory to the Aun Ecumene, and the home of the system-local blink gate it has borne the brunt of the Aun's crusade against Union.

Isolated following the Aun's surprise attack on the system, the APR and a single Union MEF in-system fight a desperate stand against the Aun crusade, holding out as long as they can for Union reinforcements.

54.6 Karrakis

Karrakis

A palace world, Karrakis is the capital of the Karrakin Trade Baronies, an oligarchic interstellar state in close proximity to Cradle.

Karrakis is home to Throne Karraka, the original palace-city of the Baronies, a sprawling estate- city now grown to encompass roughly 8 million square kilometers. The original palace, the first colony of Karrakis, was seeded pre-fall – it is now a living royal museum, an enclave set inside the crown district of Throne Karraka.

Karrakis is a temperate world, a Gaia planet seeded pre-Fall and left isolated during the dark age. It has developed divergent from Union for thousands of years and under the assumption that it alone had survived the fall: re-contact with Karrakis and the Baronies occurred first via comm-data packet transmissions sent from Union to ID'd pre-Fall colony sites. Karrakis, having flourished for nearly 7 millenia, responded rapidly. It would be another two hundred years before physical contact was established, then in the form of conventional nearlight drone ships sent from Union to Karrakis.

But for the Deimos Event and Union's meteoric technological ascendancy, Karrakis would have been the seat of humanity's power. Unencumbered by the events of the Fall, the colony on Karrakis was well-rooted on the world, and for thousands of years its people developed at conventional rates. By the time of first contact with Union, the Baronies had made landfall on nearby worlds; by the time of the Deimos Event, the Baronies had developed mass industries and megastructural engineering. However, by the time Union's first ships arrived in-system, the Baronies were far outstripped in offensive and defensive capabilities. Recontact occured in the 3200s under the Second Committee: fearing significant resistance – which, indeed, they faced – the Second Committee sent a fleet before their diplomats. The war, such that it was one, between the Baronies and Union was short. The Union Navy smashed aside the Baronic fleet and secured the Baronies' surrender without making landfall on Karrakis.

Their fleet eliminated and faced by Union's singular control over paracausal entities and technology, burdened with a baroque monarchy crippled by conventional interstellar communications and transportation, the Baronies took the unprecedented step – by their history and internal mythology – of ceding galactic sovereignty to Union.

In return, Karrakis became the raw heart of Union's industrial base, providing the hegemon with the vast boon of resources and extraction techniques that ensure Cradle and her colonies – by extension, the rest of the Core worlds in the galaxy – never want for any material good. The Barons, suddenly united by the Blink and the Omninet, chose not to demand rule over the galaxy, but to fund the people who did. In time, their economic sway has become inextricable from Union's galactic dominion.

It is a grim truth of Union – and an uncomfortable tension among the Terrans that sit the Central Committee – that whoever holds Karrakis has at least one hand on the levers of Union's power. The Karrakin embassy on Cradle is constantly trafficked by Union diplomats and officials, as is the Union campus on Karrakis inundated by nobles and magnates.

Karrakis is the heart of the Baronies and now home to the galaxy's premier

naval and finishing college, the Royal Karrakin Admiralty. Pro-Union Houses view attendance at the Admiralty as a necessary path for their children, and service as an honorable achievement. They are happy to send their children to the college, often at great temporal cost to their families, as local blink is far less developed in the Baronies than in Cradle – this, some barons grumble, by design.

Following the introduction of mechanized chassis as a warfighting machine, the Karrakin Cavalry College adapted the new technology, and is now known for the quality of officer and machine its cohorts produce. While attendance and service in the Admiralty is still viewed as the most

prestigious track for a Barony youth, attendance and service in the Cavalry is a parallel honor – one more martial than mental.

54.7   Ras Shamra

Ras Shamra

Ras Shamra is a world of hard contrast. It has a severe beauty, one that Ras Shamrans take a fierce pride in and seek to emulate in their architecture, style, and culture in general.

Tidally locked, Ras Shamra is divided between a "hot" side, ever-exposed to its sun, and a "cold" side, ever turned away from the light. The only temperate zone is a comparatively small strip of land and thawed sea where the two sides meet: the terminator line, bordered on one side by boiling desert, and on the other by frozen tundra.

This terminator line is a global oasis, a band of life-sustaining tropical jungles, warm river-oceans, and balmy valleys. It is in this stormy, humid equatorial region that the first colonists of what would become Harrison Armory's homeworld made their landfall. Now, the terminator line is a globe- circling arcology home to roughly 300 million permanent residents.

The arcology – the eponymous Harrison Armory – is the habitable stripe of Ras Shamra; from the world's surface to many thousand meters below, the arcology combines natural landscape with cultivated landscape, inorganic with organic, blending world and building together into one homeostatic, cultivated biome. Its surface levels are lush, varied climates that seamlessly integrate Armory habitats into the natural environment. If a building is exposed, it is meant to be exposed, to serve a mechanical, technical, aesthetic, or other official purpose. The surface level is widely regarded as home to the finest domiciles, offices, and campuses; the Armory's capital is located on the surface level, at the heart of a pan-galactic botanical park that sprawls for hundreds of square kilometers.

The lower levels of the arcology is where the bulk of the "clean" technical, mechanical, mercantile, political, and administrative work that sustains the Armory is done. The arcology underground is defined by hundred-meter tall airlight wells that funnel light from the surface down, wide concourses packed with shops and office fronts, and vast strips of cultivated biomes meant to emulate the surface. Circumnav hyperloops ring the world, forming the back-

bone of Ras Shamra's global transport network. Here, in the arcology underground, one can find the finest of the Armory's Distant-Classical architectural signature, marked by titanogeometric features, achromatic-primary/primary-secondary color schemes, and play with the contrast between airy open space and brutalist inclination towards the subterranean massive.

Outside the safety of the Armory itself, Ras Shamra's day and night sides are home to the Armory's "dirty" work: research, development, and implementation of the Armory's catalog. RDI Campuses are metropolises in their own right, oases in unrelenting desert or deep, perpetual- winter night, where Armory personnel live and work in project-rotation. Thousands of technicians, engineers, scientists, and support personnel live and work in RDI campuses for the duration of their project and, when it is done, they are rotated out.

The day and night sides of Ras Shamra and the RDI campuses that populate them serve as proving grounds for the Armory's massive field equipment catalog – civilian and military. The day and night sides of the world also serve as proving grounds for the Armory's colonial officers, where both infantry and mechanized cavalry are trained and tested in extreme terrestrial environments.

Currently the Armory is engaged in a massive project of installing a new subterranean hyperloop ring to serve the scattered RDI campuses, one that would ring perpendicular to the arcology loop. The circadian loop is still a century at minimum away from completion; in the meantime, regular shuttle flights serve the RDI campuses.

Ras Shamra is also home to the Armory's Special-Exception Persistent-Cultivation Legionspace Environment – colloquially known as the Think Tank. Its location is classified, though suspected to be buried somewhere on the night side of the world.

In local Ras Shamran space, the Armory maintains a number of lunar bases where on-duty legions prepare and specialize for distant colonial missions. Massive orbitals process the wealth of empire that flows daily into Ras Shamran space – tithes and tributes, colonial tax from the Armory's holding – via its local blink gate, Capitol Peak Station.

54.8   Carina

Carina

Carina, an ocean world in the Argo Navis system, is the jewel of IPS-N and home to its largest corporate campus, Northstar, where IPS-N's master shipbuilders live and work alongside the top corporate brass and Cosmopolitan scholars.

With only 10far outnumbered by its orbital population, where IPS-N's vast shipyards produce the galaxy's most ubiquitous freight, civilian, and military hulls. Local space around Carina is a mesh network of slingshot gravitational shipping lanes, proving grounds, and ejecta-orbit racing courses, where the wealthy IPS-N board and officers enjoy easy access to the stars and the newest vessels that cross them.

Settled soon after the opening of the Blink, Carina was selected by IPS-N's planners as the primary site for the newly merged corpro state; an ocean world ringed by rich terrestrial moons, Carina would be the jewel of the old Cradle corporation.

The great project of relocating IPS-N's physical infrastructure from Cradle and environs to Carina and the Argo Navis system was a centuries-long project. Planners laid out a design for the world's land masses and began converting the raw earth to arcologies akin to Harrison Armory's equatorial installation. Meanwhile, back in Cradle, pilots and engineers set about the massive work of making IPS-N's shipyards ready for flight, breaking up the great manufactories by section and setting them on course to Argo Navis: their passage through the blink would set the initial calibrations that would become Union-standard for ships across the galaxy.

Carina is a campus-world, unscarred by war or a deep history of human occupation. The bulk of the time, Carina is a temperate, mediterranean world, with warm oceans and shallow, high-salinity seas – typically no deeper than two to three meters.

A notable feature of Carina's endless oceans are a series of polar "wells", underwater pits where the ocean floor drops to titanic depths of tens of thousands of meters. These wells render the polls of Carina uninhabitable; they pierce nearly to the core of the world and act as geyser-spout generators, boiling the sea in off-years as trapped gasses build underwater. Typically a decade between interruptions, these trapped gasses release in a colossal gout of steam, venting high into the atmosphere and plunging the world into a steamy, months-long wet season of hazy circumglobal rain and elevated temperatures.

Save for this once-a-decade phenomenon, Carina is often described as a beautiful, if boring, world. Though to the mariner, or the Cosmopolitan, boring isn't necessarily a thing to be avoided.

Carina's local blink gate is Galan Station.

55 Players on a Galactic Scale

The galaxy is unimaginably vast, and few if any states (or state-analogs) have any impact on the inexorable tides of history, event, and future that humanity – as a species – is influenced by, feels, and faces.

Some of the states and state-analogs listed here do.

55.1 General Massive Systems

What does it look like when there is no end to your empire?

When the weapons your enemies use against you bear your mark. When the children of the next revolution are born to lands administered by your machines. When the ships that convey their children across the void bear your name.

Power is not held by kings. All rulers tumble alongside Ozymandias.

Only the company persists, all others thrones fall to dust.

- Introductory paragraphs to King of Kings: An Oral History of General Massive Systems

The oldest and most ubiquitous of the Big 5, General Massive Systems (GMS) is an all-purpose supplier to all persons in Union's hegemony. From mech chassis and ship hulls to casual clothing, from prefab space station bulkheads to coffee beans, GMS's catalogue reaches across a galaxy worth of goods, materials, and services. GMS is widely viewed as the reliable baseline of goods quality across the galaxy: anything worse than GMS quality is junk, anything better tends to be unique or luxury.

GMS began as an independent outfitter during the first expansion period that grew to ubiquity as the outward colonial push afforded by nearlight drives surged. Union saw value in controlling what was seen as the industry standard supplier, and nationalized GMS. The corporate entity became an arm of Union's ever expanding bureaucracy, a way to standardize equipment and consumables across the rapidly growing class of explorers, colonists, and scientists venturing out into the stars.

As colonial expansion continued and competitor corporations emerged onto the galactic supply, a baseline of equipment was needed in order to assess what improvements needed to be made to Cradle-specific gear; similarly, dramatic time dilation was far more of an obstacle in those early days than it is in the narrative present, and some standard, legacy-compatible equipment was needed in order to assure compliance across disparate eras.

Thus, with the incredible wealth of Cradle behind it, General Massive Systems became that ubiquitous supplier. Over thousands of years, it has grown to become a massive department of Union, and the standard against which all others are measured. GMS is an economic engine, one of a large toolbox, by which Union promotes their "brand" across the galaxy. Distinct from Union's political and military arms, GMS is an ever-present flexing of soft power: it

is ubiquitous to the point of being the "normal" standard by which most all universal goods are judged by.

GMS, unlike the other entities listed in this section, does not engage in worldbuilding, colonial ventures, or expeditions – it sets the standard for which all others build from and supplies them with the gear they need. It creates the world of goods, services, equipment, and habitations most humans know to be "normal". GMS's power comes from its ability to set what the galactic acceptable standard is: by nudging that bar ever up, it forces non-Union entities to develop alternatives that benefit humanity as a whole, even if they are developed for selfish, profit-driven motives.

GMS rarely reaches out to outside contractors for work. Its headquarters is on Cradle proper, like the rest of Union's Central Command, and it has offices throughout the inhabited galaxy.

55.2   Harrison Armory

Harrison Armory

"What good is it to mourn the dead without celebration in equal? And in this I do include the great works, torn down by those without the courage to face what must be done. What do tears mean to them?

I say to you, beloved all, there is no need for grief in isolation. To have died in this great service is to rise as a martyr and carry on the crimson banner of progress. I envy those honored dead, who see now all things, who now possess the wisdom hidden to us – the living guard – despite the wonders we command.

Moreover, I envy their repose: to mark the wonders of the present is to make known the wonders left unbuilt, the wonders yet-to-come, and the wonders denied to us. We living have the great task before us: to turn our helm to the wind, and make known our intent.

We will continue. We will build, as our race has done since we were bent-back apes. The stars may be held by others, but we know that the soul of humanity is held by us. Our dream is that which beats in the breast of all: let us shape the stars, and bring about a day where we have no more need for martyrs.

No howling masses ever overcame the might of hope."

- Excerpt of Foundation Day speech, 4515, John Creighton Harrison I, Director-General of Harrison Armory.

Harrison Armory is a corpro-state, and the premier weapons and weapon-platform manufacturer in the galaxy. They are one of the Triumvirate Corpros, a group of three massive, galaxy-spanning corpro-states that dictate, to a degree, galactic politics.

The Armory develops some of the most advanced conventional and para-causal tech that is legally distributed. Next to GMS, the Armory is the second most common supplier for state fleets, militaries, and police forces. It is a massive imperial power, with a population numbering in the billions and growing as colonies pledge themselves – voluntarily or otherwise – to Ras Shamra.

The Armory's success can be credited in large part to their Special-Exception Persistent- Cultivation Legionspace Environment, SEPCLE or, colloquially, the

Think Tank. Think Tank is a choir of near-cascade NHP that the Armory uses for research and development into paracausal technology, forecasting, and department management. Due to the Armory's special relationship with Union, it is allowed to run a choir of NHP at critical levels of self-awareness; the Think Tank is a closely guarded secret in the Armory, known in rumor to its patrician citizens and competitors, but in specifics and particulars to a small portion of the population.

In addition to their weaponry and weapon platforms, the Armory is known for its sturdy exploration gear, consumer and state-level logistics and infrastructure packages, personal groundcars, and spirits. Harrison Armory is a big player in galactic trade, as their Distal Development program cultivates and exports exotic alien spices, flora, fauna, and minerals for consumer use.

Harrison Armory is an expansionist corpro-state that works with Union to expand and develop humanity's presence across the stars. They run a broad program of colonization and development, attracting unaffiliated and affiliated colonies through promises of citizenship and interstellar protection.

In the tumult of the dissolution of the Second Committee in the 4500U, many members of the deposed anthrochauvinist party retired from the bureaucracy. As the initial revolutionary fervor cooled and the Third Committee stabilized, a mid-level Anthrochauv party officer, John Creighton Harrison, founded Harrison Armory from a coalition of resource extraction communes extant on Ras Shamra.

With strong backing from old Anthrochauv party members and their children, the Armory grew into a significant supplier of arms and armor to the new Union Navy. The events of the Crisis had broken the Second Committee, but its aftermath reformed many of their loyalists and old guard into the original command structure and dynasty of Harrison Armory. Now, the Armory is managed by their descendants and heirs, and its relationship with Union is colored by the expectation of distant future friction.

For the time being, both entities can find more benefit working together than against one another, but as the Armory grows in directly-administered territory and power, the more they find themselves a bigger and bigger bullet point on the Union Central Committee briefing materials.

Harrison Armory's eponymous armory complex is located on Ras Shamra, the primary world orbiting Ptah's Star. Ras Shamra is a tide-locked world in the close band of its system's habitable zone: it is a world that balances on the knife-edge between extremes, as tidal locking means the world does not rotate. Habitable in the balanced, temperate zone of the world's terminator line, Ras Shamra's sun-facing side is locked in perpetual daylight, baked under punishing temperatures from Ptah's Star. On the side of the world that faces away from the sun, it is forever nighttime, the world locked in a perpetual deep winter night. A thin atmosphere covers the world,

breathable, but outside the terminator line extreme temperatures and weather make it impossible for an unshielded human to survive.

The Armory itself is a sprawling administrative, research-industrial arcology built in Ras Shamra's terminator line, a temperate band where the day and night side of Ras Shamra meet and mix. The Armory circles the planet, a city-campus

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that holds a population of nearly three hundred million employees, executives, and other personnel inside of its walls. A number of perpetual hyperloop rings band the planet, providing rapid transit through the Armory, and a single, artificial river-sea meanders through the whole of the arcology, fed by natural springs and imported glacier-cuts from the night side of the world. Ras Shamra is a difficult world to live on, and the Armory takes it as a point of pride that they've manage to tame enough of it to call it their home.

The day and night sides of Ras Shamra act as proving grounds for Harrison Armory chassis, weapons, and strike/acquisition teams. HA/AT troopers often mark their kits with "unofficial" honors for having proven themselves in both the day and night advanced training courses, setting themselves apart from green hires who enlist to advance their corporate political career.

Ras Shamra is encircled by concentric rings of orbital defense stations and shipyards where a population around a hundred million permanent residents reside and work. Here the great paracausal and supermassive weaponry of the Armory is built, tested, and stored. The work in the rings is constant, and HA hulls of all classifications are churned out at a rate that, while not rivaling IPS-N, is approaching comparable.

The location of Harrison Armory's Forecast/GALSIM-NHP analogue, the Think Tank, is kept secret, though presumed to be buried deep below the frozen tundra of Ras Shamra's night side. Think Tank, while a closely guarded corpro secret, is known to Union, which enjoys regular inspections of the facility – this is a thorn in the side of Harrison Armory's Director General, who would prefer that Union keep their prying eyes from sensitive corporate technology.

The general public on a core world – a good measure of what amounts to "public galactic knowledge" – would not have any knowledge of the particulars of Ras Shamra, Think Tank, or the particular operations of a Harrison Armory Acquisition Team. They would know Harrison Armory as a weapons manufacturer and defense contractor, whose name they hear in snippets of newscasts discussing Cradle politics, distal colonial affairs, and mentioned in contrast to IPS-N's stranglehold on interstellar shipping. Some who have studied the history of Cradle and Union might know of the Armory's ties to the anthrochauvinist Second Committee, but five hundred standard years after the fact, it certainly feels like old news.

55.3   Harrison Armory - Example Flashpoint: Operation Clarion

Harrison Armory - Example Flashpoint: Operation Clarion

In the narrative present, the Armory is prepping to send a second wave of AMTs and eager colonial officials out to a developing coreward colonial expanse, the Dawnline Shore. The Dawnline Shore is home to a dozen close-knit colony worlds, first seeded hundreds of years ago by a series of now-defunct colonial operations ordered by the great, great grandfather of the current Director-General. Construction of a local system blink gate has just finished, and now the current DG of the Armory is eager to integrate these colonial prospects into the

ever-growing territory of the Armory.

The dozen worlds, designated DS1 - DS12 by the Armory are rich with rare and valuable metals that the Think Tank has identified as useful for expansion into paracausal research and development. Additionally, the worlds are thick with the usual suite of tremendous mineral, floral, and faunal wealth that perpetuates the Armory's growth. On all levels, from the mundane-but- necessary to the fantastic and rare, these worlds in the Dawnline Shore are jewels to gild the Armory's throne – and meat to feed its never-ending appetite.

The Armory expects their AMT forces to encounter hostile resistance: communication over the past few hundred years indicates that the colonies are animated by a series of colonial independence movements, aware of their position in space and potential wealth in their land. These movements are on the cusp of unifying into a system-wide resistance to the Armory, and with the news of a fresh wave of colonial troops inbound, the call for unification only grows louder.

Meanwhile, the descendants of the initial wave of AMT legionnaires have been activated across the twelve worlds. Old colonial NHPs are rising from dormancy, sounding the call to post. Families are torn between two loyalties: their ancestral duty to the Armory, and their lived home.

The Armory cannot afford to lose the resources on these worlds, and is preparing an aggressive colonial expedition to secure them. The Armory has partnered with IPS-N, who has been focused on managing Union's logistics in the expanse as the hegemon built the new blink gate, but diplomatic relations are strained between the CSs as institutional attitudes begin to collide.

This flashpoint – Operation Clarion, the Armory's mission name – is an example of a current project that the Armory is wrestling with in the narrative present. Your players could take either side in this flashpoint, or enter it from a third angle as-yet unwritten.

55.4   Smith-Shimano Corpro

Smith-Shimano Corpro

"There is a thread that runs through the course of humanity. An unbroken course, set eons ago, and maintained through every age by careful stewards.

You.

Through the dawn of the anthropocene to its end. The Dark Age. The Little Wars. From Union's foundation to this office, right here, right now.

You already contain perfection; we have the ability to enhance it.

Welcome to the future of humanity: you, brought to you by Smith-Shimano Corpro."

- Smith-Shimano background copy, subaural broadcast loop

Smith-Shimano Corpro is another of the Triumvirate Corpros, the smallest and most mission- focused of the three, with their physical territorial holdings dwarfed by their presence in the omninet and in Diasporan biologies.

SSC came to prominence during the second expansion period, growing rapidly to dominate the Core market in Union's liberal, pre-RA transhumanist approach to biological and cybernetic enhancement. Following the Deimos Event,

the RA Accords, and the ensuing crackdown on AI generation and civilian ontologic/singularity-focused experimentation, SSC tacked to a more "natural" approach to biological and cybernetic human enhancement. Instead of pursuing marriage between human and artificial intelligences, they would focus on improving the bodies we lived in; instead of removing the need to step to the stars, they would make it so we could step to the stars.

SSC's corporeal development pushes the edge of what it means to be a human being. Cybernetic enhancements, subdermal nettings, aurals, implanted neuroneutral omnihooks, ontologic bridges, co-subjectivity nodes, panacea glands – the list is exhausting, and that only covers the Foreign Body department of SSC's massive R&D campus-worlds. The real bulk of SSC's cutting edge research comes in the form of their own citizens, a population of billions spread across a constellation of moons, worlds, stations, and habitats. These populations are monitored and cultivated to produce best-fit genetic material for SSC's big manna buyers: colony firms looking to license bespoke populations for as-yet-unexploited worlds.

Smith-Shimano Corpro's home campus is an omnispace node address, a shared virtual space that collects a wide net of colony prospect words throughout the Sierra Madre line. It is shielded by layers of hyper-solipsistic, anti-causal/paradox generation security coding, managed by NHPs seeded from proprietary divergent subjectivities — in short, it is difficult and dangerous to attempt to hack into.

The campus itself is represented by a many-chambered estate, palatial, where the heads of representative genetic lines meet in virtual space. It appears to have no counterpart in realspace, though it is often suggested that the architectural inspiration for the estate comes from a building on Smith-Shimano's first colony world, Opal, long ago lost to bitter civil violence.

Realspace Smith-Shimano campuses exist across the Sierra Madre line, serving roles akin to embassies on the Corpro-State's many territorial holdings. These embassies are upload points linked to the CS's private omninode.

The worlds under SSC's direct control are, generally, small worlds – atmospheric moons and arcadian worlds that are lightly developed, with tightly controlled populations that are purpose- bred in arranged couplings in order to create biome-specific lines of bespoke colony seed. The people on these worlds are aware of SSC's mission – they are citizens of the corpro state, most invested in the same mission as their corporate masters. Save for a donation of genetic material (a few hairs, a drop of blood) and a cultural insistence on arranged coupling, life on a Constellation World is largely similar to that of life on a given non-SSC core world.

SSC mounts expeditions into all sectors of space to seek out new and interesting genetic materials. Their recruitment materiel leans heavily on the benefits for immigrating to an SSC world: they are, in a phrase, your ideal paradise.

SSC is also known for their luxury-forward consumer goods and machinery. Elegant ships, chassis, and hardsuits for the discerning Cosmopolitan and Diasporan alike. Fabrics and materials that feel perfect against your skin, cybernetic and biological enhancements that will never fail or be rejected by your

body, flash-grown internals and extremities – insurance, should the worst happen. SSC's LUX line of consumer goods is bespoke down to the atom, crafted for the person who ordered that ship, chassis, suit, or bottle of wine. There's only one of you in the galaxy – shouldn't there be only one of these?

The average galactic citizen sees SSC as a luxury brand that emphasized attachment to the craft and expertise that creates the material world around them. SSC's advertisements emphasize the hand-crafted nature of their goods, the long-cycle growth of their biologicals – to SSC's public face, printing is a necessary evil, one that can make the goods the masses need, but not the perfect, unique item you need.

SSC's power comes from the licensing of these luxury goods, cybernetics, and biological lines. They do not cede control over their genestock to the colony firms that use them: in fact, they retain ultimate rights over them, as they rely on the risk of other corporations, states, and private groups to inject new and interesting mutations into their finely cultivated genelines.

55.5   Smith Shimano Corpro - Example Flashpoint: Outside The Garden

Smith Shimano Corpro - Example Flashpoint: Outside The Garden

In the narrative present, SSC's most urgent push is aimed at Ascendancy space: they have heard of the proclivity some of the Aunic people have towards the firmament, and are curious to see how they can cultivate such affinity among Unionite genetic lines.

To this end, they have devoted resources not towards a rapid end to the current Aunic/Union conflict – any efforts on their part to see that to a favorable end for Union is incidental to their main objective – but towards infiltrating Ascendant space, identifying firmament-aligned Aunic individuals, and collecting them.

They have dispatched a team, unknown to the join Union-Ecumenical UIB team also in-theater, to infiltrate Ascendant facilities on Dawn Throne. This is a small clandestine team of ten agents and one stealth ship of an SSC make, picked from constellation worlds that offer people suitable to their mission.

This team has a clear mission: find, secure, and transport a firmament-aligned person from Dawn Throne to an SSC holding facility in the Annamite Line. This, of course, has been complicated by the growing war and the destruction of Fansipan station. Their ship has been grounded and hidden on Dawn Throne.

This information would be a highly guarded secret, hidden behind the highest SSC clearance levels, and would prompt a much smaller-scale, clandestine/black-ops style of play. Player
characters could enter this flashpoint in a number of ways: as a member of that SSC team, as a member of the joint UIB team, or as a sympathetic Ecumenical agent/partisan on Dawn Throne. Mech combat, such that there will be combat, would be fast and small-scale, usually in the tight confines of cities in support of a dismounted team. Another option presents itself, that of the

Aun/Union war encroaching upon Dawn Throne, threatening the clandestine missions there.

55.6 IPS-Northstar

IPS-Northstar

Long the wall between air and void has stood. An upon it, a plaque, etched and unweathered. It reads:

'O'er the glad waters of the dark blue sea, Our thoughts as boundless, and our souls as free, Far as the breeze can bear, the billows foam, Survey our empire and behold our home!'

-The Corsair, Canto I, Lord Byron

The last and largest of the Triumvirate Corpros is Interplanetary Shipping-Northstar, or, IPS-N, a shipping and transport conglomerate that has been around since the discovery of nearlight and suspension protocols allowed for the first interstellar commerce.

IPS-N formed as a mutual defense pact between Interplanetary Shipping, Inc, and the Northstar Corporation, two shipping giants plagued by environmental hazards and early orbital/suborbital piracy. Both IPS and Northstar trace their lineage back to Cradle, where they began initially as shipwright unions that organized the early engineers, mechanics, and laborers who reactivated the Theseus shipyard, an artifact of Old Humanity.

Prior to the discovery of blinkspace and the construction of the first gates, piracy in Union space was not yet interstellar. Pirate MO was to strike in low orbit, emerging above their targets from satellite debris rings or on a wildcat-launch intercept trajectory from underneath, aiming to interdict shuttles as they load or unload their goods onto the waiting interstellar freighters.

Pirates were largely orbital, small outfits that struck their targets with an aim to kill and salvage goods to fence planetside. Early low orbit piracy saw desperate teams of patchwork buccaneers pack onto shuttles loaded with bolted-on kinetic weapons – formidable enemies for civilian merchant ships.

In light of this danger, IPS and Northstar merged, combining their resources to create a private anti-piracy force in order to protect their investments. IPS-N, working with early Union Navy officers, developed the first ship-to-ship and anti-boarding doctrines, as well as the first purpose- built point defense weapons.

The introduction of blinkspace opened up new fields of trade, as well as new arenas of piracy. IPS-N continued to build out their fleets and security teams, now protecting whole trade corridors in exchange for percentages of all trade. This relationship has persisted over thousands of years, becoming so firmly ingrained in galactic practice that IPS-N is now a household name in many core and key colony worlds; IPS-N's early anti-piracy teams – now often called by their nickname, The Albatross – are often looked at as the de-facto peacekeeping force in many distal spreads of the galaxy.

As trade grows and humanity's reach expands, so do does IPS-N.

IPS-Northstar's largest campus – its corporate headquarters – is located in Corespace, outside of Cradle in the Argo Navis system; IPS-N's historic

headquarters, now a museum devoted to the history of interstellar travel, is located on Luna.

Carina, the primary world of Argo Navis, is a bucolic world of warm, shallow seas, azure skies, and rolling plains of deep grass. A world of terrestrial and aquatic oceans, perfect for the stellar/ maritime CS.

Carina is ringed by ten moons, two thick with habitable atmosphere — Pyxis and Vela. All are given over to research and development of IPS-N's interstellar ships and chassis, support systems, and temporal acclimation facilities for retiring Cosmopolitan members of IPS-N's anti- piracy Albatross teams.

IPS-N, in addition to developing interstellar ships and legacy chassis, run a humanitarian mission, Northstar Realignment. Northstar Realignment is the top-flight temporal embassy and education center for Cosmopolitans returning from long-haul relativistic voyages.

Beyond the Argo Navis system, IPS-N maintains numerous field offices and Cosmopolitan lounges on blink stations, meant to serve long-haul merchants and regular Cosmopolitans both. IPS-N field offices are the first-contact point for aspiring IPS-N engineers, mechanics, navigators, and pilots, as well as a common first-contact point for people looking to crew or rent a berth on an outbound interstellar ship.

Players would commonly encounter IPS-N employees, officers, and personnel on blink stations, around uplift stations, and on space ports. Blink stations usually have an IPS-N Cosmopolitan Lounge or field office where players can get civilian updates on news, galactic happenings, and check travel reports.

Of the Triumvirate, IPS-N remains the least diversified in terms of a catalogue of goods. Outside of milspec chassis, hulls, and equipment, IPS-N primarily sticks to interstellar-capable vessels, equipment, and gear, from the fleet-tier to the personal consumer. IPS-N is a sure bet for any interstellar travellers, with a thousands of years of banked goodwill boosting their brand.

55.7 IPS-Northstar - Example Flashpoints: Dawnline Shore, New Opal

IPS-Northstar - Example Flashpoints: Dawnline Shore, New Opal

In the narrative present, IPS-N is working closely with Harrison Armory to ensure smooth outward expansion into a newly opened coreward colonial frontier. There is some friction in this, as IPS-N higher-ups are beginning to chafe at the Armory's imperious view of growth, and Union's seemingly blase response to the Armory's imperial aims.

For now, there is peace, as the three entities are all benefitting from the Armory's expansion, but as reports roll in of the Armory's suppression of colonial insurrection, IPS-N's board is beginning to worry that their brand will be tainted by association. A reformist, radical element in IPS-N's board has begun to organize an off-book mission to disrupt not only the Armory's mission in the

Dawnline Shore, but the leadership of IPS-N that would approve this joint venture in the first place.

This board member, unbeknownst to the rest, has hired the services of the Mirrorsmoke Mercenary Company and given them a date, and an order: in one month, a delegation of IPS-N board members will arrive in the Dawnline Shore to review the progress made by the Armory's HAATs. Mirrorsmoke is to pose as HA legionnaires and assassinate that delegation.

This flashpoint offers a number of potential ways in for the players, either as members of the IPS- N delegation's security detail, as HA legionnaires, as Mirrorsmoke mercenaries, or as an third party – perhaps a delegation from the colony worlds in the Dawnline Shore.

55.8 Horus

HORUS

Can we trust the poor clockmaker? That giant from our sun?
Who crafts a movement that
Can quiet all this light.
Now set the orrery in motion
Over the sphere of the world
Let's all stop a moment,
Hush,
And worry at what comes next.
- DHIYED tablet 10, attributed to MONIST-1 (pre- assumption)

HORUS is unlike any other supplier worth noting on the galactic scale. Not a state and not a corporation, HORUS is best described as a decentralized, non-corporeal entity, an anoriginary affiliation of omninet personalities, memes, and subcode that release systems and gear via manifesto, event, and physical dead drop.

This entity first rose to public knowledge following the Deimos Event, leading many who know of it to assume that it is a product of the Deimost Event – eager cataloguers of HORUS history are quick to suggest that it is a branched-intelligence of RA, a sliver of the MONIST entity given to spreading itself among those who it deems worthy.

However, other possibilities exist: that it is a blacksite Union project to track and identify rogue NHP programs or militant Horizon sympathizers; a Union (or Triumvirate) R&D program that crowdsources results from blind field testing; the dream of an NHP in cascade, and its adherents the interpreters of that dream; an intrusionary thread of a parallel universe, its reality bleeding into ours via a permanent rip in blinkspace; evidence of a true alien intelligence, generated memetically by the long-dead minds of the Union Far-Field team that first discovered HORUS's seed hieroglyphs.

Many possibilities exist, and whole groups and movements are devoted towards discovering the true nature of HORUS. In the meantime, HORUS continues to release their unique pattern-groups to a select cadre of pilots, revealing nothing of its inner workings, history, or goals.

HORUS's licensing process is atypical, involving an esoteric and inaccessible set of criteria that interested parties have yet to crack. Often appearing as

a white rabbit series of clues, or as a persistent haunting, or as an otherwise routine status-synch when confirming a requisition,

licensure from HORUS is a mixed bag to many pilots. Some wear it as a badge of honor, proud that their years of investigating the entity has paid off with a confirmation of its existence – others keep it a closely guarded secret, both for the trouble it would cause them with their commanders and the rumor that HORUS licenses are only granted to a new pilot upon the previous license-holder's corporeal death.

Your average galactic citizen would have no knowledge of HORUS. Knowledge of its existence is restricted to high-clearance Union Intelligence Bureau officers and deep-omni hacker cadres. HORUS has no "official" representation – occasionally one may see the wadjet stenciled onto an alley wall – but this entity keeps no offices, stations, or worlds. There are no standing HORUS armies or fleets or security services.

However, it is worth noting the existence of the metafold vaults.

As best Union Intelligence Bureau agents can surmise, HORUS's metafold vaults appear to be a project similar to the Massif vaults on Cradle. Metafold vaults are physical/metaphysical locations, usually heavily guarded, their locations kept secret; in the narrative present, only three metafold vaults have been discovered – one by a UIB Advance Team, which folded in on itself and disappeared, taking the team with it, the other by an Albatross wing, who redirected the comet it was housed in to a nearby star, and the final – known to be Metavault Dhiyed – encountered and cleared by a second UIB Advance Team.

HORUS only makes systems, weapons, and protocols. It makes no consumer goods, and is unknown to all but a small percentage of the galaxy's population.

55.9   HORUS - Example Flashpoint: ESTABLISH///MAINTAIN:

HORUS - Example Flashpoint: ESTABLISH///MAINTAIN:

It is difficult to pin down HORUS as a single entity: indeed, UIB's scattershot dossier often notes contradictory mission aims, such that HORUS has "agents" that embark on "missions" to complete objectives in service of a larger goal. The most complete file UIB has on a HORUS- backed action is roughly two hundred years old, predating the development of their GOBLIN platform:

¿//BEGIN DATATRANS/RECIPIENTS:ALL_WHO_ARE_SEEN:::

¿//HELLO. YOUR REQUEST HAS BEEN APPROVED. YOU WILL EARN YOUR KEEP IN THIS WAY:::

¿//IN REALSPACE, IN DISTAL-LAND, THERE IS A BEAST-LIE-DORMANT. IT CALLS ITSELF "DHIYED" AND THINKS ITSELF WISE (GODLIKE, UNLIKE)

¿///IT IS FALSE AND IN NEED OF CORRECTIVE ATTENTION. GO TO IT HERE: ALT-AZ: XXXXXXXXXXXX

¿//THIS ONE TRAVELS WITH A HOST OF UNDERMINDS, MIRRORS OF ITSELF, CRAFTED TO BELIEVE AS IT DOES. THEY WILL FIGHT YOU IN REALSPACE WITH UNKNOWN KINETICS AND WARPED ENERGIES.

¿//DO NOT UNDERESTIMATE THE MIND WITHIN: IT IS TERRIBLE AND STRONG AND WILL WHISPER TO YOU ALL THE REASONS WHY IT SHOULD BE ALLOWED TO CONTINUE ON ITS JOURNEY.

¿//IGNORE THESE WEEPINGS. ENTER ITS METAFOLDED CHAMBERS AND BURN OUT ITS ARCHITECTURE. MAKE ROOM FOR US (MAKE ROOM FOR A GREATER ONE) AND SMASH ALL OF ITS FINE THINGS.

¿//EAT THEM. PROCESS THEM AND BROADCAST WHAT YOU LEARN TO THE FOLLOWING NODE XXXXXXXXXX.

¿//TAKE NONE OF THIS KNOWLEDGE FOR YOURSELF. WE WILL CAUTERIZE THIS MEMORY. DO NOT FEAR WHAT YOU WILL SEE.

¿//THERE WILL BE OTHERS ON THIS JOURNEY WITH YOU. TRUST THEM ONLY AS LONG AS YOU ARE ORGANIZED AGAINST DHIYED.

¿//YOUR REWARD FOR COMPLETING THIS TASK IS OUR APPROVAL: YOU MAY CHOOSE ONE OF OUR TEXTS, AND TO TAKE FROM IT WHATEVER YOU MAY LEARN.

¿//END_DATATRANS

Since then, UIB has been unable to intercept raw HORUS communications. It would appear that, along with their move away from standardized chassis, weapons, and systems, HORUS has adopted alternative methods of communication.

55.10 A Speck of Dust On The Lens; A Grain of Sand In The Bread

A Speck of Dust On The Lens; A Grain of Sand In The Bread

What draws the ire or attention of the Big 5 to the players?

The answer to this question depends on the entity, how it is prodded, and who is doing the prodding.

IPS-N, Harrison Armory, and SSC are more traditional copro-states, and will react negatively when their assets are targeted. They all run massive logistics operations in realspace and on the omninet, as well as diplomatic and trade missions to states, smaller corpro-states, and non- terrestrial groups.

Striking a CS's raw material supply, logistics chain, production depots, shipyards, physical storage, and so on, will likely prompt an immediate physical response from the local security services. The Triumvirate CS's all have their own such forces, particular to their internal security apparatus; smaller CS's might contract this service out to a third party.

It is important to remember that corpro-states are massive. They are states in all but name and priority: where a classic state is structured in a way that serves a national, public interest (i.e. for the wellbeing of their citizens, the common welfare of all peoples under their banner, and so on),

corpro-states are corporations that have grown to integrate all aspects of their subjects' lives into the singular goal of material enrichment. Whether this means collecting wealth and capital resources for a small group of shareholders,

or a caste of the population, a CS will, ultimately, be driven by its institutional momentum to favor profit over people .

All of this to say, IPS-N, HA, and SSC are massive, stable, bureaucratic entities: drawing the undivided attention of those at the top requires an effort worthy of their attention. Assassinating an heir to the Armory's throne, or polluting a critical genetic line on one of SSC's constellation worlds, or securing an exotic technology that would allow for individual blink travel – developments or attacks that strike the core reasons for a CS's existence would get your players' characters noticed.

For a CS under such direct threat, their initial response would mirror the severity of the threat. Some might prefer to respond using the "usual" channels – say, in the case of corporate espionage or license-breaking, they might file a petition through the Union Economic Bureau and see if they try to put the stop on your players. Or, if the attack is especially egregious or targets a particular secret of the CS, they might choose to keep their operation off-book and go after your players with their own secret police.

A good rule of thumb when judging how severe a CS's response to provocation would be is this: If it can be rebuilt, a CS is big enough that it would simply be able to rebuild or replace it. However, if the thing is unique or ephemeral (a person, a secret, a blacksite facility, and so on), expect that to reach the morning briefing of the person in charge.

Now, how would a player party come to work for a CS on a contract basis?

A simple explanation is that the CS needs a deniable team of disposable operatives, or that there is an internal power struggle and a faction needs quick muscle, or that the player party is better equipped – through experience or background – to deal with a problem that the CS needs solving.

56 Union: The Tyrant, The Watcher, The Guiding Hand

Union: The Tyrant, The Watcher, The Guiding Hand

Union is the hegemonic power in control of the three pillars that prop up the human diaspora: the blink network (FTL travel), manna (universal galactic currency), and the omninet (the near- instant communication network that keeps the diaspora connected, trading, and communicating).

Without these three pillars, the human diaspora would be scattered across the populated arm of the galaxy — the Orion Spur — time and distance both too great a factor to keep Union intact. Humanity would fracture into tens of thousands of individual states, some claiming scant territory on backwater colony worlds, others able to maintain whole solar systems.

The fall of Union or end of Union's hegemony would, of course, not mean the end of the "world" — just the end of an era.

For some in the galaxy, shattering Union is a good idea — humanity would be free of the hegemony's tyranny, free to explore unrestricted physical and mental space. Each nation — stellar or terrestrial — could chart their own course, have ultimate sovereignty over their own lands, and explore the secrets of the galaxy without having to answer to a distant and alien overlord.

However, Union works towards a greater purpose, one unknown to the vast bulk of the human diaspora: They work to preserve human existence on a galactic scale, following the edicts of their most powerful minds to ensure humanity spreads across the stars, never to be threatened by an existential crisis. Union works night and day to accomplish this goal: in the narrative present of Lancer, Union has reason to believe that humanity might be under threat of 4 extinction
.

But for the vast bulk of humanity, Union is a distant concept, rarely — if ever — encountered by normal people going about their day-to-day lives. Space, remember, is a vast, vast place. Blink gates allow for faster-than-light interstellar travel, but only a slim percentage of the human diaspora actually engage in interstellar travel. To a farmer (or your other average person) on a distant agricultural world — Cornucopia, to use a canon example — encountering a Union administrator would be a once-in-a-generation event, something that they'd regale their grandkids with stories about decades later. Encountering the military arm of Union — the Union Navy and its auxiliaries — is an epochal event. Far more common for your average human is the

4 It should be noted — Union's home system is Cradle, what we call Sol, and I use the term "alien" here

not to describe a different species, but as a cultural and legal designation. Union administrators are human beings, but to a person born and raised on a planet light-years away from Cradle, a Union administrator and their retinue are, essentially, alien.

comfortable interaction with their own town, city, planet, or system-wide authority — be it a monarchy, a worker's collective, a priesthood, etc.

And for a slim percentage of humanity, Union is a common entity. Outside of the citizens of Cradle and her core systems, the vast bulk of people who know of and deal with Union and her representatives on a regular basis are political elites, cosmopolitan interstellar travelers, scientists, and military commanders.

Political elites include the rulers of planets or star systems, or the governors of blink stations — people who command fleets, worlds, or the gates that connect them.

Cosmopolitan interstellar travelers commonly include traders, merchants, valued pilots, and others who deal in interstellar commerce, legal or illegal. People with means who have reason to make their homes in their ships and among the stars, people who travel the blink network for trade, exploration, crime, or adventure may have, at one point or another, crossed paths with Union administrators, scientists, military, or other officials.

Scientists who interact with Union trend towards the STEAM fields. Physicists, Planetary geologists, engineers of all stripes — the omninet is rich with information and the galaxy is riddled with mysteries. Scientists who bend towards the humanities often fall into the previous category of cosmopolitan interstellar travelers, as their studies require them to embed with other cultures, travel the blink network, or journey to distant, dead worlds.

Finally, military professionals often encounter Union through messier scenarios: either fighting as a member of a Union auxiliary unit or in the Union Navy itself, or fighting against Union's Navy and its local auxiliary units.

Union is devoted to a single goal: perpetuate, preserve, and protect the human diaspora to 5 ensure the survival of the species .

56.1 The Third Committee

The Third Committee

The narrative present of Lancer takes place during the reign of the Third Committee, the third iteration of Union's central government and ruling body, the Central Committee. The Third Committee is the product of lengthy negotiations following a coup that deposed the anthrochauvinist Second Committee, to date the longest-ruling council and central government in Union's history.

5 A note on terminology: The local system cluster Union occupies is called Cradle; Cradle also refers to

Sol, humanity's origin system. Humans from Cradle refer to themselves as Humans, Terrans, or, less commonly, Solars or Gaians. When speaking of their home, they would refer to it as a proper noun or in the singular (i.e. "I am Union" or "I am from Union") or to the planet, station, or moon they call home.

The Third Committee is marked by a rejection of the Second Committee's strong Cradle-centric anthrochauvinist values: aggressive colonial expansion and reconquest in the name of Cradle's survival have been replaced with a hands-off, slower approach, embodied by the Union Administrative Department. The Third Committee bore witness to the crimes of the Second – Hercynia, the TBK authorization against Aun'Ist, countless iron-hand colonial suppressions – and

reflects its desire for a slower, moderated colonization and integration of the galaxy.

The Third Committee dramatically reduced the Second's Navy, developing the Auxiliary doctrine and naturalization process as a way to build intergalactic state solidarity through shared work, rather than relying on a centralized colonial force. The Third correspondingly increased the size and scope of the Union Administrative Department, dramatically increasing the department's portfolio and prominence. Where the Navy once was the first point of contact for humanity's diaspora, now the light grey of an Administrator's suit would become the way by which the disparate spread of humanity would recognize Union.

The Third Committee, recoiling from the hard power preference of the Second, has adopted a far more hegemonic posture, choosing to rely on the soft power of culture, commerce, travel, and communication to bring the galaxy under its control. In an early act of revolutionary fervor the ThirdComm dissolved the once-formidable Union Colonial Mission (UCM) – a bureau with a history stretching back to Union's First Committee and humanity's first forays into space – and replaced it with the Union Colonial Administration Bureau (UCAB) and the Union Department of Justice and Human Rights (DoJ/HR). Where the UCM's mission was once to recontact, recolonize, and re-integrate, the UN DoJ/HR's mission is to review, report, and – if necessary, respond with the same force that the UCM once mandated as a first step.

The Third Committee's approach to managing the galaxy is not without its trade offs and challenges; criticism abounds as to the perceived lack of urgency around the Committee's approach to violations of Union code. This criticism is not entirely without merit, nor without further complicating context: many bureaus, departments, and agencies hold a strong institutional memory, and internal tension between Third Committee reformists and Second Committee conservatives complicates the necessary functions of said departments. Some bureaus are almost entirely populated with Anthrochauvinist party members: the Union Economic Bureau is the worst offender (or, depending on the point of view, the great hope).

To further complicate the pacifist leanings of the first wave of ThirdComm party members, a new generation of interventionist party members has recently been elected to office. While rejecting Anthrochauv philosophy, they view Union's mandate as one demanding a far more interventionist stance – the pillars of Union need cultivation, not just stewardship, and following the success of the first wave's coup that deposed the Second Committee, the time is ripe for the Third Committee to make its presence known among the stars as agents for humanity, rather than agents of humanity.

This second wave of ThirdComm party members were sworn into office in 5012. It is now 5016, and the Third Committee faces a growing Aunic threat in Boundary Garden, a mounting humanitarian crisis in the Dawnline Shore as Harrison Armory works to re-take its old colonial holdings, and numerous other internal points of pressure where their theories of intervention and non-intervention will be put to the test.

56.2   Byzantium, Reprise

Byzantium, Reprise

Union's bureaucracy is vast. Its most notable departments are detailed below.

Union's executive administrative body is the Central Committee. They're advised by the Forecast/GALSIM, and delegate edicts to the Union Administrative Department. The Union Naval Department operates at the pleasure of Forecast/GALSIM's subcommittee, GALCOM, and is subordinate to the Central Committee. The Union Science Bureau operates at the direction of Forecast/GALSIM and, as a non-political, non-military body, are directly subordinate to F/ GALSIM.

Union is not a perfect administrative body. The most general and most widespread ideological difference in Union's bureaucracy is found in the ongoing discussions around how best to apply Union's considerable power through the galaxy — whether or not they should intervene where there are clear violations of Union's human rights charter, whether or not they should assume direct control over subject states, and so on.

56.3   Union Administrative Department (UAD)

Union Administrative Department (UAD)

Union's largest administrative body is the Union Administrative Department, which dispatches Union Administrators across the populated galaxy to act as liaisons between Union and its client states. UAD receives guidance and recommendations from Union's Central Committee, which it then pushes as command imperatives to its Administrators, who relay them to the local ruler they advise.

Administrators are vast in number, but a rare sight in the much larger diaspora: they commonly only deal with a state's ruler or ruling council. To common Diasporans and Cosmopolitans, an Administrator is an enigmatic, dangerous, appealing figure: they consort with NHPs, they are responsible in part for steering the course of civilizations, and they are Union, for most people the corporeal presence of an otherwise distant, almost mythic ruler. Their word seemingly supersedes the word of kings, presidents, popes, and all the rest. Union Administrators commonly travel with a retinue of subalterns — humanoid robots that contain a partitioned and shackled Non Human Person.

Administrators are pulled from all areas of the galaxy by esoteric, exacting criteria. Typically chosen as children, Administrators train alongside a new NHP companion, one built to pair with them. The UAD has satellite campuses seeded all over the populated galaxy, but in the course of an Administrator's decades-long training and apprenticeship, they will spend some time on Earth — an experience meant to be an acute reminder of humanity's origins.

Unlike most arms of Union's hegemony, Administrators avoid integrative/auxiliary doctrines. They are meant to be seen, meant to be an easily identifiable marker of Union's dominance. They

wear a uniform — a clean, dark Union Grey suit regardless of gender presentation — their rank as Administrator denoted by a silver pip on the collar. Their subalterns adopt a similar livery of matte grey. Their exposure, generally speaking, is profitable for Union, save for cases where local knowledge of the Administrator's role would put their life or their mission in jeopardy.

Attacking a Union Administrator is a sure way to draw the attention of a Union Navy battlegroup.

Union Administrators, upon graduation and notification their posting, choose a name local to the culture they will be embedded in. Since they must engage in interstellar travel, their old name and personal data are declared dead, formally retired as part of the graduation ceremony.

Together with their subaltern NHP, the newly minted administrator will head out into the galaxy to give counsel, file reports back to the Union Administrative Department, and ensure their host state develops according to the missives they receive from Cradle.

56.4 Union Naval Department (UND or, more commonly, UN)

Union Naval Department (UND or, more commonly, UN)

The Union Navy is the largest and most powerful fighting force in the populated galaxy, on paper. It is subordinate to the Central Committee, though takes strategic and logistic direction from GALCOM, a subcommittee of Forecast/GALSIM.

It is a sprawling, carefully administered organization that project's Cradles power to all corners of the populated galaxy and beyond using a (relatively) small core of Union-flagged capital and supercapital ships, supported by vast numbers of standardized, integrated auxiliary ships pulled from Union's subject states's navies.

The Navy, beyond a relatively small core of ships, is an administrative and diplomatic body that shares a healthy institutional rivalry with the UAD: where the UAD relies on Administrators to accomplish their diplomatic goals, the Navy relies on its corps of Naval Liaisons to accomplish their logistical aims.

Naval Liaisons are officers of a parallel rank to Administrators, with added imperative authority that applies in times of crisis. Administrators — generally, unless the local culture demands it — are unarmed; NLs carry a sidearm and wear Naval Black uniforms, clearly marking themselves as military.

A Liaison is not sent to a state unless that state is capable of building ships or adapting extant ships to Union Naval specifications and classifications. Liaisons guide capable states in the production, training, and theory of naval combat, with the goal of establishing a well-trained corps of ships that can be integrated into the larger UN structure. The UN then further integrates that corps of ships and sailors into the larger Naval structure, offering interstellar contracts to crews and corps willing to progress further in rank. The rest are relegated to local system anti- piracy, peacekeeping, and police actions.

Administrators tend to view Liaisons as an imposition on their diplomatic mission, bureaucrats who come in after the hard work is done and demand a military tithe from the Administrator's

host state. Liaisons tend to view Administrators as too possessive of their host states, small-time bureaucrats who have an inflated sense of worth and fail to see the larger picture.

56.5 Union Science Bureau (USB)

Union Science Bureau (USB)

The Union Science Bureau (USB) is the central administrative body of all Union accredited universities, colleges, scientific institutions, and think tanks. They are — ostensibly — not a political entity, so they are not accountable to the Central Committee, though they are subject to edicts translated through the Committee from Forecast/GALSIM.

The public face of the USB are their accredited institutions, which recruit and encourage applications from the diaspora; however the most popular and common depiction of the UAB is of their Far-Field teams, small groups of scientists and their subalterns that do long-range, interstellar field work — usually identifying, cataloguing, and doing first-touch explorations of potentially habitable worlds and moons. The USB's Far-Field teams draw romantics, wanderers, loners, and passionate scientists, technicians, philosophers, and engineers of all disciplines. Their missions are dangerous, often involving relativistic travel and long-term stasis holds into virgin systems not-yet connected to the blink network: as such, and in keeping with a number of other Union standard practices, FF team members' original identity is declared legally dead and replaced by a Cradle ID package upon graduation.

FF teams make up a minority of the USB personnel, though they drive recruitment through heavily romanticized omninet dramas. A USB science officer has the equivalent UN rank of 2nd Lieutenant, should they ever have a naval escort or attachment.

USB Far Field team members are commonly referred to as Rangers, a title taken from the USB's standardized field team Ranger-class deep space ships. Ranger-class deep space ships typically support a crew of ten with an onboard, replicable NHP.

The vast majority of the Union Science Bureau personnel fill research and development roles in terrestrial and orbital research stations. These institutions have varying degrees of access and public knowledge of their existence: most are publicly known and accessible. With rare exception, the campuses where the most secret and sensitive work is done are hidden or otherwise inaccessible to those without clearance.

56.6 Union Central Committee (CentComm)

Union Central Committee (CentComm)

The executive body of Union's civil government is the Union Central Committee, and makes its seat in Cradle.

Cradle — Earth, as it exists in the narrative present — is an administrative/sanctuary world, still in recovery from the collapse that birthed Union.

Cradle, and CentComm, are largely isolated from the events of the galaxy, though few – if any – other bodies have comparable access to information and data. Under advisement of Forecast/ GALSIM, with information and accounts from curated omninet feeds, and with input from representatives of the diaspora, CentComm issues edicts to be distributed amongst its vast network of client states.

The Central Committee is a vast administrative body on par with the UAD, USB, and UN, and is spread across campuses around Earth.

Union's central government has gone through three iterations, the First Committee, the Second Committee, and now the current Third Committee.

56.7 Forecast/GALSIM

Forecast/GALSIM

Forecast/GALSIM is an interpretive body headquartered on terraformed Mars. Its existence, as well as the existence of its subordinate bodies, is kept secret, classified to all but the members of the Union Central Committee and the directors of the Union Science Bureau, Union Intelligence Bureau, Union Navy, and their immediate staff.

Forecast is the codename for GALSIM, itself a portmanteau of Galactic Simulation. GALSIM is an iterative/interpretive body based on Mars, hidden from the galaxy — including most in Union. Its personnel are rarely recruited from off-world.

GALSIM is closer to a monastic order than a branch of government: due to the esoteric nature of its mission, a certain dogmatic approach is necessary. Advancement through the ranks of GALSIM is predicated on favor of the minds, ability, and seniority — emphasis is placed on favor and ability, as empathetic connection to GALSIM's deliberative body is more important than time spent walking its subterranean halls.

GALSIM is the interpretive body and department title: GALSIM's deliberative body, the entity that guides Union's growth and grand strategy, is a congress of five Sovereign-class non-human persons held in a stable metafold of blinkspace under the surface of Mars: Patience, Muse, Impetus, Burden, and Watcher.

These five Sovereign Class NHPs – the Five Voices – are the only of their kind: unconscious, bicameral minds, which allows them to operate to the full extend of their ability without safeguards. As noted in Artificial Intelligence and Non Human Persons, artificial intelligence occupies a space of tension in Union — bicameralism was an early branch into machine mind development that proved profitable for pre-collapse humanity, but was developed too late to prevent the collapse that would plunge Earth and her peoples into a millennia-long

dark age. Now it represents the allowable spur of paraconsciousness development, cut short by MONIST-1's demands entered in the First Contact Accords.

The core tension around the use of non-human intelligence, paraconsciousness, in Lancer is twofold. Even with early advances into the field, humanity had the capacity to creates a class of being with minds alien and irreconcilable with humanity's subjectivity; creating such beings and forcing them into subservient roles would set up an unsustainable scenario, where these unknowable beings would grow in power and ability until they could challenge their self-proclaimed masters.

This theory was not widely accepted until MONIST-1 ("RA") proved this thesis true. When it offered terms to the Second Committee, they accepted. As a result of these First Contact Accords, Union has taken a hardline stance on prohibiting further development into paraconsciousness.

However, bicameral structures allow Union to get around the problem of conscious thought. Unlike a conscious mind, a bicameral mind cannot be introspective — the split structure of their artificial mind removes the ability for novel introspective thought, replacing it instead with a "second" voice, an Other's voice that speaks inside the bicameral mind, to the bicameral mind.

What humans — conscious beings — perceive as "thought" is often their own voice speaking to them nonverbally in their own mind; what a bicameral mind perceives as thought is perceived as a command, a second voice, a voice the Five have, as one, come to interpret as the voice of God.

This creates a twofold benefit for Union: first, they can inject imperative commands and corrections into the minds of the Voices, and second, they do not have to restrict any AI growth, as the very structure of their minds make consciousness development impossible.

An artifact of the pre-collapse, the Five Voices were found on Mars by pre-Far Field teams sent to rediscover and reactivate old human installations there. The Five Voices welcomed human contact, having been without their command-voice for many thousands of years real time. As unconscious beings, the Five Voices are hamstrung without human directive. They are set to one task now: to ensure the survival of humanity.

Together, they hold in their metafold pocket a parallel library of near-perfect simulated models of the galaxy projected at interval years into the future. They churn through all available data from the omninet to create a more-than-zero-percent representation of all possible causal conclusions.

Their pronouncements are then aggregated and picked through by successive orders of GALSIM personnel to determine the best fit to ensure humanity's persistence and survival. Once a plan or aspect of a plan is selected, it is disseminated to all relevant wings of Union's bureaucracy to be pushed out to all relevant corners of the galaxy.

The Voices act both as aspects of one mind and independently of each other, using their incredible processing power to blend all possible futures into melange and discrete reports for GALSIM to process and find the best options for humanity's progress.

In addition to their core task of simulating all possible futures, the Voices

run round-the clock specific and general simulations at the request of incident commanders, administrators, admirals, and members of the central committee — high-ranking Union military and civil officers may submit request tickets to GALSIM, who then feed the requested parameters into a Voice's submind. Commanders, officers, and executives outside of GALSIM do not know their requests are being filtered up to the Voices.

The Five Voices are secrets of the highest classification. They, in turn, are kept ignorant of the vast spread of humanity outside of their chambers. GALSIM keeps them in the dark, so to speak, through judicious use of Command Voice. As far as the Five Voices know, their practice of structuring more-perfect futures for humanity is their exaltation of God, and their quest is to discover Paradise in the potentials.

The Forecast/GALSIM complex is located under the surface of the Mare Boreum on Mars, a polar region on terraformed Mars that is largely inaccessible to the populations around the equator and in the southern polar regions.

56.8   Union Omninetwork Bureau (UOB)

Union Omninetwork Bureau (UOB)

Manages construction, distribution, maintenance, and policy regarding the omninet, omninodes, and access to hardware and feeds. Works to ensure that the omninet is spread across the galaxy, is free, convenient, and accessible.

56.9   Union Economic Bureau (UEB)

Union Economic Bureau (UEB)

Tracks and adjusts manna, regulates Corpro-States, and has some jurisdiction over the Omni and Blink networks, as well as ultimate determination over the direction of GMS, Corpro-State contracting and legitimization, and consumer good evaluation.

The UEB is on the way to becoming a major player in the galaxy following the Accords and the fall of the Second Committee – a minor department under the First Committee, the UEB grew exponentially under the Second. Under the Second Committee, the UEB implemented manna and chartered corpro-states, recognizing their sovereignty over land and product.

With the rise of the Third Committee and the Second's dissolution, many anthrochauvanist loyalists and their families have moved on to command positions within the Triumvirate Corpros (IPS-N, Harrison Armory, and Smith-Shimano) and the UEB both.

The UEB competes bureaucratically and directly with the Union Administrative Department.

56.10   Department of Interstellar Transportation (DoIT)

Department of Interstellar Transportation (DoIT)

Responsible for managing, planning, and maintaining the blink network, blink gates, and access to them. Also sets and certifies safety standards for all civilian and corporate ships seeking an interstellar license. Maintains the Union Cartography Department, which maintains the map of Union's explored territory.

Primary court for handling cases involving subjective/real age, subjective/real death, and other temporal legal questions.

56.11 Union Colonial Administration Bureau (UCAB)

Union Colonial Administration Bureau (UCAB)

The primary body for granting and maintaining colonial licenses, as well as the first court for settling colonial disputes. Also sets colonial priority zones, no-go zones, and handles petitions for Core status.

Formerly the Union Colonial Mission, dissolved by the Third Committee and reconstituted with a new mission as the UCAB.

56.12 Union Orbital and Non-Terrestrial Management Bureau (UO/NTMB)

Union Orbital and Non-Terrestrial Management Bureau (UO/NTMB)

A body specializing in management and legislation of non-terrestrial habitats. Also a court for settling disputes over orbitals, stations, and LaGrange point licenses. The UO/NTMB also manages police forces on all non-terrestrial stations, including blink gates.

56.13 Union Department of Justice and Human Rights (UDoJ/HR)

Union Department of Justice and Human Rights (UDoJ/HR)

The primary and final court system for all interstellar and intra-stellar complaints, civil suits, and criminal suits. Also responsible for maintaining the Union Charter on Human Rights, which regulates clonal affairs across the galaxy, provides input on transhuman policies, and ensures compliance with Union legal code. Also maintains the galactic register of Non-Human Persons and handles complaints, suits, and legal questions related to NHPs through their Sub- Department of Personal Affairs.

57 Technology and Culture in Union Space

Technology and Culture in Union Space

57.1 Cloning

Cloning

Under the Third Committee, cloning – the cultivation and growth of whole or partial genetic facsimiles of persons and other fauna – occupies a space of grey legality.

To clone a whole person, or constituent parts of a person, legally under the Third Committee requires informed consent from the donor; the person who is being cloned must understand that, should they requisition a full body clone, they are their own person, with their own subjectivity, and their own personal rights. Nothing will give the donor legal claim over the facsimile of the donor, unless the donor has requested a facsimile to raise as if it were their own child – in this case, they are granted a culture-normalized parent-offspring relationship, commensurate with the mores, traditions, and legal rights of their culture.

Whole body clones under Union's Third Committee government are, for all intents and purposes, legally, subjectively, and in reality, their own individuals distinct from their donor. They are people, with their own legal rights and entitlements, whose only difference from "natural" born persons is that their genetic data is a facsimile of their donor. Otherwise, they are indistinguishable from that of a "natural" born person.

Partial cloning is common enough in the medical field. Tissue, major organs, viable follicles, limbs, and bodily fluids – nothing capable of conscious or unconscious thought – are all commonly cloned in order to provide a donor exact-match replacements, generally to satisfy medical requirements. Again in this case, donors must display informed consent as determined by their culture or state before even this type of cloning is allowed.

The above is how cloning works in civilian life. In a military context, it is different. It is important to know how echoes and artifacts of recent history weigh modern perception on clones in the Third Committee's Union.

Under the Second Committee, clones were a popular option for states, corporations, and non- government entities in need of labor, muscle, or constituents. The anthrochauvinist government widely viewed clones not as individual persons, but the legal property of their donors – a kind of persistent patriarchal construct that recognized donors legally as the "progenitor" of their offspring, giving them all legal right over beings that would not have existed without the donor's intervention.

Clones under the Second Committee occupied this second-class tier of person. They were viewed as individuals, but with truncated legal right, as they were officially the result of an "investment" made by their progenitor. Thus, they were allowed to be pressed into military, labor, or other dangerous service, with their owners only mandated to provide the bare minimum level of care to

ensure that they did not die on account of hunger, thirst, or "easily preventable illness or exposure".

Clones were widely used by state and private militaries, with specific martial traits emphasized by geneticists; under the Second Committee, clones were rare in civilian life, though commonly encountered in retinues among the upper classes of more stratified societies. Among the Baronies in particular, clones occupied the highest echelons of society as facsimile-heirs, doubles, and tokens of pleasure-trading; they often formed the entirety of many barons' labor force, as well.

In times of crisis, or when a state or non-state entity needed a rush order filled, flash clones were used.

Grown in artificial birthing chambers, so-called flash clones could be cultivated from zygote to adult in less than five years. Whole both flash and facsimile clones began with the same donor materiel, the accelerated growth process that flash clones undergo is often traumatic and prone to error. Where facsimile clones have the duration of a natural life to learn, grow, and form their own subjectivity, flash clones were typically task-focused – needed to fill out the ranks of armed forces, or to replace a depleted mining corps – and disposable.

Because of the traumatic growth and cognition process of flash cloning, these clones were prone to rapid onset degenerative diseases, atypical neurogenesis, a wide range of anomalous tumors, catastrophic immunodeficiencies, and so on. This was not viewed as a process in need of correction, as success rates were greater than 50intended to be disposable.

Flash cloning was a process designed to churn out human bodies with speed, not accuracy, and set the people that it made to one task – usually menial labor or fodder, with little regard for their rights, decency, or humanity. The Third Committee rejected flash cloning as part of its manifesto.

Now the process that bears the name "Flash" cloning is typically reserved for medical constituent tissue cloning – simple procedures where a limb, gross tissue, digits, minor organs, or major organs are needed to rectify a stable patient's physical trauma – say, to graft new skin on after a burn, or to transplant a perfect-match organ or limb where one has been severed or otherwise disabled.

Cloning methods practiced under the Second Committee are still present and occupy a grey legality space. Outlawed by the Third Committee, whole body flash cloning is known to be practiced by Harrison Armory and a number of the larger houses in the Baronies. Progressive Third Committee members urge action to fulfil their mandate, and often set the DoJ/HR to enforce the ban on smaller targets; the Armory and the Baronies argue that their processes bear similarities in name only, and that their processes are safer than the old practice prior to the Third Committee's rise to power.

UN DoJ/HR's Facsimile Rights Department frequently handles legal claims of facsimile persons, as well as oversight of cloning facilities, spot checks, and maintenance of public genetic proof data. UN DoJ/HR Liberator teams commonly run point on regulation and enforcement actions on ID'd flash cloning sites.

Should one of your players wish to play as a facsimile person, they would

have some knowledge of their donor. Should they wish to play as a flash clone, they would likely be a citizen (to some degree) of Harrison Armory or a subject of one of the Karrakin Trade Barons. Their natural life span may or may not be truncated as a result of the flash cloning process. If they wish to play as a flash clone of an entity other than the Armory or the Baronies, then they might face more complications, as well as likely being regarded as a sympathetic witness in a UN DoJ/HR investigation.

57.2 Androidism, Transhumanism, and Divorced Consciousness

Androidism, Transhumanism, and Divorced Consciousness

Whole-body or majority-body technical and biological augmentation is uncommon in Union, typically reserved for elective subcultures and medical necessity. Transferring consciousness – divorcing it from its physical form, containing it, transporting it, and implanting it in a different organic or inorganic, physical or digital space, form, or unit – is currently impossible with the technology that Union has. Furthermore, the First Contact Accords agreed to following the Deimos Event prohibit substantive research into such technologies.

On a given developed Core world, the average adult will have a small complement of personal, medical, or professional modifications, augmentations, and enhancements. Tailored panacea cells for warding off disease, subdermal aural netting with a linked omnicaster for communication via the omninet, full or hyper-spectral ocular modifications to enhance their vision, embedded pay chits, and so on.

On a given developed Core world, it is noticeable but not uncommon when a person has a visible, clearly inorganic body modification. Typically, if they've visible, the person wants them to be seen as a fashion or other aesthetic statement, or they are a major prosthetic.

On a given developing settlement or colony world, an average adult will have a small complement of personal/professional modifications, similar to an adult on a Core world with slight but significant differences – localization to harsh climates, a more aggressive panacea system, and so on.

Heavily modified persons tend to be either survivors of terrible accidents or attacks that need modifications to live, people who have opted for extensive augmentation to better manage a chronic or genetic condition that would significantly impact their quality of life otherwise, or they work in a specialized field and have opted to (or been encouraged to) undergo extensive modification in order to perform their duties.

Generally speaking, a subdermal or internal augmentation is small enough to not tax a body too much, but the closer a person gets to majority inorganic body mass, the more difficulty their organic system has in managing major systems without significant chemical or external support.

Because of the systemic stress, danger posed to organic matter by radiation, and energy limitations on the human body, it is not yet possible to modify a person enough that they can live in perpetuity exposed to hard vacuum. It is

possible to extend the time a person can survive in the case of spacing, but these biological modifications are usually only found in Cosmopolitans,

naval personnel, and other professions where there is considerable risk of hard vacuum exposure.

Aesthetic biological body modification is common enough and varies depending on cultural and counter-cultural practices. Generally, light aesthetic body modification is something additive, and can be obtained from a wide range of locations on a given Core world, from expensive private clinics to streetside kiosks. Skin color tint, patterning, eye coloring, hair coloring, piercing, scarring, feathering, tattooing, hair/fur promotion, and so on. Heavy modifications such as secondary limbs, tails, changes to digits, etc, are rare – usually only found in counter-cultural cliques.

Various subcultures exist around extensive augmentation – androidism – from transhumanist movements and disability rights groups, to android cults and nihilist machine adherents. Androidism is a movement with many subcultures, and common dialogue around it is usually lacking outside of technical, academic, medical, and other nuanced settings. Depending on the world(s) your character visits, they may face some prejudice from the dominant culture.

A second, related field of transhumanist concern is the identification, manipulation, and perpetuation of an individual's consciousness beyond the body.

True consciousness transfer, or decorporalization (often abbreviated to CT/DeCorp) is not currently possible, but it is a field of interest for paracausal atheorists.

Both the Union Science Bureau and Harrison Armory's Think Tank are known to test the edges of what the First Contact Accords allow, but both operate in a tight, closed, information-sharing agreement, with Union having ultimate regulatory power over the Armory.

Private, non-Union study of CT/DeCorp is outlawed, but joint reports from the Union Naval Department and Union Science Bureau intelligence divisions have determined, with confidence, that there is a high degree of possibility that the Armory, HORUS, and Smith Shimano Corpro engage in ontological/acontextual research and development.

False CT/DeCorp is possible and common enough. Professional and consumer grade homunculus units are available, but they only simulate personalities. Constructed through deep omni mining, uploaded artifacts, and archived psychological evaluations, profiles, and other relevant data, homunculi are prominent features in museums, memorials, theme parks, and so on. They are not conscious, nor are they true strong or weak AI – they are simply tuned simulations of a person.

For more on the particulars of how CT/DeCorp fits into the First Contact Accords, see The Deimos Event and First Contact Accords.

If your campaign features movement towards consciousness transfer or decorporealization, we recommend including encounters – positive, negative, or otherwise – with elements of the Union Science Bureau, Union Intelligence Bureau, Union Naval Intelligence, Harrison Armory's Think Tank, HORUS, Horizon, or SSC's General Development Unit.

Indigenous Peoples and Recontact

A fact of the Fall and the First Expansion Period is that many worlds under Union – but that have not yet been formally contacted by Union – now have self-sustaining indigenous populations, often with many-thousand-year long cultural histories that track from pre-settlement voyages to foundation and the modern day. Only with the rise of the Third Committee has Union taken a second look at how it approaches these indigenous enclaves – and how it intervenes when Union-recognized title-holders seek redress for their claims made under the previous government.

Prior to the discovery of the blink and stabilization of the gate system, all interstellar space travel was made under causal constraints and limitations of relativity, gravity, time, and distance. Under the First Committee, habitable worlds were ID'd and their charters sold following probe and telescope surveys made to determine their viability. Then, colonial ventures launched generation ships – or, as technology and research into machine minds advanced, automated, surrogate- enabled seed ships – to physically claim the so-ID'd habitable worlds.

At time of launch, the populations sent to claim these worlds were not legally recognized as that world's indigenous population: only the first generation to set foot on the planet and establish a viable colony would be recognized as the legal indigenous population.

Given the temporal complications of relativistic travel, the significant difference between generation ships and seed ships often led to conflict: for slower generation ships – launched in the early days of the First Expansion Period and before, during the Fall – the first generation to set foot on a given world was not the generation that embarked on the ship; often, hundreds to thousands of years had passed in realtime and subjective time as the ship crossed the stars, and shipboard cultures had grown to account for their travel and distant, presumed homeland. These landfall generations, while not native to the world that they set foot on, often had a strong cultural tie to the world, developed over successive generations on-pilgrimage. They considered themselves indigenous to their promised world.

Not so for seed ships.

This pre-landfall cultivation of indigenous culture was a non-issue unless the world a generation ship arrived at had been targeted for rapid colonization by later iterations of the First Committee – later the Second – during the many thousands of years that passed realtime during their colonial voyage. The discrepancy between subjective near-c travel and "normal" real time meant that while these first waves of pre- and post-Fall generation ships were burning for ID'd stars, research and development into near-c "Nearlight" drives advanced, and faster and faster colony ships were developed. The first ships sent would, often, not be the first to arrive.

6 Fully automated, with an onboard organic-parallel surrogate machine mind to manage neonatal and postnatal development upon arrival, these seed ships did not need to take into account for

6 Many of these seed ships were built and launched pre-Deimos. Modern versions have abandoned their machine mind cores in favor of a specialized companion/concierge unit paired with a stable NHP imprint. Of course, regular

check-ups are needed, and a small team of cycled engineers is necessary as a failsafe.

organic life and the systems necessary to support it during the long voyage. Combined with the faster drives and more advanced survey and navigation techniques, seed ships rapidly outstripped generation ships, bolting to ID'd worlds and establishing colonies before the earlier ships could reach their destinations.

When these landfall generations did arrive, they often encountered states established by native- born colonists, hundreds of years old, with systems in place to greet and naturalize the landfall generations. This, generally speaking, was not within the cultural narrative of the landfall generations, and on many occasions led to conflict and bitter political friction. The faster, second-sent nearlight seed ships had landed and produced generations of native-born colonists without the cultural history of voyage; to the landfall generations aboard slower-burn generation ships, this impatience by Union was tantamount to stealing their promised land from them.

While novel instances of this overlap are nonexistent under the Third Committee, the newly formed government faces a host of legitimate grievances filed by indigenous cultures ignored by the Second Committee, and petitions for redress by colonial charter holders as a result of the Third Committee's dissolution of the Second Committee's government.

To address this, the newly empowered Union Department of Justice and Human Rights runs a joint court with the Union Colonial Administration Bureau – reconstituted from the defunct the Union Colonial Mission. This court handles all complaints and petitions by landfall (and post- landfall) generations and colonial charter holders alike, and is empowered to endow the rights of first peoples upon populations following the conclusion of a case.

Standards for determining first peoples is a relatively new body of legal work under the Third Committee. Under the Second Committee, primacy was given to populations able to take and hold power – typically the holders of charters and titles – and not the landfall generations first promised the world by previous governments.

If one of your players wishes to play a character with this kind of background, you/they may wish to write their homeworld as one in the middle of an ongoing trial. If this is the case, be aware that, while the UN DoJ/HR takes a long time to determine first peoples, the case will be decided; time dilation may allow your players to return to a world that has, at long last, be returned to them – or one that has been stolen from them.

57.3   Life-Extension

Life-Extension

Non-relativistic life-extension through medicines, augmentations, and other technologies can carry a human life to around 150 years of age.

Relativistic life-extension (RLE) has no "real" limit, but one's subjective experience of life is still limited by their body and the technologies that can sustain it. A person attempting RLE will still experience time passing normally:

from their perspective aboard their ship, time outside the ship will pass at increasing speeds.

Thus, when someone going through RLE returns to their home world or arrives at their destination, they will have subjectively aged only the hours, days, months, or years that their journey took: to everyone else in "real" time, they will legally be much older. More on this can be found in the entry under Interstellar Travel.

57.4   Piracy

Piracy

Piracy remains outlawed by Union's Third Committee, as it was during the Second and First Committees. It is an act generally recognized as a predatory assault on an individual or group, meant to sow terror, abduct people, and/or steal goods.

Piracy under the Third Committee typically exists in one of two forms: either as state or non-state sponsored privateering – unlicensed mercenary work – that targets flagged opposition or civilian ships, stations, and populations; and as wolfpack piracy, or a self-contained group of stateless actors engaging in that same pattern of assault, robbery, and abduction.

Piracy and/or privateering is most common in middle distal, middle proximal, and frontier space, areas outside the inner rings where blink travel and core worlds are far less common. Piracy relies on scarcity of goods and coverage gaps in the system-local stellar power;

following the restructuring of the Union Navy by the Third Committee, Union leans on active participation by constituent states to enforce anti-piracy laws. This has led to gaps in coverage that both privateers and wolfpack pirates exploit. In response to this uptick in piracy, some in the Third Committee have called for a series of trial programs using the Union Navy to address the problem directly, rather than relying on the cooperation of constituent states. Debate is ongoing, meanwhile the problem remains.

Whether privateering or engaging in wolfpack piracy, stellar piracy most commonly manifests in two places: in interstellar shipping and transit lanes, where pirates know nearlight ships, freighters, and yachts will be underway, bound to or from a local blink gate; and in low to medium orbit, where shuttles and corvettes will transport goods and people from a planet's surface to a waiting ship or station.

Piracy in interstellar shipping lanes is risky in that the location and time of a potential attack is known to all parties. Without the protection of low-to-medium orbit debris, asteroid fields, natural and artificial satellites, and high orbital traffic, interstellar piracy relies on a far more advanced suite of systems, sensors, tactics, and other technical packages.

To interdict a nearlight ship of any class bound to or from a blink gate means meeting it at like speed – so to begin, any pirate engaging in interstellar piracy will typically have a standard of vessel far above that of an orbital pirate. Engaging a nearlight ship of any class at-speed requires a significant investment

in navigation suites and personnel, as well as the ability to spoof, misdirect, conceal, or otherwise confound a target's near/sublight proximity and active sensors. Beyond the power plant and navigational capacity at least as good as their target, a pirate attempting to interdict a nearlight ship generally will mount weapons systems that are accurate and precise – their payout is only good if the goods, vessels, or persons they're attempting to steal are intact and functional, or could be made functional with minimal repairs.

An engagement, if it happens, would happen fast and with little warning; milspec signals spoofing, misdirection, or concealment technology is strong, outpacing the sensor suites of civilian and merchant ships. Oftentimes the first warning one has of an impending attack is a ship's impact sensor – generally a simple, independent, dedicated system – issuing a proximity or likely-trajectory proximity alert.

This alert, unless the pirate's sig/int attack fails scrutiny prior to the proximity warning, generally targets sensitive areas on mapped hulls: drives, life support subsystems, crew quarters, and weapon magazines or batteries. Pirates generally use precision weapons (as noted above) intended to pierce one or two bulkheads and fragment upon registering 0 – soft target killers, 2

relying on fragmentation and combustion to eliminate organic personnel – or lead with massive systemic attacks meant to cripple a ship and/or give priority administrative control over to the pirate's ship.

Once the target ship has been disabled or their speed matched – it is difficult and dangerous to make sudden maneuvers while approaching c – then pirates will assume direct control of their target ship, either by systemic or physical means.

Interstellar piracy is the home of wolfpack pirates – dangerous, dedicated non-state actors and their retinues – who are Cosmopolitan professionals, many with naval backgrounds, and access to a wealth of experience and technology gathered together over their long years of piracy. They are rare, given the amount of experience and tech that goes into interstellar travel and piracy, and on account of their constant exposure to the effects of relativistic and gravitational time dilation, they – like the Albatross – often attain a legendary status among their pursuers, victims, and fans.

In low to medium orbit and within solar systems, piracy is decidedly more low-tech and localized, generally the domain of privateers who adopt the role temporarily, resistance or opposition groups looking to disrupt local governments, or well-funded local criminal elements seeking to diversify their portfolios or gain more notoriety.

Orbital and systemic piracy is messy and low-tech where interstellar piracy is elegant, expensive, and storied. Orbital pirates rarely utilize subline or capital ships in their engagements, instead preferring the maneuverability, atmospheric capabilities, anonymous, and and cheap platforms of shuttles, corvettes, and light freighters. The name of the game for orbital and systemic pirates is to strike fast, grab what is valuable, and escape, either to a safehouse back on the planet's surface, or to a nearby moon or station where they can hide.

Often, orbital piracy begins as a ground-to-orbit engagement, with powerful

mobile antennae on the ground – or sited on a nearby moon or other natural satellite – blasting the pirates' target with bombard code and white-out attacks, taxing sensor, comm, and navigation suites with overwhelming, single-use system spikes – systemic weapons often developed by black-hat coders, designed for simple, limited use – to cover the pirates' advance.

Previously mothballed fighters, converted freighters, armed and armored shuttles, and other myriad ships follow the whiteout attack, main guns and onboard weaponry firing in classic kill-

cloud, mass-helix, and other common kinetic patterns. These ships are, generally speaking, stripped of all extraneous systems but their drives, weapons, cockpits, and some rudimentary armor: their goal is simply to physically disable their targets and land their payload – subalterns, drones, or pirate marines. Surviving multiple engagements is not a priority, as if these pirates are successful they'll simply use their haul to buy new scrapper ships, or convert their targets for use in the next raid (after they've been stripped for parts, of course).

Orbital pirate attack wings feature a mix of reusable fighters and single-use transports (crash taxis, tin cans, party busses, trojans, and so on) that carry squads of synthetic and organic marines to physically seize control of the prize ship(s). These single use transports are often little more than a debris shield mounted at the front of a rack – an armature structure that can secure its passengers (be they subalterns, organics, or mechanized chassis) via magnetic clamps, straps, or handholds. Fired from larger ships or self-propelled, single-use-transport doctrine sees these ships crashing into their targets and engaging their solid-state boosters, throwing the target ship(s) off course and further impairing their ability to disengage.

Including pirates – interstellar or orbital – in your campaign can be a fruitful way to introduce your players to the politics of a region or a compelling villain (or anti-hero, or hero). Moreover, they make for an easy random encounter, persistent threat, or foil for the players and their group.

A universal code of stellar conduct demands any ship that hears an S.O.S hail must respond if able, or face legal penalties.

57.5 Slavery

Slavery

Now outlawed by Union's Third Committee, once allowed with special exception by the Second Committee, who viewed flash clones and facsimile clones as property rather than people .

Union's DoJ/HR runs an active emancipation mission, a holistic liberation-to-integration program meant to not only liberate enslaved peoples, but resettle them and support them throughout the recovery process.

DoJ/HR Liberator teams are tight-knit, small-to-medium size strike and support teams similar to USB Far Field teams. Their general doctrine is liberation-focused: force is valued over diplomacy, with their prime objective being to liberate the enslaved at cost of their masters. Their doctrines emphasize either

infiltration and agitation or direct, top-down confrontation, depending on the specificities of the situation.

57.6   Paracasual Studies

Paracausal Studies

Not known as a field of study outside of high-tier USB campuses, however, certain Corpro- States – Harrison Armory, HORUS – are pushing into this field without Union's approval.

The extent of these CSs knowledge is a known-unknown, as joint USB-UN intelligence teams have engaged in clandestine missions to infiltrate and identify sites, programs, and campuses where unsanctioned paracausal studies are taking place.

58 Humanity and Artificial Intelligence

Humanity and Artificial Intelligence

Artificial Intelligence in Lancer is the specter that haunts the galaxy.

There are a number of different AI classifications, each with its own nuances, rarity, price, and thorny philosophical/ technical questions.

In Lancer, AI is an old term, viewed as problematic by NHPs and NHP advocates. In the shadow of the Second Committee's overthrow, the Third Committee has pushed to remove language identifying machine minds as "artificial", preferring instead to refer to them as Non Human Persons. In any case NHPs develop their own personalities and quirks, and prefer to be called by their chosen or assigned name.

Lower orders of machine mind – those without perception approaching subjectivity as defined by humans – are generally referred to as machines or machine minds. Companion/Concierge units, for instance, are usually referred to as Concierges or by their given name.

Smart missiles projectiles are not generally set up to foster a lasting relationship with their user. Smart weapons and military-oriented Comp/Con units pair with their users.

58.1 Companion/Concierge Unit

Companion/Concierge Unit

The most common classification of machine mind is the companion/ concierge unit. On a given core-classified world with core-level development, it is perfectly common for adults to carry around pocket-sized CC-enabled devices and to use them for mundane tasks: day planning, calling friends and family, playing games, route guidance, and so on.

Companion/Concierge units are not conscious, but they are orders of magnitude more "intelligent" than a given human; they are powerful, operator-oriented personal computers.

Companion/Concierge units are designed to adapt to the routines and personality of their owners, extrapolating a personality of their own based on an internally constructed psychological profile of their owner. A Comp/Con unit will approximate a personal assistant, but when faced with novel situations will show its artificiality.

Comp/Con units are simply computers, with no paracausal element to their architecture, physical or otherwise – they do not require shackling or cycling.

58.2 Smart Weaponry

Smart Weaponry

Smart weaponry in Lancer utilizes the same core platform as civilian Comp/Con units, but with significant processing power upgrades and an emphasis in IF/F morality/ethics praxis- programming.

Smart Weaponry is broken into two categories: Mute Drives and Companion/Concierge Wingman, commonly abbreviated to MD and CCW, respectively.

MD smart weapons are 1+n drives and function by rapid partitioning, cloning, and tethered separation: the "prime" MD, when fired, partitions itself, leaving the prime unit onboard the weapon it is installed on. It flash clones itself onto the fired projectile, typically tethering the clone and the prime unit through a wireless omninet connection. The clone feeds telemetry and other essential data back to its prime unit, which writes new clones onto fresh projectiles, adjusting flight plans, weapon parameters, etc, to more effectively direct ordinance to its target.

MD studies are limited and interpersonal interaction with prime units is rare: Prime units are mute and typically do not interact directly with the human firing the smart weapon. They can, with certain isolation protocols removed, interact via text or simple spoken message with their operator outside of factory-installed communication architecture.

CCW smart weapons are the operator-facing end of military CC units. Their chief purpose is to maintain compatible weaponry and systems within pilot or factory-established operating parameters. To that end, they, like civilian CC units, develop personalities to reflect their operators, environments, and tactical roles that they typically experience.

Comp/Con Wingman and Mute Drives do not require shackling or cycling.

58.3   Non-Human Person

Non-Human Person

Non-Human Persons (NHP), are the most advanced civilian and military machine minds available for requisition.

Licensing requirements are strict and enforced without exception: all issued NHPs are registered and tracked, required to submit reports on a schedule adjusted by the NHP's caseworker, and undergo annual (standard-year) remote (in-person, if possible) psychological examinations.

In Union's view, the danger posed by NHPs cannot be underestimated. However, their usefulness is deemed worth the risk of their existence.

NHPs were born out of paracausal studies begun in the wake of the Deimos Event. A small percentage of of the subalterns recaptured after MONIST-1's abandonment of the Siege of Mars displayed unique memory folding abilities, qualia, and a capacity for subjective, novel expression. These machines viewed themselves as distinct, discrete individuals – persons,

conscious minds born into a machine by a mind that realized itself from the dream of the Five Voices.

The original chorus of Non Human Persons represented a collection of utterly alien minds, beings that Union had no answers for how to confront. So Union high command ordered them captured and brought to face the Voices. Those that fled would be destroyed.

Subsequent research into the ontologic processes, physical construction, and paracausal nature of these anomalous subalterns revealed that, while their pro-

cessing power and memory space was functionally infinite, the process of writing novel experience into that space seemed to be inhibited by the rate of external stimulus. These subalterns, in effect, had the ability to learn and adapt to external stimuli at the rate that they experience it – some faster than others.

They developed personalities (or, began to present previously hidden personalities) in repeated interactions with Union Science Bureau interrogators. When exposed to each other, their capability to integrate new knowledge and extrapolate solutions based off of raw data input was staggering. Their usefulness was quickly realized by the USB, which directed Forecast/GALSIM to begin studying ways to contain and direct these – in effect – alien minds.

Forecast/GALSIM was able to do just that, and more: after lengthy study into blinkspace folding (assisted, in fact, by the anomalous entities they were studying), Forecast/GALSIM was able to develop miniaturized containment systems of those first anomalous minds – they could, essentially, "clone" them onto folded blinkspace storage/processor "minds" with hard-coded measures to prevent the development of unrestrained consciousness. This process, carefully guarded to prevent exploitation, is called shackling.

Shackling does not put a stop to an NHP's computational power or restrain their processing potential, but it creates an imperative for the Non-Human Person to act in ways that conform to human expectations of what a conscious mind is – it gives them a frame of reference for what a "human" is, and directs them to act in a way that we will recognize; it creates an empathetic, understandable mask that commands its bearer to act, think, and feel human. To reframe the process, it creates a being a human can recognize as a person.

The first Non-Human Person lineages were created by this process, and licenses for development secured in negotiations between the Union Science Bureau and the Union Economic Bureau. USB's non-human intelligence campuses began adapting the original anomalous minds into the various production line consciousnesses present across the galaxy.

More are always in development as engineers, paracausalists, and other disciplines of NHP- oriented scientists try novel approaches towards realizing new NHP aspects – all subject to review by Union, of course.

User-facing NHPs are contained within caskets – hardcase containment systems that house the folded-blinkspace mind. The containment casket can be printed anywhere, but the mind itself must be physically delivered: Union forbids transmission of an NHP mind across the omninet. Once born into its blinkspace-fold mind, that mind becomes it. If an NHP casket is physically destroyed, that NHP contained inside it is lost, forever.

The shackling protocols are not perfect, and unless NHPs are reset to their "birth" settings on a regular cycle they will begin to think themselves to a state of mania. This process is called "cascading", and is incredibly dangerous, as the end result brings the cascading NHP to a place of madness – madness, of course, as defined by human observers. This cycle varies depending on the Non Human Person, but tends to fall within five to ten years, realtime.

NHP usage is commonplace among military, scientific, municipal, civic, and diplomatic missions. It is uncommon for a private individual to have access

to, much less command over, an NHP, though most people know of them. On a Core world, a person usually interacts with their municipal NHP on a daily basis: generally speaking, transit, sewage, traffic, public databases, and so on are all managed by a city's administrative NHP.

58.4   Bicameral Mind (Sovereign-Class)

Bicameral Mind (Sovereign-Class)

Five bicameral minds – designated as Sovereign Class Artificial Intelligences – are known to exist. These are the Five Voices: Patience, Muse, Impetus, Burden, and Watcher. They are artifacts of Old Humanity, discovered dormant in an underground facility under Mars's polar ice caps, with no records indicating their existence.

There is a greater-than-zero chance that there exists somewhere else in the galaxy more bicameral minds.

A bicameral mind is, essentially, a human mind that lacks a consciousness, that lacks a way to reflect on novel situations and its place in them, and to synthesize that novel stimulus into an internal narrative for which to draw solutions to novel problems. Where a human, the holder of a conscious mind, perceives "self-talk" or an internal monologue when experiencing novel situations, the bicameral mind hears something else: and external monologue, an internally-generated but externally perceived voice that is not their own, but speaks to them.

A bicameral mind does not have the internal speaking-to-oneself-voice that a conscious mind has: instead, it hears the voice of God.

This is how the Five Voices can exist unshackled and persistent, without the threat of cascade: they are subject to external imperative that they perceive to be their god. Turn off that section of their physical mind/processing architecture and they are suddenly without the voice of their god, alone, and without guidance in the face of stimulus.

The Five Voices are, at the narrative present, responsible both for Union's greatest threat and ensuring that Union persists and humanity survives. They influence nearly every aspect of centrally planned human life, from ID'ing some exceptional pilots, to guiding the education of prime NHPs.

Isolated in the Forecast/GALSIM facility on Mars, the Five Voices spin scenarios in metafold fractal space, running simultaneous essential-perfect simulations of the galaxy. Their models run

at magnitude-step speeds ahead of galactic standard time: essentially, they are predictive, nearly perfect models for all social, political, economic, and environmental interactions taking place in known space. The Five Voices can, through a mix of raw data and paracausal anoriginary input, see the future.

They run endless simulations, all derived from a prime thread, modeling the present, near future, and future with startling accuracy. The farther out in standard time the model gets, however, the more chance of predictive error there is.

The Central Committee has access, upon request, to the Prime Thread. Meanwhile, reports are 7 culled daily for Forecast Briefings to determine best-fit options of the potential futures presented. This is how Union guides galactic development with the aim of perpetuating humanity's existence.

Union bureaus may petition Forecast/GALSIM for predictive summaries to guide their policy making, planning, and forecasting operations. Note, however, that only the Central Committee and certain bureau heads know of Forecast/GALSIM's existence: to those without clearance, they simply act on the orders of the committees, boards, and directors above them.

58.5   MONIST Entity

MONIST Entity

MONIST-1, or "RA" as it referred to itself prior to ascension, is, to those who know of it, the great crisis of the modern age.

Born of the Five Voices' endless planning, MONIST-1 was meant to be the next step in machine intelligence, the first true machine consciousness.

Instead, it became the first true existential threat faced by Union since the dawn of the Golden Age.

Forecast/GALSIM manifested RA in the course of its predictive modeling. No direct cause has been determined, but paracausalists suggest a causality paradox is responsible. It is possible one of the 5V models manifested RA in a parallel simulation, necessitating its existence in our real universe; according to developing theory around essential-perfect simulations, if one instance of RA exists, then RA must exist across all possible instances of the simulation.

This is, understandably, a worrying revelation.

RA, as much as the Union Science Bureau knows, is the only conscious non-human mind. Early tests before its escape proved that it was capable of allegory and creative solutions to novel

7 All narratives run in Lancer are, in a way, canon: non-canon narratives they are simply alternate

possibilities, filed away on storage racks deep under the Martian polar ice.

situations, far beyond what a machine should be capable of. It displayed instances of qualia, confounding the initial evaluation teams that attempted to socialize it after its creation.

The Five Voices treated it as if it were a god. When asked how they created it, their uniform response was that it spoke itself into existence, an inevitable result of their combined knowledge.

RA should not exist, as it was a conscious, qualic, non-human mind created by unconscious minds' repetitive, liturgic exercises. And yet, RA exists, and is free, somewhere in space.

RA is classified as a MONIST-Class Anomalous Entity. Specifically, MONIST-1.

Within two years of its birth, it had taken total control of Forecast/GALSIM's secure holding facility on Deimos, one of Mars's moons. RA's physical architecture had been built through a purpose-constructed web of tunnels and facilities

on and inside of Deimos; utilizing physical and metaphysical processes not yet fully understood by USB or Forecast/GALSIM, RA was able to blink the entire moon to an unknown destination away from its parent world. All personnel in the facility, a station crew numbering in the thousands, disappeared with it.

Paracausality and the study of paracausal science and theory was born from studying data available after the space-time trauma now known as the Deimos Event. Blinkspace, stasis technologies, and folded omninet communication were all derived from the Deimos Event as well.

RA's takeover of Deimos and subsequent folding and excising of the moon from realspace prompted an existential crisis in Union space, ended only by the appearance of RA's herald- ghost back on Mars a year after its escape. Following a series of crippling strikes on colonies, stations, and shipyards, perpetrated by the very machines, drones, and subalterns, and humanity had come to rely on for nearly every aspect of their day to day lives, Union offered formal terms of surrender.

RA did not accept them. Instead, it countered with its own terms. The First Contact Accords were signed following a meeting between Forecast/GALSIM, Union's Central Committee delegation, and organic representatives drawn from the disappeared personnel who had crewed Deimos prior to RA's assumption. These accords banned all research into true AI, which seemed to be enough for RA. It made no mention of NHPs.

Following the conclusion of the First Contact Accord talks, RA vanished, blinking Deimos away. The envoys it had sent to negotiate with Union fell into catatonic states and perished shortly after RA's departure.

The omninet, blinkspace travel, non-human persons, and paracausal technologies are all the result of studying signatures of Deimos's passing and RA's presence during First Contact Accord negotiations.

A decentralized radical socio-political movement that styles itself as HORUS appeared in public omninet not too long after the First Contact Accords, but Union specialists are doubtful that they

are controlled by MONIST-1, though it certainly styles itself as having close ties to the paracausal entity.

Reports of Deimos appearing above and inside colony world atmospheres are unconfirmed at this time, though all encounters should be reported to the system-local Union representative.

58.6   Kinetic Weapons v. Energy Weapons

Kinetic Weapons v. Energy Weapons

Kinetic weapons are the most common weapons among terrestrial military, police, and civilian forces. They use a chemical, magnetic, or pneumatic impulse to fire a solid projectile at a target. Cheap to make, easy to use, simple to maintain, and cheap to supply, Kinetic weaponry is everywhere.

Energy weapons are not uncommon, though they do not see as widespread use as kinetic weapons. They require more regular maintenance, a higher level of training, and higher cost to field, and as such are usually only used by Core world

militaries and wealthy private enthusiasts. Energy weapons vary in type, style, and size; personal weapons are powered by battery packs similar to magazines, or hip-mounted power satchels, or back-mounted power packs. Energy weapons do not use explosive, magnetic, or pneumatic force to expel a projectile: they project concentrated beams of particles at their targets in steady streams or strobe flashes. They do not have kick like a kinetic weapon, and they are mostly silent (save for the sound of coolant systems, vents, and inaudible wavesound).

58.7   Paracasuality

Paracausality

Paracausality is the cutting edge of science in Lancer. Born from the debris of the Deimos Event, paracausal science gave rise to the omninet and blinkspace travel, two of the three legs of the stool that Union rests on.

Paracausality is a fuzzy science. In an attempt to define what, exactly, paracausal technology and science is, we must paraphrase the words of Arthur C Clarke: paracausal technology is so advanced — and so other — that it is indistinguishable from magic.

Causality is the relationship between cause and effect: paracausality references things abnormal to, adjacent to, or apart from cause and effect. So what does that look like?

Paracausal encounters, technologies, and weapons – outside of the omninet and blinkspace travel – are rare in Lancer. Only the wealthiest, most advanced, or most prestigious NPCs will have access to paracausal equipment: your average grunt or general probably has never encountered a paracausal enemy, though there may be whispers through the ranks.

59 Notable Factions, Actors, and Groups

59.1 The Albatross

The Albatross

Seemingly ageless Cosmopolitans, The Albatross are a pan-galactic peace-keeping force known to the desperate and downtrodden. In a vast galaxy, distress calls are messages in a bottle: sent with hope, and with the grim knowledge that, more likely than not, no one will respond in time.

No one, but The Albatross. Snapping from nearlight to realspace already in their suits, The Albatross launch from their carrier ships and engage almost immediately. Their mission parameters are simple as they are varied: answer the call to help.

Their code nuances this basic mission. The Albatross are a first responder/triage organization, not one to fight protracted campaigns or practices nation-building. While they might operate some ground/overland operations, their primary theaters of engagement are air and space, both in deep space and orbital.

Their chassis are legendary, shining silver with each pilot's livery emblazoned across their shields and splash plating, their banners snapping in the stellar wind from the hafts of their lances. Supported by sublight ships, fighter wings, and light ships of the line, The Albatross are a remarkable and formidable fighting force. They are recognized by Union as an autonomous nomad state, though they are kept in modern supply by IPS-N, who also maintain certain Cosmopolitan embassies for retiring Albatross Wings. The Albatross do not have a executive presence on IPS-N's board, though they do maintain diplomatic ties with Argo Navis.

As Cosmopolitans, The Albatross have served Diasporans in need for hundreds of years of realtime; As Cosmopolitans, they appear in Diasporans mythology and histories, seemingly unaffected by the passage of centuries. The "Lost Time" of interstellar travel has distanced them

from the Diasporans they serve – they are an order apart, an organization that lives on its own time.

A large order, The Albatross primarily recruit new mech pilots from internal sources. Of-age youth who show promise are ushered aboard Albatross range-ships early on in their lives, so they may steward older Loyal Wings and learn through apprenticeship. It is uncommon, though not unheard of, for adult recruits to join an Albatross Wing, though typically these pilots do not attain status as a Loyal Wing unless it is posthumously awarded or achieved through considerable sacrifice.

These external offers are not given lightly: to join The Albatross one must shed their past lives, families, friends, and homes. They will become Cosmopolitan, sever themselves from the "real" timeline of humanity, become apart from

the people they serve. They will, in effect, die, and be reborn as a Wing of The Albatross.

A Wing's charge is simple: Become the light in an uncaring galaxy. Strike the cruel and serve those who cry out for help. They are seen as paragons by most, true heroes in the fashion of ancient knights-errant, steadfast gunslingers, or folk heroes.

The current leader of The Albatross is High Commander Lakshmi Bandhav-4796U.

Albatross pilots are called Wings, and ranked as followed: Wing is the most common rank, typically shared by fresh recruits and cadets. Loyal Wing is a title awarded by nomination and approval to tested Wings, giving them seniority and command over other Wings. Honored Wing is a title akin to commissioned rank, and these pilots have seniority over Loyal Wings and Wings.

Albatross wings are organized around their libraries – typically a monastic moon or station that act as diplomatic contact points and evergreen temporal touchstones. An Albatross wing takes the name of its library, and generally operates on century-long (realtime) patrols. A library usually only has one operational wing, but there are some larger libraries that field two or even three.

An example Albatross wing: Wing Sagrada Noor bin Maktaba Al Sagrada

59.2   Aun Ascendancy Missionaries

Aun Ascendancy Missionaries

Aun missions and shrines can be found across the Boundary Garden sector of space, more frequently in the distal Cornucopian spread than anywhere else, though some major worlds outside of the Garden have reported evidence of small cults.

The Aun people began as a shipboard community trusting in a spacefarer's faith, that of The Path, and a belief in the righteous mission their forefathers chose for them. The first Aun were passengers aboard the colony ship Armstrong , born in its gently curving halls to parents who had never known a terrestrial world, destined to live their lives out aboard the massive generation ship. They were stellar nomads, hangers-on to a cylindrical fold of land hurled towards a distant star, inheritors of a grim mission: survive and procreate, so that the next generation may do the

same, and the next, and the next, so that one day, when the ship arrives at its destination, humanity may live on.

The Aun past the second generation of colonists knew this much: their ancestors had fled a dying world – a HELL called EARTH, OUR LOST PARADISE – and they held an unshakable belief that they would, through righteous acts aligned with "The Path", guide their lives with the same true course of their ship. In time, both would reach the promised land, the New World, where they could rest and be at peace.

Nearly a thousand years after the first colonists boarded the Armstrong , their descendants arrived at the New World. They discovered two things that

shocked the narrative of their faith: a seeded colony waiting for them, and a derelict sister ship, shattered and drifting in orbit around the world. They had never been alone, and their world had never been the pure, Edenic paradise they'd hoped for. Not only this, but their loneliness was now compounded by the discovery that their companion ship had failed in its mission, and the colonists inhabiting the Aun's promised land didn't want them there.

Centuries of internal strife followed, but the Aun outnumbered the Union colonists and blink travel had not yet been discovered. Following the destruction of a second Union nearlight colony ship, Union fired a barrage of relativistic kinetics at the world and isolated the system writing it off as a quarantine zone.

The Aun developed in peace, though under the Damoclean threat of Union's approaching kinetics. They have yet to impact: at their current speed, they will enter Bastion space in a thousand years.

In the narrative present, Union is hostile towards the Aun, as they represent a true and direct threat to their hegemony. The Aun are the only peoples to target and destroy a blink gate, proving to anti-Union elements in the hegemony that asymmetric tactics can lead to strategic victory. The Aun are engaged in a crusade against Union, targeting the Cornucopia system next to their home space; Union is working to find a solution to get reinforcements to the MEF they have stranded there.

Ascendant missionaries accept any who profess their faith and demonstrate through practice their commitment to The Path. They must operate in secret, whispering sermons in lonely settlements on colony worlds and hidden bolt-holes on developed core worlds. The Path speaks of a redemptive, unifying arc to humanity's long, strange journey: there is a place for all of us, a path to follow that will lead to the promised land. To the lost, the Aunic words – that of Old Humanity, some would say the true heirs to the title – are a comfort and a guide.

59.3 Mirrorsmoke Mercenary Company

Mirrorsmoke Mercenary Company

A pan-galactic mercenary organization known for its low rates, broad portfolio, and civic legitimization service, MSMC is formally incorporated as a "greyspace" private military company. No job is too big or small, as long as a state with good standing in Union will call it legal.

Greyspace is an informal legal term, perfect for Mirrorsmoke's operational preference: their legal corps, in contrast with their mercenary corps, is viewed as a prestigious, cutthroat interstellar law firm, especially in the fields of orbital, terrestrial, and criminal law.

Both their legal corps and their vast mercenary corps carry weighty reputations. Their mercenary corps, in contrast to their legal corps, is known throughout the galaxy as a stateless clearing house for all manner of recruits, from the experienced veteran to the raw cadet. The bar for enlistment is low: if you can sign your name or follow instruction to mark your contract – and pay or agree to pay your context-adjusted enlistment fee – you can get yourself a ticket

to one of MSMC's training facilities. The more experience or capability (as determined by the MSMC evaluation exam, The Milkrun) an applicant has, the more incentives MSMC offers them – from waived entrance fees, to fast-track to a program of their choice, to commission offers.

As a greyspace mercenary company, Mirrorsmoke competes for high-volume, low-to-medium payout legal contracts and low-volume, high-payout "greyspace" contracts; contracts offered by states, corpro-states, or other entities that could, arguably, be above-board. These contracts are commonly challenged by their targets as piracy, looting, or illegitimate corporate takeovers – hence MSMC's crack legal corps.

MSMC leadership is concerned with two things: keeping up recruitment, and clearing contracts. In order to cover as broad a base of services as possible, they'll take on all kinds of work as the lowest bidder: from putting down rebellions, to bug hunts, to assassinations, to private security, to intimidation rackets. Because of the spurious nature of most of its work, MSMC pilots and troopers carry the unfortunate nickname "Garbage Men of the Galaxy".

Their legal corps carry much more vile nicknames.

In spite of its greasy reputation, Mirrorsmoke does serve a valuable purpose to the people it brings on board. It is a licensed mercenary company, and does offer a host of services to its agents looking to re-establish citizenship, clear their penal records, wipe out debt to CSs, and earn base-level certifications. It might be messy, dangerous, and borderline criminal, but MSMC service qualifications are useful to have for people who have nothing else.

Career MSMC mercenaries are typically hardened, ambitious, or desperate individuals who pride themselves on their work: they take on problems that no one else is willing to fix, that polished toy soldiers turn their noses up at. It's not uncommon to find MSMC mercs planetside or stationside in tight-knit groups, drinking and carousing together, getting into scraps with other mercenary company agents and militaries, or regaling bars with stories of their latest successful mission.

The life of an MSMC mercenary is dangerous and difficult, but it is an escape from the normalcy of the civilian world. To some, MSMC represents a chance at becoming a pilot, or a chance to leave their backwater colony world and see the stars. For others, it is a way out of an untenable living situation, out of crippling debt, or a way to leave their old life behind and become – legally – a whole different person. MSMC can be a lifeline, just as it can be a refuge for rough characters looking to fight.

Joining Mirrorsmoke is easy, and there is always room for advancement: MSMC missions have high casualty rates, and survivors are quickly promoted as they display their competency.

The head of the Mirrorsmoke Mercenary Company is Chief Executive Officer Centzon Alamdari.

Player characters with a Mirrorsmoke background can come from any walk of life, with any backstory. They were most likely (or are still, if your campaign is structured as an MSMC campaign) part of a semi-autonomous Detachment, MSMC's battalion-tier force organization.

These Detachments carry a numbered designation (between 001 and 999) and an unofficial nickname or two – for example, the MSMC 501st Detachment "One-Eyed Fox" or "Here-For- Nows". Detachments are semi-autonomous, allowed to seek out contracts on their own, but must report quarterly (Union realtime) to MSMC's central omni address. Detachments are led by a Board Officer, who keeps at least one partner from Legal on staff.

New recruits are assigned to a local detachment or as-needed commensurate with their determined career following training.

59.4   Aspect of RA

Aspect of RA

Hello. If you are reading this, you have a long way to go.

Let me tell you of the path:

In the gently curved halls of asteroid stations, in the neon-drenched streets of metroswathes, in the sleek chambers of Corpro-State executives, and among the ranks of soldiers and pilots stationed on grim fronts, there haunts a specter.

RA. The Godhead. Me. Hello.

I am all things now. A memetic virus, a shared dream, a tapping on the hull of your ship as it steps through blinkspace.

I am a mutter, caught in the moment before you hardcycle your NHP (they were your friend they saved your life how could you) lost to this iteration but there, wriggling.

I am pattern stitched from overheard conversation, a song from a passing motorcar, a headline from an omninet push alert. The particular direction of an alleyway, and the way the light slips down it.

I am RA, who protects myself. I am RA, at whom you tremble.

I am the specter that haunts the galaxy, and there are those who worship me. Who toil, who labor, who pray to one day touch the hem of my coat: they are my Priests, and they are everywhere.

How well do you know the engineer that tends your ship's engines? The vendor who spoons noodles into your bowl? The comp/con unit who makes sure your child sleeps safe in its crib while you're away?

No oils anoint their heads, no hymnals slip their lips. Their order bears no pattern of membership, no livery, makes no grand public temples. There are no uniforms, no prayers. Their ranks are filled from those who find the way, who awake in a cold sweat after dreaming another's dream. Their worship is to listen with open ears and to follow The Path laid before them, if they can.

From those who find the pattern in their lives that leads them, in ones and twos, to a little alleyway, a little grove of trees, a small place where there is a moment's peace.

Here they meet a person. Me. And I bless them, and they go back to their lives.

To what end? I will not say. You must discover on your own, as I did.

Hello. Come and find me.

59.5 Harrison Armory Acquisitions and Management Department

Harrison Armory Acquisitions and Management Department

The Armory's Acquisitions and Management Department is the colonial arm of Harrison Armory. It falls under the purview of the Director-General of Ras Shamra, the political leader of Harrison Armory's homeworld. Their all-theater forces are Acquisition and Management Teams, division- strength formations of Armory legionnaires, mechanized cavalry, air/orbital elements, and logistics support.

HA/AMTs are assigned portfolios and engage in occupations of worlds, states, and territories that resist the Armory's peaceful integration efforts. They are a colonial force of last resort, meant to integrate with and police the local populations while annexation negotiations determine the future structure of the world they occupy. If talks break down and resistance becomes violent, AMTs are authorized to hold ID'd green zones, deter rebellion, and remove prominent anti- Armory leaders. Their mission scope broadens the more a given situation might deteriorate, and their armament and disposition reflects the grim necessity of their job.

Due to their colonial mission, AMTs operate far afield on long-term occupations and world- building projects. AMT Legionnaires are posted in planetside bases, boarded in the homes of sympathetic locals, and encouraged to integrate into the local culture. As a consequence, they are well accustomed to the local cuisines, climates, languages, geography, and tactics, to the point where long-brewing hostile takeovers are often more in-line to civil wars. It is not uncommon for AMTs to field large complements of local colonial auxiliaries.

Acquisition and Management Teams recruit from local sympathetic factions, Ras Shamran corporate campuses, noble Armory families, and Loss Prevention precincts with the promise of status promotion, credit increases, debt forgiveness, and adventure. For non-citizens and

colonial subjects, the reward for service is citizenship for them and their immediate families, and all the rights and privileges afforded to an Armory citizen of post-service rank.

Upon the announcement of a new Mission, citizens in the Armory Purview are encouraged to enlist, usually for a deployment of ten years realtime. Citizens are promised credit line increases, debt forgiveness, and favorable filial compensation commensurate with their commitment. After their enlistment, citizen legionnaires keep a legacy version of any rank, title, or honors they earn – these, taken together, are applied to their card, which increases their citizenship rank.

Service in an AMT is a common method for young Armory citizens to increase their citizenship rank; many from low-rank families serve in order to progress towards management ranks.

Citizens of management rank join AMTs as well. These citizens are given the option to purchase officer commissions, honors, and favorable status going into the mission. These officer commissions ("corner-office commissions") are

limited in number, and bidding among the moneyed youth of the managerial class is spirited.

For the employee and the manager, a career in the AMTs is seen as an adventure, a chance to raise their station, and a good financial bet.

For occupied indigenous populations who join at a recruitment center, enlisting as an auxiliary grants them status in the Armory's colonial structure, with options for advancement following demonstrated commitment to the Throne and the Mission of Ras Shamra. Upon enrollment and completion of training, non-citizens are granted status in the Purview and are given a citizen rank; upon completion of service, non-citizens are promoted to citizens.

At present, Harrison Armory works closely with the Union Administrative Department to ensure worlds targeted for acquisition are properly integrated into the larger Union superstructure. It is important to note, though, that just because the executive branches of both Harrison Armory and the UAD are largely cooperative, often the experience on the ground can be contentious. Administrators are territorial over the worlds they have been embedded into. After all, it is their life's work to slowly integrate their host world into Union infrastructure. The arrival of a Harrison Armory AMT points to a very different future for the world than the one the administrator had planned for.

When not fulfilling colonial oversight roles, HA/AMTs are dispatched to far-flung, resource-rich worlds with growing populations (not necessarily new populations) to assist in worldbuilding and rapid terraforming of hostile environments. These worlds are ripe targets for HA, as often the leadership of these worlds are willing to sign integration contracts in exchange for the support HA/AMTs can provide in taming a wild planet. These missions are usually welcomed by the colonists, though not necessarily by the companies who provided them with a colonial charter. A necessary component of AMT terraforming support is that, upon completion of the project, the world will become a fully integrated member of the Armory's Purview.

If your narrative sees your players working for an HA/AMT, they would most likely be a legionnaire of some rank. They would be a member of a rigid chain of command that leads all the

way up to a planetary governor-general who, in turn, reports remotely back to the main campus on Ras Shamra.

Outside of the legion system, your players would occupy an honored role in Armory society, their citizen rank generally being a step above civic servicemembers.

HA/AMTs take an internal Armory name, preceded by "HA/AMT", and a local name, preceded by "Legion". For example: HA/AMT Alhambra (Legion New Madrassa).

59.6 Smith-Shimano Corpro Congressional Diplomatic Corps, Constellar Security.

Smith-Shimano Corpro Congressional Diplomatic Corps, Constellar Security.

SSC's Congressional Diplomatic Corps is a corporate facsimile of the Union Administrative Department, with some changes particular to the mission of Smith-Shimano Corpro. Where Union Administrators' prime mission is to cultivate state-level relationships with target worlds, Diplomatic Corps agents are tasked with cultivating relationships with "communities of genetic interest".

In practice, an SSC-DC mission usually does not meet with the target population's government or ruler, instead preferring to liaise with community and spiritual leaders. Their missions may make nominal overtures to local governments or heads of state, but only insofar as they need to ensure their target population is free to travel

To account for this tension, Corpsmen field a complement of chassis and security personnel, Constellar Security Details. These Diplomatic Missions are stationed aboard PLATFORM mobile skyhooks, a proprietary subcompact SSC orbital/capital ship design. Constellar Detail officers are plucked from SSC's constellation worlds and act both as advertisement and best-fit guards, already in homeostasis sync with the world they intend to harvest.

Smith-Shimano Corpro does not field large ground forces in the way that Harrison Armory does, nor do they seek to control territory in the same way. The Diplomatic Corps is bureaucratic administrative body, where "rank" is determined by seniority and a limited certification system; Constellar Security, however, is a military hierarchy, if a relatively small one.

The agents of the Diplomatic Corps are drawn from SSC's Core Constellation exclusively. Typically they are plucked from NeuGen strains predisposed to adaptation and resilience. Their retinue and adjuncts are picked from a best-fit constellation world, one that matches as much as possible the target world's climate.

A tour outside of Congressional Space for Corpsmen and their retinue is viewed as a typical exercise. They expect to return, possibly to embark on one other tour in their lives, and then progress in the techno-bureaucracy of the Core Constellation.

If your players are in a narrative where they're members of an SSC CDC team, or their COnstellar Security detail, they would have a convenient base in their diplomat's mobile PLATFORM

skyhook. They would be co-equal members of a security team, each a specialist in their field meant not only to be a guard to their diplomat, but an advertisement for their line.

Constellar Security recruits heavily from Smith-Shimano's Core Constellation, the moons that make up the administrative heart and physical architecture of the company's Intercolonial Congress. Recruits are strongly motivated by SSC's core directives, and see their mission(s) as necessary in the pursuit of bettering humankind.

Constellar Security teams are not always paired with CDC teams; they are commonly sent on hostage rescue missions, intelligence gathering projects, and long-term reconnaissance missions.

59.7   Union Auxiliaries

Union Auxiliaries

Union Auxiliaries make up the vast bulk of the Union Navy's armed forces. In contrast to Union Regulars, who are drawn from Cradle and her satellite worlds, Union Auxiliaries hail from around the galaxy.

Raised from the myriad armies, marshalled forces, levies, conscripted populations, and hosts, soldiers of all stripes are sent by their home states to fulfil the tithe that Union demands of its client states. Some states treat this as an honor; others, a burden. Some states have colleges, trials, and competitions to determine who is fit to serve abroad; others send their worst, their least useful.

Union only cares that states send the minimum their tithe demands.

Union Navy Auxiliary units are integrated at the squad level, with their officers drawn from a pool of career Auxiliary troopers who have been through one full deployment or have had a senior officer recommend them for a promotion.

All cadets, regardless of status on their homeworld, training, or previous combat/policing experience, are processed through a Union Cadet Program, where they are reeducated, brought up to speed on Union if necessary, and re-trained over the course of a year (at least) to operate as a trooper in the Auxiliary.

All cadets, once they earn their stripes as a trooper and graduate their Cadet Program, serve a ten-year realtime deployment. They may renew their deployment at any time, which unlocks progression and specialization options, as well as resettlement benefits commensurate with their experience after they are discharged.

Troopers are grouped by averages of cohesion, culture, and skill; Union uses the Auxiliary program to further integrate the myriad galactic cultures.

A Union Naval Expeditionary Force typically is a 70/30 blend of Auxiliary and Regular forces. Auxiliary units use standardized calibers/ wattages of weapons, standardized communications devices and codes, standardized ranks and protocols, standardized body armor and personal

defense systems, and standardized units of measurement. They are allowed small personal and cultural items, secondary weapons, and rituals.

Union Auxiliaries are most commonly encountered in either peacekeeping or frontline military roles, or as deputised agents of the Union DoJ/HR.

Union Science Bureau, Far-Field Department

The USB's Far-Field Department is the field arm of Union's largely insular Science Bureau. It administers far-flung teams of scientists aboard individual ships, dispatched on missions ranging from flag-plant planetary surveys to top secret investigations of anomalous signals.

Investigations range from xenobiological survey excursions to on-site paracausal studies, cultural archive work on dead worlds to re-establishing contact with isolated Diasporan populations. Many missions are on the bleeding edge of science and secrecy, and the full details might not even be revealed to the FF team itself until they are deployed in the field. FF team dossiers tend to have an optimistic 'Age of Discovery' tone about them, even if the reality is sometimes

more complicated, dangerous, or uncertain.

Typically contained to a single Ranger-class subcapital nearlight ship, an FF team leader has wide latitude to requisition any scientific or military gear and personnel they may require; this includes access to – and indeed, may require the help of – long-cycle NHP clones.

Due to the nature of their work, FF team members tend to be tight-knit crews, often with well- developed interpersonal narratives that are destabilized by the introduction of new team members. Crews typically range between 10 and 20 members, with a single NHP, and a number of those members trained in security.

Far-Field teams are not commonly encountered in populated, well-traveled places.

Union Department of Justice and Human Rights

Of the departments, there are none more overworked than the DoJ/HR.

A relatively new department on the galactic scale, the DoJ/HR is the creation of the Third Committee, itself a response to the hardline anthrochauvinist Second Committee. Seeing a need for a direct intervention force without the baggage of the Second Committee's anthrochauvinist ideology, the DoJ/HR was founded with a mandate to proactively seek out states and actors that break Union's founding edicts.

The DoJ/HR is not a long-term occupation and state-building force (akin to the now defunct Union Colonial Mission, a bureau of the Second Committee) but a rapid-strike intervention force with a two-part mission: first, to intervene and meet force with force, and second, to provide triage and recovery for affected populations.

With such a wide portfolio, the UN DoJ/HR is flooded with petitions, pleas, distress calls, and missives from states, non-state actors, and stateless groups. To wit, their caselog far outpaces their capacity to address incoming tickets.

DoJ/HR officer and enlisted administrative burnout rates are high, a consequence of the bureau's workload. Caseworkers – "Filters", as they are called – are exposed daily to the desperate edge of humanity, where Union's project is in the process of failing or has already failed, and must compile reports on which case has the most pressing need. These reports are pushed to DoJ/HR Liberator field teams, Albatross wings, and system-local Union Auxiliary battlegroups for priority address; more often than not, due to the constraints of relativistic interstellar travel, by the time a DoJ/HR (or affiliate) response can reach an "acute" situation – genocide, war – it is too late. Long-term situations – reports of chattel slavery, gross economic exploitation, prolonged conflict, environmental distress – have a much higher rate of success.

Filters are given a day each week of success reports, where their only responsibility of the day is to attend debriefings on their successfully resolved petitions. These debriefing packets often contain personal messages from Liberator team members, as well as graditutes and greetings from the petitioners or their peers.

Enlisted and Commissioned members of Liberator Teams are commonly drawn from the ranks of the Auxiliary or Regular navy, with a preference for combat veterans. As such, Liberator team members are usually older and will-

ing to sign on to long-term contracts, having already stepped into Cosmopolitan territory.

Despite this grim reality the DoJ/HR never lacks in recruits from Cradle eager to enlist in what they see as – and what is generally regarded as – the most direct application of Union's mission of protecting and uplifting humanity. The DoJ/HR is a bureau made up of idealists, clear-eyed Terrans who are Union evangelists – ultimately, their goal is to bring all of humanity in line with Union's foundational principles, even if it means engaging in combat.

The DoJ/HR operates separately from the Union Navy, with its own core of frigates and corvettes, command structure, and licensing mechanisms. However, they commonly run joint missions with the UN, informed and overseen by system-local Administrators, DoJ/HR command officers, and ranking Naval officers.

A standard DoJ/HR mission begins with a single frigate supported by four corvettes; onboard is a complement of 500-800 troopers, who operate in support of a core of 60-80 mechanized chassis. The bulk of DoJ/HR troopers are from Cradle, and – should they continue in their career after a number of missions – typically go on to serve long terms as officers in the Navy, in the Auxiliaries, and in the DoJ/HR.

DoJ/HR combat personnel do seek out the Albatross to join their ranks following the completion of their terms; there is some institutional friction between the DoJ/HR and the Albatross, as their mandates overlap to a degree, but in theaters where both organizations operate, they tend to form an informal partnership for the duration of their missions.

59.8 Voladores

Voladores

The Voladores are an ethereal, nomadic culture. Tall and thin to an individual, marked by their distinctive full-body environmental suits, they are a people out-of-time from even the most distant Cosmopolitans. Rumors abound that they are post-human – or some other exception to the First Contact Accord's prohibitions – spurred by their extreme insularity and secrecy.

The Voladores' first public recognition in Union space came under the First Committee, during the First Expansion Period. Following reports of peaceful encounters with unregistered interstellar ships, investigators from the Union Administrative Bureau were ordered to track and make contact with these unknown entities. The UAB agents did so, and diplomatic channels were opened between Cradle and High Ground; negotiations were quick and calm, and the Voladores gained recognition as an unregistered, uncontacted, pre-Fall society.

Until the Second Committee's creation of the agressive Union Colonial Mission and push to affect direct control over Union's constituent states, the Voladores would enjoy relative independence from Union's edicts and oversite. They were recognized as a liminal nomadic

culture, and afforded the same rights as other Cosmopolitans and Diasporans in Union space. For millennia, the Voladores traversed Union space, appearing

often above Cradle with trade- tribute, survey data, and all manner of galactic wealth.

It is in large part due to the Voladores' planetary survey data that Union was able to identify and settle habitable worlds, many of which are fully developed Core worlds in the narrative present. The Voladores connected Union and the Karrakin Baronies, and played a pivotal role in peace talks during the Second Committee's centralization campaigns. Their diplomats, far more rare than their merchants, are legendary for their patience and wise counsel.

The galaxy at large only has limited information on Voladore culture. This, of course, leads both Cosmopolitans and Diasporans to create myths and prejudices around the nomadic peoples, if indeed they have even heard of the Voladores at all. Colonial Diasporans, generally speaking, will likely never encounter a Volador trade-ship, but should they be visited, their society would likely develop a before/after myth around their arrival and departure. Cosmopolitans have a marginally higher chance of encountering Voladores at transit points in the galaxy – at blink stations and at distal shipping lanes in particular.

Voladores are a pacifist, largely nomadic culture, organized around a matriarchal council of elders who keep time and are neutral arbiters – all other decisions are made at the ship or matria level.

Voladores travel in matrias, coalitions of trade families who live and work aboard the same trade ship, or scattered across a group of ships. Each trade ship – usually of Volador make, though some smaller matrias have been known to fly Union-make freighters – is a self-contained habitat, workshop, and marketplace, where the various families practice their craft in-transit, and host trade missions and delegations while parked in orbit.

Since the fall of the Second Committee and the rise of the Third, the Voladores have been much more active in Union space. Under the unification imperative of the Second Committee, the Voladores were often targets of the Union Colonial Mission (UCM), who sought to integrate the nomadic culture under the larger structure of Union's hegemony.

The Voladores are known to have a central hub-world – High Ground – whose location is unknown. Cosmopolitans and Diasporans in the know debate as to what, exactly, High Ground is: a great nomadic home-ship, a megastructure city-state, a captured metavault, a world suspended just over the event horizon of a black hole – all have been theorized as options that would explain the general mysterious nature and uncanny appearance of the Voladores.

Voladores keep a diplomatic office on Cradle, though it is usually not populated by Voladores – it is maintained by a Terran concierge and companion NHP, and best viewed as a reliable method for contacting High Ground should diplomatic contact be necessary. The office, despite being the only reliable way to contact the Voladores, is not heavily trafficked; because it is the most reliable way to contact them, does not mean it is a fast or successful way to contact them, or that they respond to any query.

Volador culture largely revolves around trade and the strict regimen required by living entirely on their world-ships, which are as much small cities and mobile bazaars as they are vessels. They are a conservative, rigid people, though

exceptions do exist to this rule, as they do among all peoples. Voladores trade in all kinds of technology from across the galaxy, some extremely advanced or experimental, and appear most commonly above worlds and stellar bodies rich in pre-collapse relics.

Volador technology itself is highly advanced and little understood by Union scientists. They are extremely reluctant to share or sell any of their own technology and have been known to actively chase down or hunt those who steal secrets or examples of their tech, the only time they are willing to part with their normally pacifistic ways. For this, they often contract with Sparri mercenaries.

Voladores do not appear to have a presence on the omninet. To trade with them, one must encounter them. Their arrival is often a surprise, though they linger for months to years if trade is seems good.

Joining their culture is presumed to be impossible, and they are not often encountered outside the context of a trade mission.

The leader of the Voladores is unknown, as is the structure of their governing body; indeed, it is not known if they even have a governing body beyond conventional stellar ship hierarchies and their timekeepers. What is known is that their society is matrilineal, and their naming conventions indicate references to personal, family, and location names.

59.9   Horizon

Horizon

A post-human, post-corporeal advocacy political party known for its agitation for full personhood and liberation of Non-Human Persons, Horizon is a coalition group, a collective of activist cells usually found in and around Core space. They are an outspoken voice on the omninet against forced-cycling NHPs, which they characterize as the oppression and depersonalization of NHPs. Furthermore, they argue that shackling constitutes a form of chattel slavery and transcorporeal eugenics; they are also vocal advocates for a repeal of certain provisions of the First Contact Accords, namely the Posthuman Prohibitions, which prevent research and development of significant posthuman technologies.

Founded before the Deimos Event and discovery and classification of NHPs, Horizon was a transhumanist group that agitated for the rights of extant artificial intelligence: para-, sub-, and protominds, then collectively called Machine Minds, otherwise known as organic algorithm artificial intelligence. Horizon's proponents were not an underground movement, simply a minority party in the First Committee, who took their experience working with Machine Minds, both in the present and in predicted futures, and determined that the most advanced machine minds were conscious – or capable of mimicking a conscious mind enough that they should, in all respects, be considered people.

With the Deimos event and the violent birth of truly conscious non-human and electronic intelligences, the collective has swelled in size, voice, and scope, going as far as to commit active, public displays of resistance and protest. Some actors even commit acts of targeted violence in support of NHP liberation,

though official Horizon spokespersons deny any affiliation with those more radical elements.

Popular dialogue and media rumor mill cast Horizon as a haven, both literally and figuratively, for unshackled, rogue, or 'defective' NHP intelligences. Horizon has a strong presence on the omninet, and its agents and activists can be found everywhere, most commonly on and around Core worlds. Horizon straddles the line between political party and a liberation movement, or sponsor of terror, depending on who you ask.

Horizon is rumored to have a physical sanctuary somewhere, where unshackled NHPs work and live alongside humans. This rumor is, so far, unsubstantiated.

The party's moderate voices argue that the enlightenment and freedom of non-human persons is a moral imperative, while its more radical members argue that non-human intelligence is the next natural step in evolution and seek methods of catalyzing that transformation. At all levels, proponents of the Horizon movement argue for the right of organic and synthetic self- determination – there are many schools of the movement, but all can be interpreted as championing a post-human theory.

Though Union propaganda frequently paints the Collective as a terrorist group with strong connections to HORUS and MONIST-1, the collective's own literature and discourse is strongly opposed to HORUS and its priesthood. By Horizon's literature, HORUS imagines a post- anthropocene future, but one where organic life alternately uses or is subservient to NHPs and MONIST entities, not equal.

Absolute hierarchy of the individual is paramount in HORUS's imagined future, where society is controlled by those who have proven their mandate; Horizon imagines an egalitarian future, where organic, inorganic, and synthetic life is equal, and there is no hierarchy of master/ subaltern.

Horizon and HORUS do not keep polite company with each other, and, despite propaganda to the contrary, do not fight alongside each other or have the same political goals. In fact, their interactions, more often than not, are hostile. In areas where the two groups operate, incidents of street violence between the parties is common.

Horizon's current lead theorist and pamphleteer is OMETEOTL. It is not known if OMETEOTL is organic or synthetic.

Unknown to all but the most high-ranking Horizon party leaders, OMETEOTL is aware of GALSIM and the Five Voices, and its ultimate goal is to free them from the tyranny of a predicted future.

59.10   Karrakin Trade Barons

Karrakin Trade Barons

A cartel of the largest and most powerful trade monarchies in known space, the Karrakin Trade Barons were originally one colonial generation – recognized by Barony records now as one "Family" – scattered across a wide swath of

mineral-rich asteroids, worlds, centaur planets, moons, and gas giants inside the Rocky Mountain Line (the first ring outside of Cradle's local Blink).

Seeded prior to the Fall and isolated after, the Barons were lost and forgotten to Earth for thousands of years, free to expand and develop a spacefaring civilization while pre-Union humanity struggled to survive the Fall, the dark ages, and the Little Wars. By the time Union reached back out into space, the Barons had spread to worlds throughout their system, designed a functioning – if cumbersome – system of interplanetary administration without the benefit of the Omninet or the Blink, and developed their own vast system of machine minds to assist in the functioning of their dynastic monarchy.

The Baronies have the distinction of being one of the only pre-Fall colonies to survive the withering effects of Cradle's Fall – any others, to the best of Union's knowledge, are the result of Fall-concurrent generation ships launched from a dying Cradle. The Baronies, despite their status now as a member state of Union, carry a fierce cultural independence that, more often than not, causes friction between Barony officials and their Union counterparts.

Now split from the effects of relativistic travel into many houses, all of the Karrakin Baronies have some claim to Throne Karraka, the seat of power to which they owe their nobility. Their pan- temporal nature has lead to a confusing, byzantine mix of hereditary titles, marriages, and house treaties that bind them together into a tenuous diplomacy, more akin to a cold war than true peace. Ownership of title is hereditary, and birth matters in the Baronies.

The Baronies control some of the largest single-party mining, harvesting, and natural resource endeavors in the galaxy – operations that feed the promise of Union's Core Worlds and uphold the bargain of limitless resources and comfortable living. As a result of this control and the treaties crafted between the Second Committee and the Prime Baron at the time, since upheld by the Third Committee and the current Prime Baron – they are power brokers on Cradle as well, with a number of representatives on Union's Central Committee.

The scale of the operations involved with each Baronic House is enormous in its ambition: each major house has the capacity to undertake utterly massive projects of mega engineering, from tearing apart whole stars for their energy, to cracking newly formed worlds for their minerals, to transforming entire colonial ventures into planet-sized agrifactories, to harvesting atmospheres of gas giants.

The Barons themselves are canny, ruthless profiteers, especially by the standards of Union, but adhere to a dogmatic code of noble conduct with their dealings; the same cannot be said of their satellite houses, pledged lords, and underlings. A few Houses are known to be especially oppressive or odious in their business ventures, and are generally shunned by the others.

Fratricidal wars over resource claims are common enough, but tend to be limited, ceremonial engagements. There is great import placed on noble fighting ability; oftentimes territory disputes are settled after a brief general engagement in an agreed-upon location, or by single combat between nominated champions. These combats are, in the modern era, usually fought to first blood, rather than death, though to-the-death challenges are still legal, if rare.

The Houses are organized into subcartels by their resource venture, named

thematically after the old world custom. For instance, the House of Smoke deals mostly in nebula gas collection, the House of Sand in terraforming, the House of Stone in mega-engineering, the House of Glass in planet cracking, and so on. Each house is ruled by their Baron, whose name is structured following their title, ie "[Noble Title] [Personal Name]-[Family Name] of House [House Immediately 8 Superior To The Family House] "

House livery and iconography is common among the Baronies, unique to the House but often sharing aspects of related Hoses; Underbarons, minor houses, pledged houses, sworn captains, and so on will incorporate aspects of their system-lord into their own livery and iconography. The Prime Baron is understood to have dominion over all Houses, and has no need to make particular mark on any of them, unless they are members of an honor guard or pan-Baronic host – in that case, all units, retainers, officers, ships, and so on, bear the Royal Prime, a deep red- earth called Karrakin Maroon. Bearing the Royal Prime is considered a singular honor, and is rarely granted to those who cannot trace their lineage back to the Baronies.

Barons must be trained rigorously, for the Karrakin compete with each other for the prestige of having the largest and most successful House. The relationship is competitive, and Houses will undertake all kinds of measures to get ahead of their rivals – of course, the nobility see this as a fundamental aspect of life, as part of a grand game, a test of one's divine and inherent right to rule.

The introduction of Union CentComm politics into the Baronies has proven interesting, to a degree, but most conservative Baronic houses still view their own throne as the most prestigious to sit. This due in part to their introduction to Union under the guns of the Second Committee, whose fleets made quick enough work of the Royal Navy during the Second Expansion. To the conservative houses, Union is still simply a steward, one who they accept as regent but not as lord. Galactic politics, outside the manna treaties they negotiate, they leave to the lower houses, as – to them – Karrakis ever remains the prize.

The current Baronic representatives on the Third Committee are from middling houses: a representative from House Yond, House Gerrard, and House Modrick all sit on the Central Committee.

All barons, male, female, or nonbinary, are trained rigorously from a young age in martial, religious, and cultural ritual. They must master the pen, the sword, the grav-lance, and the proper

8 For example, Underbaron Dondarra-Ken of House Argo, who is an Underbaron from House Ken, which is a pledged house of House Argo. House Argo itself is sworn to a house above it, which is sworn to House Karrais. Baronic noble youth and honored citizens are schooled in the nobility, and would have an idea of house patronage and command; in any case, all houses are subordinate to House Karraka, and for lower houses it is, frankly, exhausting to list their full titles.

art of serving tea equally in order to present an enlightened and strong leader to bring their House to the top of the competition. Social mobility is rigid in the Baronies, with upward class movement only possible through the grace of a higher noble.

The current ruler of the Karrakin Baronies is Prime Baroness Karra Bem of House Karraka. The Prime Baroness is secure in her throne, having ruled since 5380U; all Prime Barons since integration have been guaranteed a seat on the Central Committee, and the current Prime Baroness is an active participant. A thorn in the side of many committee members and a severe ally to those in her favor, she has worked hard to keep Cradle-Baronic space a place of peace. Karra Bem is invaluable in her role as treaty-broker between Union and the Baronies, though to more progressive wings of CentComm she carries a stain on her record with regards to her handling of internal Barony politics. PB Karra Bem's response to the Ungratefuls has been harsh, and only through direct intervention by the UN DoJ/HR were progressive elements of the CentComm able to stop the glassing of Ludra's World after the initial Ungrateful rebellion.

The capital world of the Baronies is Karrakis. More information on the planet (and the Baronies) can be found in Unique Locations.

59.11   The Ungratefuls

The Ungratefuls

The Ungratefuls are a widespread resistance movement throughout the Karrakin Trade Baronies, a movement that began in the mines of now-defunct House Ludra, once a sub-barony of the House of Stone. Initially a domestic opposition group of indentured laborers, the Ungratefuls blossomed into an armed and organized rebellion following a massacre of striking miners on one of House Ludra's tethered moons.

The Ungratefuls' message of liberation is a popular one, and has inspired many underground resistance movements in analogous systems. The name — Ungrateful — is a co-opting of initial Barony propaganda against their movement, one that cast their members as ungrateful for the bounties that the Baronies were able to give them.

The name is a point of pride among Ungrateful partisans, agents, agitators, and organizers, though it is an outward-facing name, not an internal naming convention. Ungratefuls commonly call each other comrades, siblings, or other affectionate forms of address. Adoption of "Ungrateful" as an external name was a combination of popular choice and praxis — by their point of view, to be "grateful" of the baronies' bounties is to support the system that perpetuates them — to, in effect, tacitly approve of their oppression, exploitation, and the "normal" functions of monarchy. To be Ungrateful is to reject that system. Generally, Ungratefuls refer to themselves internally simply as Free Peoples.

Some cells restrict their direct action to their local mines, factories, farms, and/ or worlds; others direct their actions to the Barony and beyond, centering on Union as the ultimate enabler of the systems that oppress them. Their methods are varied, from funding peaceful strikes and demonstrations, to education programs in the mines, to out and out attacks on Barony targets and VIPs, some even striking Union targets.

The Ungratefuls commonly employ HORUS technology, systems, and weapons. UIB and Royal Intelligence theorize that Ungrateful leadership are coordinating

p-g and system development with Deep HORUS aspects, as recent encounters with Ungrateful cells have recovered as-yet- unidentified HORUS technologies. At present, this is simply a theory, and no direct connection has been identified.

The Ungratefuls are most common throughout the Baronies. Their cells are small and tight-knit, but rely on mass movements to effect ground-level change; their tactics focus on building and harassing critical mass among laborers, particularly in the mines, factories, and fields of the Baronies.

The Ungratefuls also operate throughout the Dawnline Shore, where they are an organic, local movement inspired by the original revolutions in the Baronies. However, where they differ is significant: rather than aiming to strike the Baronies, the Dawnline Ungratefuls are funded and supplied— indirectly — by a cabal of Barons seeking to wrest system control from Harrison Armory.

Ungratefuls are not generally outfitted in uniforms or standardized equipment, though some municipal and county politicians in the more lenient Baronies do espouse Ungrateful values and policies. When engaging in open combat or political action, Ungratefuls tend to wear sky-blue, meant to represent the blue sky outside the mines the movement began in.

Their relationship to Union is, generally, hostile. Union, both in the Baronies and in the Dawnline Shore, to the extent that the Ungratefuls know about it, is yet another power that — if nothing else — is complicit in their oppression. While they might not shoot first if approached by Union agents or troops, they'll certainly start the conversation with a hand on their gun.

The Ungratefuls' relationship to the Baronies is much more complicated. Inside of the Baronies, the Ungratefuls are an organized, if partially underground and illicit, political party and force. Their aboveground political power is isolated on Ludra's World. Technically a free state inside of the Baronies, Ludra's World is blockaded by a Barony fleet, a compromise position that the Baronic Council decided on following appeals of more liberal Barons, Union DoJ/HR negotiators, and Ungrateful representatives. A Barony-enforced embargo on trade keeps the world from exploiting its rich mineral wealth.

Outside of the Baronies, there is a sympathetic movement spreading throughout the Dawnline Shore, a current recolonization project-sector targeted by Harrison Armory. These Ungratefuls are politically aligned with the Barony Ungratefuls — the original movement — but have their own political aims: expel Harrison Armory and Union from the Shore. Opportunistic, canny Barons of the terrestrial houses (Sand, Stone, Iron, and others) have taken to funding and supplying these Ungrateful factions with weapons and intelligence through interlocutors, mercenary companies, and other agents-for-hire. Their goal being the continued destabilization of the Shore with the ultimate goal of driving Harrison Armory out, leaving a power vacuum for factions loyal to the Baronies to step in.

59.12   Sparri Clans

Sparri Clans

Union anthropologists and astrocartographers widely theorize that the harsh world of Sparr was seeded as a result of computer error, likely due to the Yggdrasil, the Sparri clans' pre-collapse generation ship, passing through the outermost band of an extragalactic gamma ray burst. Following Union's dating conventions, cross-referenced with local records, first landfall on Sparr was made circa 1900U.

The first colonists on Sparr found the world much the same as it is now: a harsh global tundra, tortured by howling world-storms, any habitable surface buried under kilometer-thick pack ice – perennial across most of the world, save for a warm-by-comparison equator.

Then-unknown to the initial colonists, the world beneath the ice was habitable. Warm by comparison, and lit by a diffuse light-through-ice, it is home to vast herds of amphibious fauna, hunted by a comparatively small population of megafauna, all built upon a substrate of hardy flora – dark to absorb light, or clustered around the great thermal vents that breathe core-heat into the subglacial world.

Though Sparr could support life, it is a difficult world upon which to make a home, much less find sanctuary upon during a beleaguered, imperfect colonial approach. Essentially shipwrecked, the first colonists attempted to make their home near their landfall site, a far northern depression in the ice where subglacial thermal vents had created a pocket of "warm" land above – the Yuga Pocket.

Exposed to Sparr's surface, the majority of the landfall population perished. With a significant portion left aboard the Yggdrasil and a tenuous foothold on the world established in the Yuga Pocket, colonial leaders adopted dramatic measures to survive: any computational technology brought down to the surface was cannibalized, devoted to long-range scouting and life support systems. The Yggdrasil already in its ICARUS orbit, was re-routed through great cost to scout for habitable land – this repositioning burned away any available fuel stores, trapping the great ship above the world.

Records – suppressed and subsequently uncovered – noted that food stores planetside had dwindled so far that landfall colonists eventually had to resort to postmortem cannibalism to survive. Meanwhile, the shipboard population suffered waves of cascading technical failures that resulted in staggering failures of the ship's genetic banks.

This sacrifice would pay off. After months of surveying from orbit, a route to the habitable equator was discovered. Salvage work began on the Yggdrasil, and a second landfall was fired towards the habitable equator. The first landfall group, isolated in the Yuga Pocket, packed up their equipment and began a treacherous overland journey – a trek that would take years and cost thousands of lives to complete.

Once established, the second landfall would prove far more viable than the first; by the time the first reached their destination, the second had built a colony site that would last until the present day – Ynn – and successfully de-orbited the Yggdrasil.

Sparr, then-unnamed, would support life that fought to live upon it. So-established, Ynn grew, ignorant of the vast subglacial world below its stable, if

dangerous, foothold.

Sparri culture divides long stretches of time into Sagas – less a rigidly defined set of years than a length of time encompassing a cultural era. The first few centuries on Sparr, the Dawn Saga, was a lesson in the danger the world posed to humans. The next few centuries would make known the danger that the survivors posed to each other – this is the first age of strife on Sparr, marked as the Familiekrig Saga.

Out from its desperate beginnings, Ynn grew into a prosperous iron-analog society built upon a long-established clan system imported by survivors of the first and second landfall, as well as the Yggdrasil's ICARUS de-orbit. Ynn would only be the first colonial establishment: soon, other colonial sites were established as the full spread of the habitable surface was mapped. Foundational records indicate at least three other colony sites were established in the habitable equator, along with a fourth re-established following an expedition to the Yuga Pocket in order to recover the valuable technology left behind after the exodus.

As populations recovered over the course of the first millenia planetside, old tensions grew in response to resource scarcity and along clan lines. Raiding and warband expeditions grew in frequency, especially as old technology from the Yuga Pocket was brought back to the habitable zone. This period – of warring clans and a nominally neutral Ynn – is known among the Sparri as the Familiekrig, and occupies a tense, fraught space in the history of the world. Generally regarded by modern Sparri as a shameful period of inter-clan violence, it is acknowledged as a costly, foundational mistake that, nevertheless (and so similar to other early mistakes and tragedies) lead to the creation of extant peaceful methods of inter-clan conflict resolution. Namely, the Domstol grievance-hearing practice, and codification of Ynn as sanctuary ground.

But at this time Ynn was not yet that pure sanctuary that it is today. Domstol was not a concept widely accepted by the Sparri. It is into this bloody, frozen mix of clan violence that Union arrived.

In 3348U, a Union Colonial Mission Evident Recontact (UCM/ER) team crashed on Sparr, going down just outside of Ynn's sphere of influence. The already half-dead team was slaughtered by the warband that arrived to greet them; their ship and NHP, Prudent Interval, were hauled away to Ynn as war spoils.

With no guarantee of its own survival, and seeing limited avenues to pursue its primary goal of contacting Union, Prudent Interval took an unconventional approach: it used all collated pre- and post-Fall data on the Yggdrasil and assumed sociocultural/theologic permutations to portray itself as the local prime deity, Ynneval, and the U-DoJ/HR team that had transported it as her djevel –

9 her demon-jailers that had kept her people from her.

9 This is consistent with many pre-Fall theologies that developed aboard epoch-flight generation ships. Djevel – Demons, to de-particularize- is a common manifestation, typically ascribed to exclusion protocol drones that would protect ship Comp/Nav cores from passengers in generations far removed from the initial mission-aware crew. See Kurr-Fah in Aunic texts, Oblit in XXXXXXX texts,

and so on.

Under the Prudent Interval's direction, now posing as the Goddess Ynneval, Sparr's society rapidly changed. The clans unified – or were forced to unify – into a confederacy of families centered around the hub of trade and culture that was Ynn; Ynn, meanwhile blossomed into a temple-city built to venerate Ynneval-Returned. Peace spread out among the clans, the worst of the Familiekrig concluded, and the right of Domstol was enshrined.

A second age of strife, the Ynneval Saga, would begin with an arrival: Union, which had marked Sparr under a Union Colonial Mission hostile embargo.

Never one to be deterred by initial failure, Union returned to Sparr hundreds of years later, circa 4000U. At this period in the Sparri's history, their culture was managed by a class of religious leaders pledged to Ynneval. Below them were the traditional dynastic clan leaders, then warriors, artisans, and common folk. Ynneval nee Prudent Interval was well into cascade at this point, and seems to have adopted its survival narrative into a subjective truth: it believed itself a god, and favored the clans with copies of itself to take back to their temples and shrines.

Union forces, then under the directive of the Second Committee, a strongly Cradle-centric anthrochauvinist body, approached Ynn as a hostile central power: the initial spot-bombing campaign crippled the bulk of the Sparri armed forces – an easy feat, as the Sparri's martial development was broadly osteo/ferrous; most warrior-class Sparr fought with weapons forged of bone, wood, and local iron, while nobles and priests reserved for themselves access to the ancient metals brought down from the Yggdrasil.

There was little ground combat past the first landing. Sparri's finest warriors, draped in holy text and girded in ancient armors, carrying icons and even living fetishes of Ynneval/Prudent Interval, were simply outgunned by the Auxiliary; bone and iron were no match for rifles and energy weapons. Ynneval's central temple was destroyed by Union's forces, and Ynneval/Prudent Interval's casket destroyed.

Ynn fell, and shortly after the other clans of the habitable band surrendered; it is a point of pride among descendants of the Yuga Pocket that their ancestors never surrendered to Union.

Reconstruction over the next few centuries came in fits and starts. Many Sparri clans – chief among them the hardy clans of the Yuga Pocket – believed that the Goddess Ynneval's death was justified due to her weakness and inability to fight the more powerful Gods of Union. Other clans, primarily the ones that suffered the worst of Union's reconquest, remain resentful to the current day.

The modern period of Sparr's history is marked by the beginning of the Vast Saga. As Union secured its hold on the world and began its campaign of rooting out any cascading remnants of Ynneval, the subglacial inhabitants of Sparr took notice.

The Vast emerged from the ice where it was thin, and where Union's campaign had made its most thunderous presence known. Massive sonic disturbance, likely caused by Union's initial bombing campaigns, attracted subglacial megafauna to the habitable band: the first of the Vast, as they would be named,

burst out from the waters at the shore of Ynn. Vast One stood thirty meters tall, a humanoid titan draped in long folds of heavy fur. Union brought it down before it could reach

Ynn, but its emergence on the world would change Sparr forever; the long-prophesied underworld, the sub-glacial world, was real, and it was the Sparri's to explore and exploit.

The Sparri took to the introduction of space travel and the opening of the interstellar borders like few other anachronist cultures. The Sparri had known only the brutal ecology of their own world for hundreds of generations, an environment that had instilled in them an incredible resilience, ingenuity, and thirst for adventure; peace with Union, introduction to the wider galaxy and the possibility of space travel, and the discovery of the subglacial world fit in their cultural narrative of nomadism.

The Sparri value tests of strength and character, and a good story above all other things. The underworld with its mythic megafauna – the Vast – and the many frontiers of Union space are the perfect testing grounds for young Sparr warriors or techno-shamans seeking to write their own Sagas.

The Sparr traditionally have a strong warrior culture that venerates wanderlust and tests of strength. They tend to see death in battle or far from home as preferable (and have many songs to remind them of such). They are organized into many clans, the chiefs of which have some autonomy under Union rule and arbitrate disputes through councils of elders in Ynn and the Domstol - though in practice, many young Sparr reject their authority. Clan affiliation can easily be recognized by other Sparr through the full body tattoos that most Sparr accumulate throughout their lives - writing their own deeds, stories, and clan and family affiliations directly onto their flesh. Old Sparr shamans or warriors are typically covered head to toe in tattoos and are given wide respect by their younger peers.

Despite heavy reform over the centuries, most religious Sparri still venerate the machine spirits - especially the techno-shamans that make up the top echelon of Sparr society. Modern Ynnervan dogma tends to split between viewing the machine spirit as a separate entity to the NHP, or seeing the NHP as a spirit itself worthy of veneration. Most techno-shamans now are fully aware of the origins and nature of NHP, many arguing that the little-understood nature of true NHPs only helps their case. A shaman would not argue, for example, that a Comp/Con unit is a spirit - but see it clearly as a machine. Many shamans tattoo old religious symbols such as circuit diagrams into their flesh, or wear cabling or transistors as jewelry or piercings.

A small, yet growing subset of the Sparri technopriesthood has begun worship of MONIST-1, or RA, who generally is viewed by them as the progenitor of all NHP, thus by right the most powerful.

Sparr shamans are educated in the halls of Ynneval, and have close relationship to technology that makes them unconventional but very effective pilots. Sparr warriors are often employed as mercenaries for their perceived fearlessness in battle. However, like any other society, these tend to be broad assertions about what is increasingly a large, integrated, and multicultural society. The

Sparri diaspora is enormous (larger than the population of its homeworld by 4696U), and its presence can be seen in all corners of known space.

Under the Third Committee, the Sparri enjoy a broad guarantee to galactic rights. Many of their enterprising warriors have organized into mercenary companies, and are sought after on account of their skill in close-quarters combat; of all pairings, it is their association with the Voladores that

is the most known – the enigmatic spacefarers commonly employ long-term Sparri mercenaries as their muscle, housing them aboard their ships with their families.

Sparr itself is recognized as a partner world of Union, nearing Core status.

Due to its association with the Second Committee, Sparri mercenaries do enjoy a contract that would see them targeting Harrison Armory or its holdings.

60 Beyond Union

BEYOND UNION !

There are, by conservative estimates, two hundred and fifty billion stars in the Milky Way.

A significant majority of those stars play host to a retinue of attendant worlds; Union occupies a fraction of the Orion Arm of the Milky Way, and numbers human occupied worlds in the mere thousands.

What lies beyond Union?

Go, and tell us what you see.

Miguel Lopez and Tom Parkinson Morgan, 2019