

# MechWarrior 4: Vertical Tank Controller System (Steel Battalion/Teki Hardware Update) MechWarrior's Usage Guide v0.2.1

by Baron von Pilsner



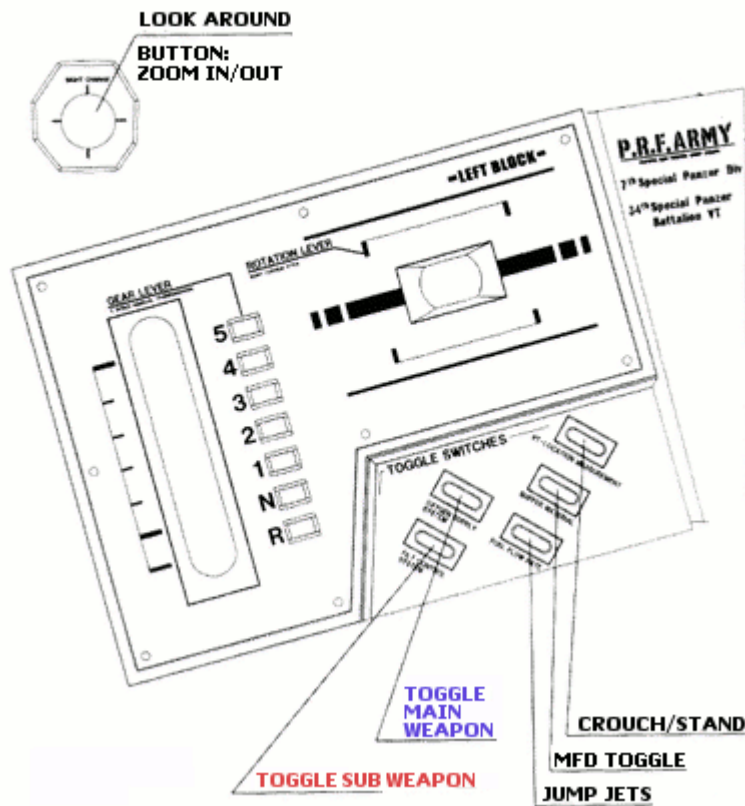
Congratulations MechWarrior, you have been chosen to receive a hardware upgrade. Your mech's cockpit's are being refitted for an ergonomic and long awaited controller update. Controls are now logically arranged with dual sticks for greater precision. The Vertical Tank Controller System (henceforth referred to as **VTCS**) may seem awkward at first, but as you learn the controls, you *will* become a deadlier mech pilot.

It is recommended you spend a few missions in the training simulator to acquaint yourself with the new controller layout before taking your mech into combat.

Refer to the install guide for proper hardware setup and maintenance, this manual is only concerned with usage, strategy, and variant controller setups.

*NOTE: It is important you calibrate 'PPJoy Virtual joystick 1' or your VTCS will not work optimally (or even well).*

## LEFT BLOCK



**GEAR LEVER:** Some mech pilots do not wish to use their foot controls, the GEAR LEVER can be used to move your mech forward (1-5), stop (N) and reverse (R). *NOTE: if your foot control block is not connected you must chose the appropriate (no pedal) VTCHID profile or the throttle control may be erratic.*

**ROTATION LEVER:** This stick is used to turn your mech left or right.

**SITE CHANGE:** this **POV Hat** is used to look left, right, down (useful for jumping and fighting smaller mechs) or back (should tactical withdraw be required to accomplish your mission objectives). The **Site Change Button** (pushing in on the **POV Hat**) will zoom your target reticule in/out.

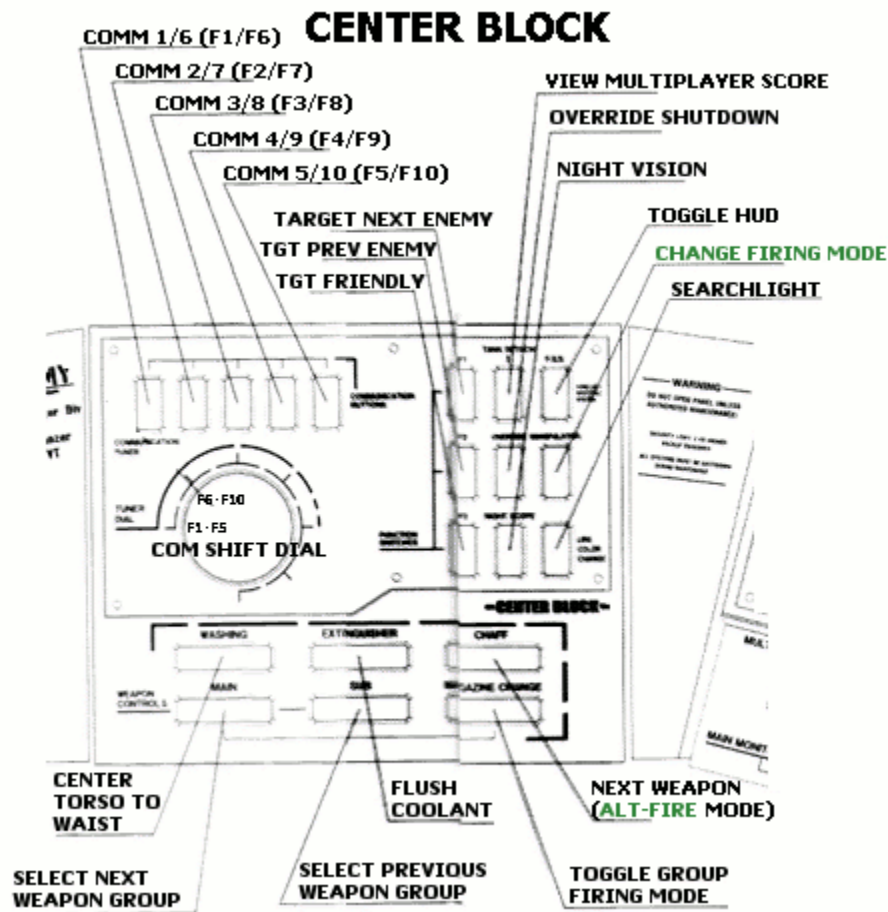
**TOGGLE SUB WEAPON:** This switch toggles between your selected weapon/group (down) and **Alpha-Strike** (up). It affects the **sub weapon trigger** on the right stick.

**TOGGLE MAIN WEAPON:** This switch toggles your **main weapon trigger** between weapon group 3 (down) and weapon group 4 (up). It is recommended to put your long range weapons in group 3 or 4 for easy access via this switch and the **main weapon trigger**.

**JUMP JETS:** Activate your jump jets (up) or turn them off (down).

**MFD TOGGLE:** This switch will toggle your MFD displays.

**CROUCH/STAND:** Use this switch to crouch your mech (down) or stand (up).



**CENTER TORSO TO WAIST:** Use this button to center your torso.

**FLUSH COOLANT:** When your mech is overheating, this will release coolant to cool your mech back down.

**NEXT WEAPON (alt-fire mode):** Select the next available weapon when in one of the **alt-fire** modes.

**SELECT NEXT WEAPON GROUP:** Toggles through your weapon groups, the active weapon group is fired with the **sub weapon** trigger.

**SELECT PREVIOUS WEAPON GROUP:** Toggles through your weapon groups backwards, the active weapon group is fired with the **sub weapon** trigger.

**TOGGLE GROUP FIRING MODE:** This changes to an alternate firing mode. When pressed you will no longer be firing a selected group of weapons, but will be firing a weapon in the selected group. After you fire, your **sub weapon** trigger will be assigned to the next weapon in the group. Use **next weapon** button (labeled chaff) to scroll through the group without firing a weapon.

**TARGETING BUTTONS:** Use these to scroll through your available targets.

**CHANGE FIRING MODE:** This has 2 modes. The 1<sup>st</sup> time you press it the **sub weapon** trigger is

linked to a single weapon (similar to **group firing mode** above), but you will scroll through all available weapons and not just the current group. The 2<sup>nd</sup> time you press it you will select a single weapon to link to your **sub weapon** trigger (no auto-scrolling). Use **next weapon** button (labeled chaff) to scroll through the list without firing a weapon.

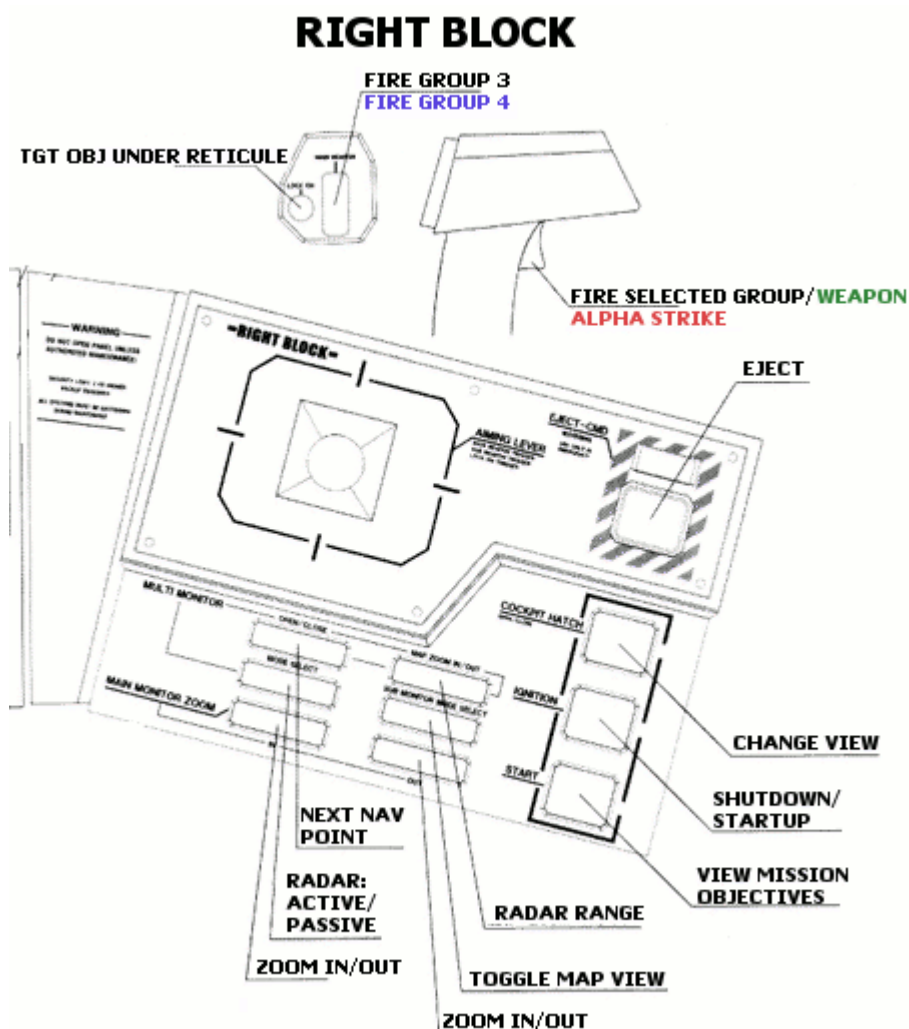
**NIGHT VISION:** Toggle night vision on/off.

**SEARCHLIGHT:** Turn searchlight on/off.

**TOGGLE HUD:** Toggle through different HUD styles.

**VIEW MULTIPLAYER SCORE:** Press to see the scores in multi-player mode.

**COMMUNICATIONS SYSTEM:** This consists of a tuner dial and 5 communications buttons. When the tuner dial is at 9 o'clock (of the adjacent position clockwise) the com buttons (from left to right) are F1 to F5 respectively. When the tuner dial is at 12 o'clock the buttons are F6 to F10 respectively. This is used to command your lancemates in single player missions. See MechWarrior 4 manual for more information on using the communication functions.



**NEXT NAV POINT:** Scroll through your nav points (labeled open/close).

**RADAR RANGE:** Zoom your active radar system display in or out (labeled map zoom in/out).

**RADAR: ACTIVE/PASSIVE:** Turn your active radar off/on (labeled mode select).

**TOGGLE MAP VIEW:** View your area map (labeled sub monitor mode select).

**ZOOM IN/OUT:** Zoom your target reticule in or out.

**EJECT:** The last button you'll ever push (at least in this mech).

**CHANGE VIEW:** To toggle from 1<sup>st</sup> to 3<sup>rd</sup> person views (labeled cockpit hatch).

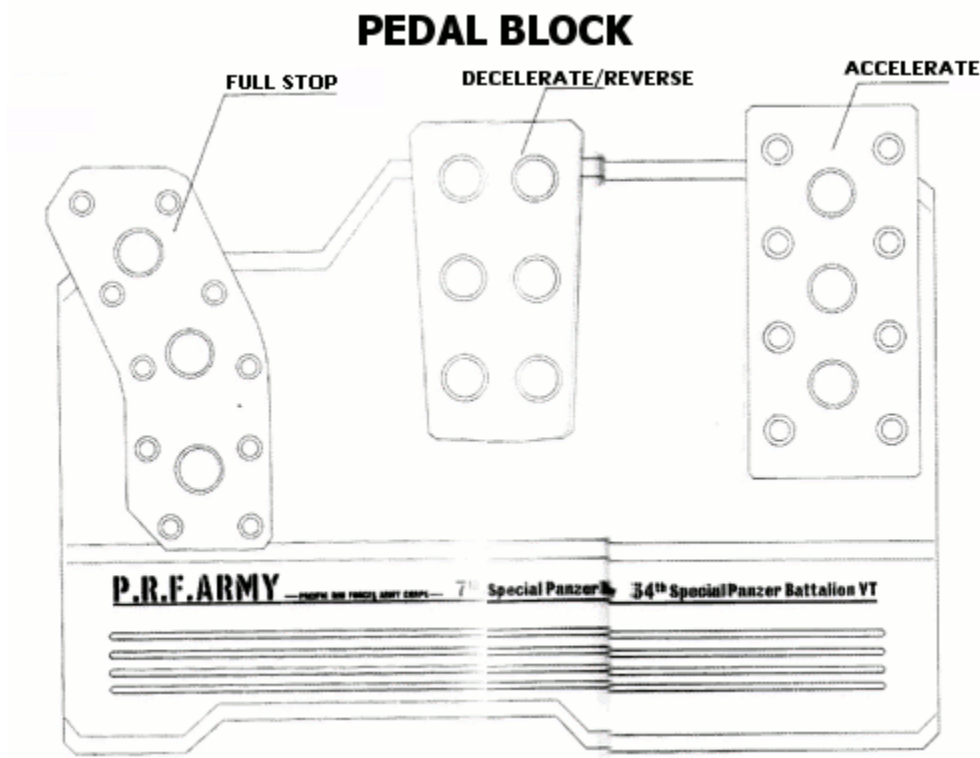
**STARTUP/SHUTDOWN:** To startup/shutdown your mech (labeled ignition).

**VIEW MISSION OBJECTIVES:** Press this to view your mission objectives (labeled start).

**TARGET OBJECT UNDER RETICULE:** This will target the object your reticule is centered on (labeled lock on).

**MAIN WEAPON:** Fires weapon group 3 or 4 depending on the left block **main weapon toggle** switch setting (up=4 down=3).

**SUB WEAPON:** Fires selected weapon/group or fires an **Alpha-Strike**. When **sub weapon switch** (left block, labeled FILT) is in the up position, the **sub weapon** trigger will perform an **Alpha-Strike**.



Your mech has been refitted with three (3) pedals for movement. They are optional and all functions may also be accessed by using the hand throttle.

**LEFT PEDAL(\*):** Brake; this pedal is used to stop your mech completely.

**CENTER PEDAL:** Decelerate/reverse; this pedal can be used to slow your mech down as well as backing up.

**RIGHT PEDAL:** Accelerator; with the obvious function of accelerating your mech forward.

\* **CONTROLLER VARIANT:** The **Pop-Tart** variant replaces the **left pedal** with an extra **jump-jet** control. **Braking** is accomplished with the **center pedal** (decelerate/reverse) or the **hand throttle** (N). This allows the MechWarrior to concentrate on targeting enemies while they jump.

## STRATEGIES:

The controller layout may seem a bit awkward and touchy at first, once you've become familiar with the controls this feeling will pass. Here are some basic strategies to help you in the transition.

**CIRCLE STRAFING:** This time tested tactic of circling your enemy while torso-twisted allows you to connect more shots while avoiding many of his. With the VTCS setup you will find that using the **rotation lever** (L. Stick) to make the finer adjustments to aiming will bring you more kills. In the past all aiming during the circle strafe was easily accomplished using the **targeting reticule** only. Minor adjustments are now best accomplished by using both the **aiming lever** and the **rotation lever** (both for aiming).

**JUMP JETS:** The Jump Jet **Fuel Flow Rate** switch allows you to activate/deactivate your jump jets easily. On some mech's you will need to prime your jump jets by toggling your **Fuel Flow Rate** switch once to arm it. A quick toggle up then down is all that's needed to prime your jets (if any). After priming, remember: up is on and down is off.

**POP-TARTING:** A Pop-Tart variant controller scheme is available, the **Pop-Tart** variant replaces the **left pedal** with an extra **jump jet** control. **Braking** is accomplished with the **center pedal** (decelerate/reverse) or the **hand throttle** (N). This allows the MechWarrior to concentrate on targeting enemies while they jump.

**MECHLAB:** Configure weapon group 3 and/or 4 for your long range weapons. This makes them readily available via the **Main Weapon** trigger (**right control block**). Many pilots configure a weapon group to have all their short range weapons in one group and use an **ALT-FIRE** mode to fire the group's weapons one at a time. This can reduce heat buildup or be used to keep an opponent from accurately targeting you (by hitting them at short range with one LBX, ERPPC, etc... after another).

## FIRE MODES:

**STANDARD:** This is the mode you are in by default.

**Sub Weapon** trigger fires selected weapon group (selected by **SUB** and **MAIN** on the center control block) or **Alpha-Strike** if the **sub weapon** toggle (left control block, labeled FILT) is in the up position.

**Main Weapon** fires weapon group 3 or 4 depending on position of **main weapon toggle** switch (up=4 down=3, labeled O2 Supply System).

#### **ALT-FIRE1:**

**TOGGLE GROUP FIRING MODE:** (center block, labeled MAGAZINE CHANGE) This changes to an alternate firing mode. When pressed you will no longer be firing a selected group of weapons, but will be firing a weapon in the selected group. After you fire, your **sub weapon** trigger will be assigned to the next weapon in the group. Use **next weapon** button (labeled chaff) to scroll through the group without firing a weapon.

*NOTE: This mode can be particularly useful especially if some of your weapons knock the enemy around and spoil his aim, or you are having heat issues with a group of weapons; they will not build up heat as fast when fired one at a time.*

#### **ALT-FIRE2:**

**CHANGE FIRING MODE:** (center block, labeled MANIPULATOR) This has 2 modes. The 1<sup>st</sup> time you press it the **sub weapon** trigger is linked to a single weapon (similar to **group firing mode** above), but you will scroll through all available weapons and not just the current group after firing. The 2<sup>nd</sup> time you press it you will select a single weapon to link to your **sub weapon** trigger (no auto-scrolling). Use **next weapon** button (labeled chaff) to scroll through the list without firing a weapon.

*NOTE: I don't find the 1<sup>st</sup> mode particularly useful unless all the weapons on your mech are short range (then this mode can be particularly useful, especially if some of your weapons knock the enemy around and spoil his aim). Otherwise you will scroll through LRM's, etc... that require a target lock or they will probably miss.*

*NOTE: The 2<sup>nd</sup> mode is useful to select a sniping weapon, but I usually have my long range weapons in group 3 or 4, so I don't have to toggle weapons when moving from long to short range.*

### **HEAT MANAGEMENT:**

Nothing is more dangerous to your survival than an overheated mech. Learn how to manage your heat or stay away from energy weapons on your mech!

**OVERRIDE:** Use this to override an automatic shutdown due to overheating. It is located on the **center control block**.

**COOLANT:** To cool your overheated mech. It is on the **center control block** (labeled as extinguisher).

**STARTUP/SHUTDOWN:** To startup/shutdown your mech (labeled ignition on the **right control block**).

**FIRING MODES:** Try different firing modes, group fire can build up heat quickly and single fire mode may require more skill, but can be used to control heat buildup by slowing (slightly) the rate of fire and allowing heat to dissipate while still bringing all your weapons to bear on a target.

Congratulations MechWarrior, you are one of the few to receive this valuable hardware upgrade. Learn it well and make us proud, your unit's survival (and your own) depends on it.

CMDR Baron von Pilsner, 214<sup>th</sup> Assault Group

<http://vt.beckament.net>

[Baron\\_von\\_Pilsner@hotmail.com](mailto:Baron_von_Pilsner@hotmail.com)