

# TRAVELLER

BOOK 1 : THE GREAT RIFT



SCIENCE FICTION ADVENTURE IN THE FAR FUTURE

# TRAVELLER

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# INTRODUCTION

Charted Space lies in a part of the Milky Way Galaxy known as the Orion Spur, located between the Perseus Arm and Carina-Sagittarius Arm. There is still much debate as to whether the Orion Spur is part of the Perseus Arm or a separate region, and there are those who wonder if the location is significant. Did the self-contained ‘playground’ of the Orion Arm allow the Ancients to develop in safety? Were they and later civilisations somehow protected from outside forces dominating the main spiral arms? Is there some significance to the fact that Charted Space is the only bridge across a rift that divides the whole Orion Spur?

The Orion Spur is cut almost completely in half by a region of very low stellar density running in a roughly spinward-rimward to coreward-trailing direction. Typically a sector or more wide, this region creates a natural barrier to astronavigation, which has affected the development of civilisations around it. It can be crossed, with some difficulty, using technology available to the races of Charted Space but the easiest method, by far, to get from one side to the other is to transit through the territory of what is now the Third Imperium.

The rift has become an important part of social and political mythology in the region. The Vilani, who created the First Imperium, were aware of their position on the bridge between the two halves of the rift and considered themselves chosen, or entitled, to rule the local region by inference. The Second and Third Imperium took a more pragmatic view, seeing their position on the rift bridge as a strategic and economic advantage without metaphysical significance. The Aslan and K’Kree both pushed expeditions across the rift and established colonies on the far side, although for very different reasons.

The spinward-rimward arm of the rift is known within Charted Space as the Great Rift. It is slightly wider and longer, on average, than the coreward-trailing section Lesser Rift. These terms may also apply to the difficulty of crossing the two halves – the easiest crossing point in the Great Rift requires jump-5 technology, whereas jump-4 drives are required to cross the Lesser Rift at its most accessible point.

The Great Rift splits at its coreward-trailing end into two spurs, thought by some to resemble a lobster’s claw.

To the people of the Third Imperium, regions on the far side of the Great Rift from Capital are considered to lie ‘behind the Claw’ and those lying closer to Capital are ‘beneath the Claw’. The sectors between the two spurs (Gusheemege, Verge and Illelith) are sometimes referred to as being ‘within the Claw’.

The Great Rift is a natural barrier to the expansion of the Imperium directly to spinward, requiring a transit around the coreward arm through Corridor sector. This has had major strategic implications over the centuries, not least in creating an element of cultural and political isolation for Deneb and the Spinward Marches. The Great Rift also reduced and delayed contact between the three Imperiums and the Aslan Hierate and Zhodani Consulate. Some historians are adamant that the Great Rift shaped the history of the Third Imperium and its predecessors, and that the modern Imperium would have been quite different without it.

## OTHER RIFTS

There are other rifts within Charted Space. The Lesser Rift, arguably, is part of the same rift system as the Great Rift and has had similar effects on the history of Charted Space. The smaller Delphi Rift is also usually considered to be part of this system or even an extension of the Lesser Rift. The Lesser and Delphi Rifts have impeded Imperial expansion to trailing and slowed contact with the Hive Federation and Two Thousand Worlds. Again, some Imperial historians are convinced this has allowed the Imperium to grow into a great power before colliding with these large and potent interstellar states.

There are many smaller rifts within Charted Space. A gap of one parsec between two mains or star clusters can be considered a rift but these small mini-rifts exert only a minor influence on economics and politics compared with the great barriers. Nevertheless, most people think in terms of astronavigation along the mains and forget about the spaces in between. This has caused blinkered thinking, such as a society capable only of jump-1 considering itself safe from a power that could easily cross what was thought an impenetrable gulf.

Beyond Charted Space there are many rifts, great and small. The largest are the voids between the spiral arms



of the galaxy. These represent a near-impenetrable barrier to navigation except where bridges such as the Orion Spur exist. Nevertheless, the Zhodani Consulate has launched several expeditions in the direction of the galactic core, which necessitated crossing between spiral arms. Exactly why the Zhodani would undertake such a monumental and hazardous task remains the

subject of intense speculation. Similarly, the Solomani Confederation has launched expeditions in the direction of the Perseus Arm, headed away from the galactic core. This, too, was a massive undertaking whose purpose and findings remain unknown outside the highest levels of the Confederation.

# EXPLORING THE RIFTS



A wide variety of maps and charts are readily available to Travellers but it would be a mistake to assume that what is on any given chart is all there is. By way of example, one of the most popular astronavigational databases, generally known as Travellermap (which can be visited in real life at <https://travellermap.com>) by its users, was created by the Travellers Aid Society for use by its members and has since been widely disseminated.

Travellers are typically interested in the mainworld of a star system, wanting to know who lives on a world, what the laws and Tech Level are, whether the atmosphere is breathable, what sort of goods are likely to be in demand and so on. The presence of gas giants in the system is potentially useful information for a ship crew but few Travellers really need to know how many uninhabited rockball planets there are or if the outermost gas giant has a ring system.

Travellermap\* provides Travellers with the data they need most. It does not present information on nearby rogue planets drifting in deep space, largely because even if this data is available, it would rarely be wanted. Many Travellers forget this fact and assume what is in the generally-available database is all there is. However, there are military and scientific charts, to which the general public has little or no access, which may contain additional data. Few Travellers are interested in the existence of a neutron star with no planets – there is simply no reason to go there!

However, a scientific mission might be interested in this data. Likewise, military surveys of deep-space comets suitable for emergency refuelling might be left out of the general databases. Indeed, whole planets may have been quietly omitted from the starcharts. A rockball world in the outsystem, used as a naval munitions dump, can be made far more secure by leaving its existence out of the publicly available data. True, a vessel that took the time to perform a detailed sweep of the star system

or someone who did a serious analysis of orbital paths would discover the existence of a ‘missing’ world but few crews are likely to do so. Even in inhabited and well-travelled systems there may be objects hidden in plain sight or simply forgotten about.

Thus, although the general databases may indicate there is nothing in any given map hex on sector map, this is not necessarily the truth. Especially in the case of a rift, there may not have been a detailed survey of the empty hex or perhaps there was and the data not released for some reason. Indeed, there are those who maintain that the rifts are far less empty than the charts would indicate.

Some of this missing data is available to those willing to take the time and trouble to consult specialist databases or obtain detailed surveys. This is usually expensive, however, since selling this information is a source of revenue for those who fund exploration missions. Some data is simply not available without the right contacts, such as naval surveys or scientific research undertaken for a secretive client. If the data is not available, the only way to obtain it is to undertake an exploration mission.

The fringes of the map are places where available information becomes a little fuzzy and where rival organisation may undertake surveys to find out what others know. An apparently innocent scientific mission to catalogue asteroids might in fact be a naval expedition searching for some rumoured strategic asset or locating refuelling points used by other powers. Some missions might be launched purely for the purpose of spying on other explorers.

All this activity gradually adds to available knowledge and data tends to creep into public charts over time. Yet this, too, can raise questions. Is the information published from the latest survey actually correct? Have details been amended for security or economic reasons?

\* Which can be seen at <https://travellermap.com>.

And in some cases, there are bigger questions, such as why a star system named on a chart dating from the Vilani Imperium is not there anymore. Was it ever? If so, why can it no longer be located?

Little is certain on the fringes of the known universe. What is true is that mysteries are bigger, secrets deeper and dangers greater. It is here that the fringes of knowledge are explored; here that the darkness is rolled back a little and new truths revealed. The dangers are great for those plunging into the rifts and the rewards impossible to predict. Yet still explorers venture out, off the edges of the charts. Not all of them return.

## TRANS-RIFT OPERATIONS

Operating on the fringes of a rift is only a little more hazardous than anywhere else, although it tends to make Travellers a little more nervous. A misjump into the emptiness is a death sentence whereas in an area of dense star systems there is a chance that a misjump might bring the ship to an inhabited system where assistance is available. However, for a vessel with a skilled astrogator and well-maintained drive, the risk of a misjump is just as small on the edges of a rift as anywhere else. The same applies to transiting all the way across a rift with a high-jump ship – this is no more dangerous than any other jump.

When operating *within* a rift, however, the risks do increase. Some Travellers are adamant that the jump drive is subject to greater variance when operating in empty space or that jump plots can be less precise; there is little room for error when jumping to a star system deep within a rift and none when attempting to make a rendezvous with a tanker or deep-space refuelling cache.

Hitting such a precise point in empty space requires a particularly good jump plot, made more difficult by the need to define the target location in a very sparse frame of reference. If the coordinates of the target are not known, a jump cannot be calculated although the ship could jump into the target hex and hope for the best.

This is tantamount to suicide however, so sane crews use a task chain to calculate deep-space jumps, starting with a Science (Cosmology or Astronomy) check, followed by the Astrogation check to plot the jump. Finally, the Engineer (J-drive) check is attempted as normal.

*Determining the target location precisely enough to allow a jump to it:* Difficult (10+) Science (Cosmology or Astronomy) check (2D hours, EDU).

*Calculating a deep space jump:* Difficult (10+) Astrogation check (3Dx10 minutes, EDU) with negative DM equal to the distance in parsecs.

## CROSSING A RIFT

The idea that a rift can only be crossed by a high-jump starship is well entrenched but this is not quite accurate. It is possible to cross a wide rift with a jump-1 capable starship providing that enough fuel is carried for repeated jumps or refuelling points are available. Indeed, it is possible to crawl across a rift at sublight speeds and the Great Rift has been crossed by this method at least once. It is more common, however, to use high-jump ships for rift crossings.

By far the safest way to cross a rift is to transit by way of known star systems. In some cases, a chain of systems allows outposts to be built to service trans-rift shipping. These tend not to be popular postings for personnel but their presence does make the crossing much safer. It is far easier to jump to a known star system and proceed to land at a starport than hit an exact spot in deep space light-years from any stellar body to refuel from a cache. This can cause otherwise worthless star systems to become important in economic or strategic terms, perhaps making them a target for enemies in times of war.

The other advantage to using known system transit is a higher chance of survival if something goes wrong. A ship that misjumps but, emerges within the system, will usually be found or able to make port eventually; it is not feasible to conduct a search for a vessel that could be anywhere in a huge volume of deep space.

Known-system transits have been used by the Aslan to cross the Great Rift in the Riftspan Reaches and by the K'Kree to cross the Lesser Rift. Such crossing points are accidents of astrography; if one does not exist within a given region then some other method must be found.

Other bodies present possibilities regarding a rift crossing. If no star system is suitably located, it may be possible to find a rogue planet or comet drifting in deep space. Many bodies have ice that can be processed for liquid hydrogen fuel, or a rogue gas giant with moons might provide a suitable location for a shipping support base. Even one with no moons offers the possibility of skimming for fuel.

A tanker or fuel cache represents a very small target in a vast expanse of nothingness. Some operators prefer to send a tanker with the ship making the trans-rift run, refuelling it after the first jump and then returning home. This obviously requires sufficient fuel for the return journey but fuel can be reduced by using a tug-and-pod tanker arrangement. A jump-capable tug carries a loaded fuel pod out to the destination, then jettisons it once it is empty, returning to base on its internal fuel capacity. A variant on this method uses fuel pods as drop tanks, leaving them behind on successive jumps to extend the ship's range. There are limits to what can be achieved by this but it can allow couriers to cross a rift if no other options are available.

A refuelling station can be constructed in deep space by the same method, with tugs dropping off component and fuel modules. However, if a string of refuelling caches is to be used, it is more common to build a permanent station and refill its reserves with regular tanker runs. A chain of stations, of any length, can be maintained by this method but the costs increase rapidly with distance. Each ship that carries fuel to the stations also uses fuel,

sometimes requiring several tanker-loads to deliver one tanker-load to a distant point.

In some cases, the refuelling point is not permanent, with tankers stationed at a known location until drained, then returning home down the chain of refuelling points. Many vessels are required to ensure a full tanker at each point, with a constant rotation of ships. This method is inefficient but sometimes used to create a temporary crossing. Some scientific expeditions are supported in this manner, typically using naval tankers during an era of peace.

The riskiest way of crossing a rift is to improvise. A ship with good sensors may be able to detect deep-space objects such as comets, which might have ice available. If one can be located within range, the vessel can proceed to it and begin looking for another. This method would only be used by the most desperate of crews or a very well-prepared exploration ship that could find no other means of crossing a stretch of space. For the average starship, jumping into a rift and hoping to somehow find fuel is nothing short of suicide.

## BASES OF THE RIFT

The most common bases in the Imperium are detailed on page 227 of the *Traveller Core Rulebook* but several others can be found outside its borders and are marked in the subsector descriptions later in this book.

**Aslan Corporation Facility (ACF):** A highly important Aslan-owned factory or corporate headquarters.

**Aslan Clan Stronghold (ACS):** A large Aslan clan facility – the world is likely the home of an important pride or strategically important.

**Aslan Ihatei Camp (AIC):** A camp for landless Aslan males looking for retainers or conquests.

**Aslan Research Station (ARS):** An Aslan clan-funded science facility.

**Corsair Base (C):** Usually an informal base that supports an interstellar pirate fleet.

**Research Station (RS):** An important science facility focussing on a key area of research.

**Way Station (W):** A large Imperial Interstellar Scout Service installation dedicated to the X-boat communication network and servicing scout ships.

# GREAT RIFT CROSSINGS



There are two well-known routes across the Great Rift; the Trans-Islands Run and the Aslan Jump-5 Route. The latter is a very lengthy transit from Wahtoikoeakh, by way of several star systems, to Aulryakh. Unsurprisingly, both worlds are important enough to the Hierate that their subsector is named for them. As the name of the route suggests, the jump-5 route is navigable by a jump-5 vessel without the need for deep space refuelling, making it potentially one of the most important routes in Charted Space.

The presence of a cluster of worlds deep in the rift enabled the Aslan to colonise their way over the rift rather than simply crossing it and hoping to find something worthwhile on the far side. Indeed, it has been suggested that an Aslan presence behind the claw was inevitable given their desire for territory. There was no need for a leap into the dark; the Aslan could expand across the Great Rift in a gradual fashion.

Although it is referred to in most databases as the jump-5 route, the Wahtoikoeakh-Aulryakh transit was navigable long before the Aslan developed long-range starships. A vessel capable of jump-2, carrying sufficient fuel for two jumps, can make the transit from Wahtoikoeakh to Ahfatre in Ryuhleia subsector, with only the jump to Aoki requiring tanker support. This may have given the Aslan access to the central cluster of worlds found in Ryuhleia and Aokylair subsectors relatively early in their spacefaring history.

The cluster of fourteen star systems within one parsec of one another, with six outliers reached by a jump-2 ship, was a significant prize in its own right, and created a jumping-off point for further expansion across the Great Rift. The second half of the transit is again navigable by a two-jump-2 ship except for the final jump from Eao to Aulryakh. Sufficiently determined explorers could have crossed the Great Rift by this route much earlier than the officially recorded date and, given evidence of Aslan incursions into the Spinward Marches long before the

Great Rift was known to have been crossed, this may well have been the case.

Today, the jump-5 route is well established, with vessels making regular runs across the Great Rift. Some ships make the whole Wahtoikoeakh-Aulryakh transit but most movement across the rift is in three segments; the two jump-5 transits are handled by specialist vessels with local ships used to cross the central star cluster. The Aslan position in the Great Rift is different to that of the Imperium but not quite so much as might first appear; Imperial vessels must transit through non-Imperial space to get across the rift by the easiest route, whereas Aslan ships can remain entirely within Hierate territory. However, the nature of inter-clan politics means any given clan's ability to get across the Great Rift can be severely curtailed at times.

It is possible that some Aslan clans have found other routes across the Great Rift, perhaps using prepositioned fuel caches or deep-space bodies for refuelling but it is likely that these clans would keep any trans-rift route secret from potential enemies.

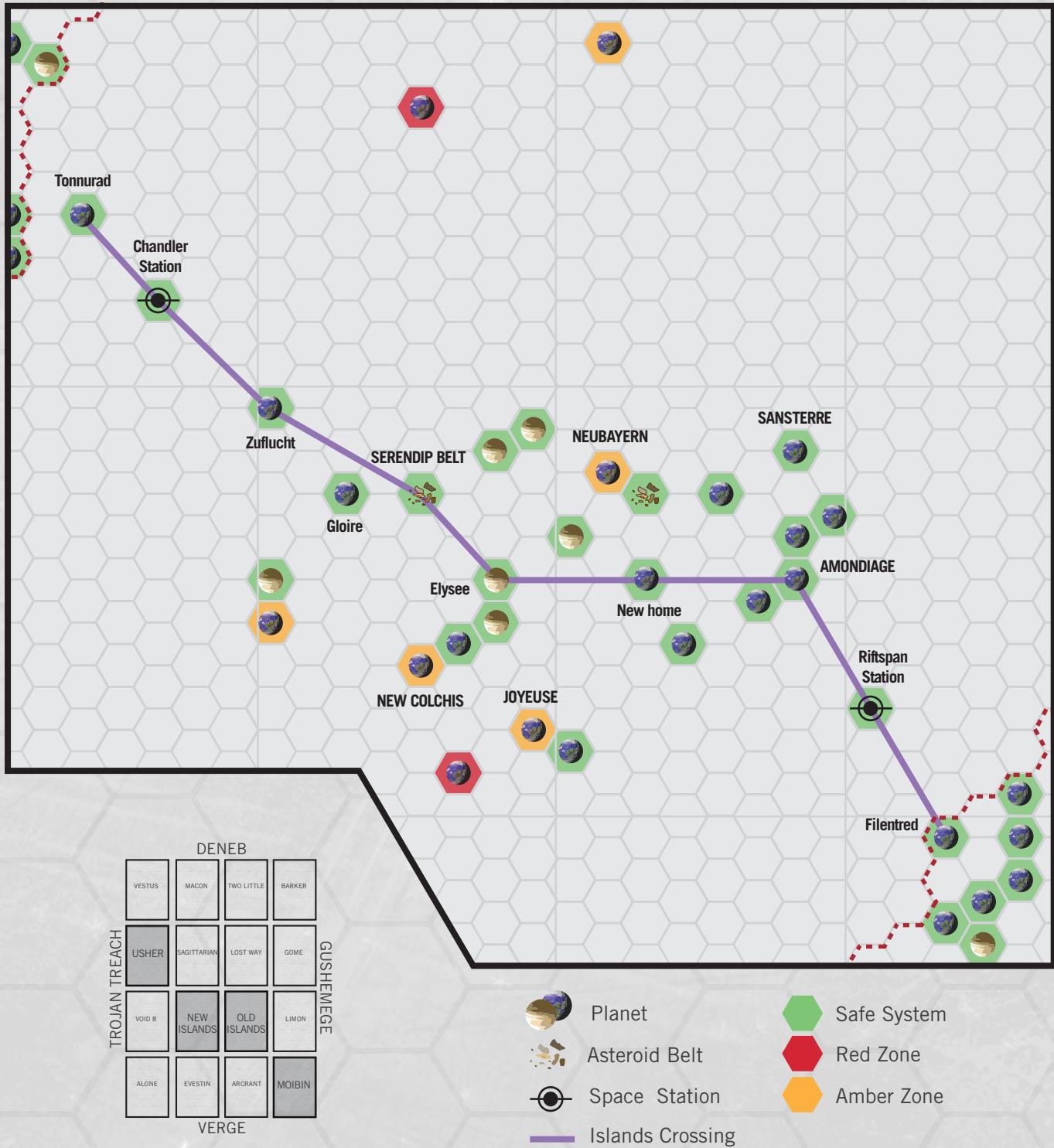
## THE ISLANDS CROSSING

The majority of Imperial traffic across the Great Rift goes via the Islands subsectors, located in Reft. The Islands are not Imperial territory, adding to the already considerable difficulties in making the transit. In addition, the shortest distance between any system on the rift 'shores' and one within the rift itself is seven parsecs; beyond the reach of any current starship design. The primary reason for trans-rift traffic is to maintain communications between political and economic administrators in Imperial territory on both sides of the rift. Difficult as it is to maintain a courier service across the rift, it is quicker than going all the way around through Corridor sector.

Crossing the Great Rift, even via the Islands subsectors, is not possible for a jump-6 vessel without some kind of deep-space refuelling. Tankers are used by naval, diplomatic and some extremely high-value corporate vessels but this is not cost-effective for most starship operators. A standard route has been established,

which can be used by a Jump-4 vessel, or one carrying additional fuel for two consecutive Jump-2 transits.

A vessel crossing the Rift from rimward-trailing to spinward-coreward will normally transit as follows, although some variation in the route is possible within the Islands subsectors. Vessels going the other way will reverse the route.



The usual launching-point for trans-Rift voyages is Filentred, in Moibin subsector. From here, vessels can make a jump-4 (or a rather tedious two-jump-2) transit to the rather prosaically named Riftspan Station. This is a small starport and refuelling station built on a rogue planetoid drifting in deep space.

Riftspan Station receives regular resupply shipments, including large quantities of fuel, from Filentred. However, the cost of maintaining the station means that everything is fabulously expensive there (refined fuel is typically Cr5000 per ton for independent ships and can easily double this during times of fuel shortages). The crew of the station, numbering several hundred personnel, have one of the most lonely and isolated postings in all of Charted Space and traffic volume is very low.

The crew of the station are rotated regularly and monitored for mental health issues arising from being stuck on a rock in the middle of a whole lot of nothing. Despite a good set of recreational facilities, boredom remains a problem, alleviated to some extent by inviting every passing Traveller to an impromptu party. Refusal to attend can cause grave offense, as the crew see few new faces.

Riftspan Station has extremely good sensors and powerful navigational beacons, as even normal variance in jump emergence location can make it difficult to locate the station. Jumping into the Great Rift with a worn or badly calibrated drive or poor astrogator is tantamount to a death sentence, even though the station maintains a tug that can (in theory) rescue ships that emerge too far away or suffer disaster. The authorities at Filentred require a stringent drive check before a vessel is allowed to jump into the rift.

From Riftspan Station, the next port of call is Amondiage, another jump-4 (or two-jump-2) transit. Most vessels then proceed via New Home, Elysee and thence to Serendip Belt. Gloire is an alternate destination but this is discouraged by the government of Serendip Belt, who owns Gloire. A final four-parsec transit takes the vessel to Zuflucht, on the very outer edge of the Islands.

Zuflucht is the exit (or entry) point for virtually all trans-rift traffic. Its small orbital starport receives most of its revenue from passing traffic and a subsidy paid by the Third Imperium in return for the right to maintain what is grandly termed a naval base there. The base is

little more than a docking station for one or two patrol vessels, plus associated support facilities.

Quite often, there are no Imperial vessels present at all, as the handful assigned to the Islands Patrol are usually out among the worlds of the Islands. When ships are present, they are often in pieces for maintenance. An Imperial fighter squadron and single system defence boat protect the station when the patrol ships are away.

Transit from Zuflucht requires another deep-space refuelling operation, this time at a purpose-built deep-space installation named Chandler Station. Chandler Station is located in free space but obtains most of its fuel within the Great Rift. A squadron of jump-1 capable tankers ply to and from half a dozen nearby comets, where ice-mining operations crack ice to make hydrogen fuel.

The station has extensive hydroponic gardens, large enough to include a small park of sorts. The gardens provide some oxygen and food for the crew, although the original intention of making the station self-sufficient fell far short of expectations. The immense cost of this bold experiment is still being loaded onto the already astronomical prices for food, accommodation, fuel and consumer goods at the station.

Chandler Station receives resupply ships from beyond the rift and is frequently visited by Imperial Interstellar Scout Service and naval vessels whose crews do not acknowledge they are engaged in trans-rift patrol or scouting operations but politely maintain their vessel has arrived as a courtesy visit, just like it would at any other Imperial starport. In this, Chandler Station differs considerably from Riftspan Station; Chandler is very much Imperial territory, complete with a platoon of Imperial Marines to defend its tiny consulate, little more than an office for a couple of clerks who log passing ships and other events of note. Riftspan Station does not have these Imperial trappings and is less 'Imperial' and more 'Islands' in feel despite being operated by an Imperial-registered corporation.

From Chandler Station, the first port of call on the Rift Shore is at Tonnurad in Usher subsector, an extensive Class B starport maintained by an Imperial corporation with some subsidy from the world government. This corporation, Riftshore Navigation LIC, is engaged in expanding the Class D starport at Helifil, which is the obvious next destination.

The expansion is slow going due to shifting goalposts imposed by the government of Helifil and as a temporary measure Riftshore Navigation LIC bought several ex-Imperial Navy tankers some decades ago, offering refuelling to vessels wishing to proceed deeper into Imperial space. This is not much of a problem for vessels headed into the rift but a crew who have just made the long transit through a very sparse region of space may become frustrated by the lack of shore leave.

After Helifil, vessels can take a number of directions if they are headed into Imperial space. However, the handful of regular trans-rift services turn around at Tonnurad, with cargo or passengers headed into Imperial space transferring to other vessels.

## OTHER RIFT CROSSINGS

The Imperial Navy and Scout Service do not acknowledge the deep-space refuelling stations they maintain in the Rift but their presence is an open secret. Their locations are a closely-guarded secret and even the crews who replenish them do not know their coordinates; senior officers and essential personnel have access to the locations on a need-to-know basis.

It is rumoured that the Imperial Navy maintains massive fuel caches somewhere in the rift, enabling an entire fleet to be transferred from Gushemege to Deneb sector. This seems unlikely, given the difficulty of maintaining such capability in secret, however it is likely that maps of potential deep-space fuel sources exist in case of future need. Smaller fuel caches do exist, enabling courier vessels to make a fast transit every few weeks to maintain communications, and it is common knowledge that the Gushemege sector fleet has an unusually large number of high-jump tankers assigned to its logistics squadrons.

Similarly, it is thought that at least one Imperial megacorporation has its own chain of stations allowing fast courier transits, which presumably translate into corporate advantages. Little information is available on the subject.

## RUMOURED INSTALLATIONS AND FACILITIES

According an unsubstantiated but persistent rumour, the Imperial Navy has a secret base in the Great Rift. The usual version of this story holds that this is a secret weapons testing and advanced-concepts development facility, where obsolete ships are refitted with exotic weapons or expended as targets. Wilder tales claim a vast fleet is mothballed there, awaiting reactivation in the event of some Imperium-wide disaster. There are even claims that these ships are not retired at all but either refitted to look like those of foreign powers for false-flag attacks or engaged in war against some unknown deep-space threat.

This hypothetical base is often presumed to be within range of Usdiki, in Gushemege sector, since Usdiki is a personal fief of the Emperor. In a worst-case scenario, the Emperor (it is claimed) can rally a whole fleet of ships or find refuge for himself and his most dedicated followers. However, thousands of navy personnel muster out each year, yet none have ever confirmed the existence of this facility; conspiracy theorists have found a way to claim this somehow proves it exists – the facility is so secret that nobody would reveal its existence even if they knew.

Less contentious is the Imperial Interstellar Scout Service Rift Research and Exploration Facility, better known as RiftREF and corrupted to ‘rifraff’ in general parlance. This facility exists, although its exact location is unknown outside the personnel assigned to it. RiftREF is home to an array of exploration and scientific craft, plus many support vessels, although some ships will be absent for many years at a time. As is the nature of such facilities, RiftREF has gained a reputation as a sinister place where strange experiments are undertaken and arcane knowledge is kept. It is known that experimental vessels have been operated from the facility but those who have completed a tour insist that, most of the time, they did nothing but survey deep-space comets for ice content and the only sinister thing present was interdepartmental politics.

# PEOPLES OF THE GREAT RIFT



There are many different sentient species to be found on the worlds of the Great Rift. Most – humans of various sorts, Aslan, Vargr, Droyne and other common starfaring species – are well known to scholars. However, the isolation of many worlds and the unique circumstances under which some were colonised, has resulted in cultural oddities.

For example, the humans of the Islands subsectors arrived after a voyage of centuries spent in suspended animation. As a result, they missed out on developments that occurred since departing Earth and never had the influences experienced by those left behind; their culture retains far more of ‘Old Earth’ in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century than the modern, interstellar-cosmopolitan society that has since arisen. The same applies to isolated enclaves of other species, which can surprise Travellers who expect all Aslan to follow Hierate culture or all Vargr to behave like those of the Extents.

Various sentient species are native to the area and may have spread out by their own efforts or after starfaring explorers arrived. Some are found elsewhere in Charted Space, often in scattered enclaves. The Droyne are one such race, whose societies range from hunter-gatherers in an obscure corner of a world inhabited by a more dominant species, to advanced starfaring powers.

## THE KURSAE

The Kursae are a mysterious species, perhaps insectoid in general appearance, who colonised many worlds in Charted Space around 200,000 years ago. This was well after the Final War that destroyed the Ancients’ civilisation but one of the many questions about the Kursae is why they did not encounter resistance from the Ancients’ heirs or some remnant of their civilisation. Maybe they did, which raises still more questions.



The Kursae are not thought to have possessed faster-than-light travel, yet managed to spread out over an area around 3,000 parsecs in diameter. Despite this very impressive achievement, they appear to have suffered a widespread societal collapse, losing technology and regressing to a primitive level. This is inferred from archaeological excavations of their worlds and many other things about the Kursae, is open to debate. Why a widespread culture with no rapid contact between colonies would undergo a uniform degeneration is a complete mystery. The best theories available suggest the Kursae achieved their goal of colonising a wide area and felt no need for technology after that, preferring a primitive lifestyle.

If this theory is true, the Kursae Diaspora may have been a survival measure, ensuring the species was sufficiently spread out to survive a disaster such as a supernova. However, this appears to have been a failure. No enclaves of live Kursae have been identified; only ruins remain. From time-to-time, a connection is made between indigenous sophonts of a world and the presence of Kursae-era ruins but it has so far been impossible to prove a solid link.

Kursae ruins are found on several worlds of the Great Rift, notably in Touchstone sector, and perhaps they are still living, right under the noses of those searching for proof of their existence. The species is listed in Imperial databases as extant but hard evidence is lacking. Any interactions with the Kursae are likely to be in the form of archaeological research or an attempt to secure a cache of artefacts.

## THE ASCONDI

The Ascondi are vaguely humanoid, with an oddly scaly skin that suggests reptiloid ancestry. They are a little smaller than humans but tough and resilient. Ascondi have two genders and, apparently, three castes within their society. Individuals do not inherit the caste of their parents but are selected by way of a complex process, resulting in physical changes as the Ascondi matures. There seems to be no gender bias towards any given caste. Ascondi prefer to spend social time with their own caste but usually form life-partnerships with a member of another caste.

By the time they are enter society as adults, which for an Ascondi is around 20 years old, individuals are firmly caste-bonded. Their physical characteristics and mindset are determined by caste and it is possible to identify caste by sight. It is not known how an Ascondi who grew up outside their society would develop.

## Castes

The three castes are traditionally referred to by the Ascondi words for hunter, finder and hearthkeeper which, like much of the Ascondi language, are almost completely unpronounceable to humans. There may be other, hidden, castes; Ascondi society is sufficiently confusing that outsiders cannot tell.

An individual's early development is shaped by their caste, but later in life an Ascondi will undergo further physical and mental changes, which modify their mental processes. It is thought that caste ceases to matter at this point.

### Ascondi Travellers

Ascondi Travellers have the following modifiers applied to their characteristics: END+1, SOC special (see page 13).

Ascondi Travellers all possess the following traits:

**Armour (+1):** The Ascondi have exceptionally tough skin, able to turn aside light blows.

**Ascondi Caste:** The Ascondi caste system results in physical changes according to the individual's role in society.

The **Hunter** caste are warriors and workers. They are not highly educated and discouraged from independent thought, creating a generally obedient caste who (whilst well regarded for their role) are the most expendable members of society. Hunters are a little larger than other Ascondi and gain STR+1 and END+1 but suffer INT-3 and EDU-3 (to a minimum of 2). All hunters gain Survival 1 upon casteing.

The **Finder** caste are technicians and scientists. They are agile and quick, although lightly built. Finders are the caste most likely to venture far from Ascondi heartlands, although they are rarely used as ambassadors to other cultures; the finder mindset is highly intuitive, leaping from idea to idea and asking endless questions. Some can seem completely random, or even idiotic, and it can be hard to figure the connection between what is happening and what the finder is babbling on about. Humans tend to be irritated by finders after a short time, sometimes describing them as 'really smart people with a fifteen-second attention span, who never got over the why? why? why? phase'. Finders INT+2 and DEX+2 but suffer STR-2 (to a minimum of 2). All finders gain Jack-of-all-Trades 1.

The **Hearthkeeper** caste are far more than the home-makers that many humans infer from their title. They are

somewhere between priests, teachers, bards, mediators and parents-to-everyone. Hearthkeepers are the core of Ascondi society and many are living repositories of vast knowledge learned by rote, protected by the other castes. However, they are not intrinsically more important; Ascondi society needs all three castes to survive. Hearthkeepers gain EDU+2 and SOC+2 but suffer STR-2 (to a minimum of 2). They gain no intrinsic skills.

## Age and Social Status

Interactions with humans are unaffected by Ascondi-society status unless the outsiders have some idea what signs to look for. Occasionally, a low-status Ascondi hunter will be mistaken for a leader by those who have no idea how Ascondi society works. This can cause hilarity among the Ascondi, who are not inclined to point out the mistake unless it becomes dangerous.

Ascondi aged 0-4 have SOC 1. Those aged 5-12 have SOC 2, rising to SOC 3 at age 13. After this, increase in SOC is tied to increasing maturity and accumulated wisdom as the Ascondi's life progresses through a series of distinct phases, each phase 2D years long. At the end of each phase, the Ascondi's SOC may be increased and/or they may go into physical decline. Ascondi suffer from diseases, and can die from accidents or violence, but this decline is triggered by unknown factors and can affect an otherwise completely healthy individual.

At the end of each phase, the Ascondi's SOC is automatically increased by +1 if it is 9 or less, followed by a chance they will go into decline, as determined by rolling 2D on the Ascondi Life Phases table. For Ascondi of SOC 10+, the chance of an increase in SOC is greatly reduced, as also shown on the Ascondi Life Phases table.

Most Ascondi do not progress beyond the [Caste]-Who-Knows stage, remaining a highly skilled and well-respected member of their caste for life. Those who finish a life phase with SOC 11+ undergo a further change; STR, DEX and END are reduced by -1 each, whilst INT and EDU increase by +1D3 each.

After this, the Ascondi is not really a member of their caste any more, however they retain their mindset and their status in society changes; rather than being called by their former caste name, he is referred to simply as Ascondi. It has been theorised this is the full adult stage of the Ascondi life cycle and that the casted phase represents a semi-juvenile state. Most Ascondi who reach this stage are around 80-120 years old.

If they live long enough, the Ascondi will eventually become visibly old and be addressed by the Ascondi word for venerated. Their intellect and knowledge will have expanded, to the point where even the most dim-witted hunter will be the rival of a well-educated human. STR, DEX and END are reduced by -2 each (to a minimum of 1), whilst INT and EDU increase by 1D3+1 each. Veneration typically begins around 150 or more years and one of the venerated might live another century or more. These are the guides but not necessarily leaders, of Ascondi society.

The Decline becomes a possibility for any Ascondi who is casted, although it is rare in younger individuals. Once the Decline begins, it is irreversible. An Ascondi afflicted loses one point from STR, DEX or END each year, determined randomly. Some Ascondi, especially younger individuals, become reckless or even suicidal once they become afflicted; older Ascondi tend towards a dignified fatalism and usually commence some important project as their final work on behalf of society.

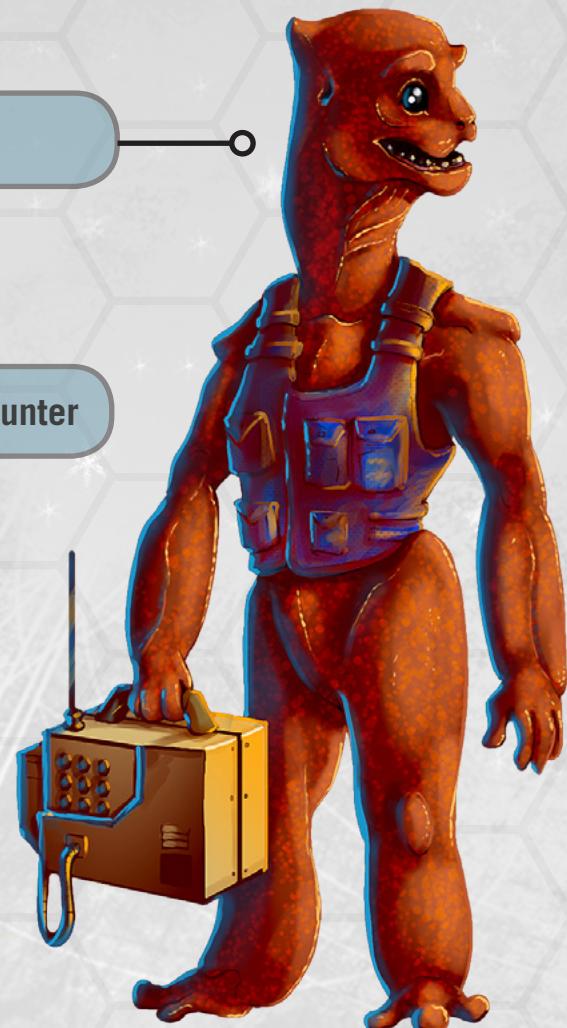
## Ascondi Life Phases

SOC	Meaning	SOC Increase	Decline
1	Juvenile-To-Be-Protected	Automatic	None
2	Juvenile-To-Be-Taught	Automatic	None
3	Juvenile-Who-Is-Learning	Automatic	None
4	Hunter/Finder/Hearthkeeper-Who-Is Learning (Casted Member Of Society)	Automatic	12+
5-7	Hunter/Finder/Hearthkeeper-Who-Has-Learned	Automatic	12+
8-9	Hunter/Finder/Hearthkeeper-Who-Knows	Automatic	12+
10	Hunter/Finder/Hearthkeeper-Who-Knows-Much	8+	12+
11-12	Ascondi	10+	11+
13	Venerated	No Further Increase Possible	10+



Finder

Hunter



Hearthkeeper



# ASCONDI CASTES

## Ascondi Society

There is a long-winded Ascondi proverb, which translates roughly as:

*A hunter, a finder, a hearthkeeper, an Ascondi and a venerated were faced with a problem. The hunter tried to deal with it using physical skills. The finder made a tool and produced a torrent of ideas. Some of them were rather strange. The hearthkeeper recounted a tale of some other Ascondi meeting a similar problem. The Ascondi tried to figure out what to do for the best and how to use the valuable skills of his well-respected fellows to produce an effective solution. The Venerated already knew what to do.*

The Ascondi have enclaves on several worlds both within the Great Rift and along its shores. They have a mature TL5 society on most worlds and are generally happy to co-exist with other species. Some enclaves have access to higher technology obtained through trade, including space vessels in a few cases. Although Ascondi dislike being away from their home culture, a tiny few have gone offworld and become Travellers or taken jobs away from home. Ascondi finders seem to have a notable talent for piloting, if not for astrogation.

The Ascondi claim one of the worlds within the Great Rift is their home, although they tend to be vague about which one – or perhaps they are not able to convey a location due to language barriers. Given that most of their language is not pronounceable by humans, most Ascondi refer to the worlds they inhabit by their human or Aslan name, adding a quizzical gesture that has been interpreted as ‘yeah, right, whatever’ every time a non-Ascondi name is used.

## THE ALO'HEI

Alo'hei have been described as living starships. They are large and fantastically beautiful creatures able to fly through space; it is thought they have a natural ability to create a gravitic-based propulsion field. Human starships do the same thing by artificial means and emissions from an Alo'hei bear similarities to those of early gravitic drive systems.

The Alo'hei are typically several hundred metres to a kilometre or so long, resembling a gossamer rainbow of tendrils and protoplasmic matter. Within this organic framework are areas that emit in many frequencies, scintillating in the whole electromagnetic spectrum, emitting X-rays, radio waves and visible light. They have areas of shifting gravitational effects within their

structure and can ‘become more solid’ at need by producing a localised gravity field. This is thought to be connected with their means of propulsion but the mechanism can only be guessed at. Other emissions are thought to be communication or display.

Alo'hei are social creatures, rarely seen alone. Groups of up to twenty have been observed, although such large groups are very rare. Seeing one Alo'hei is a privilege for the starfarers; witnessing a large group sporting in the upper atmosphere of a gas giant is a life-changing experience for many, yet whilst almost everyone who sees an Alo'hei considers them the most beautiful thing in the universe, a small proportion – of various races – react with stark terror at the sight, describing it as a primal fear originating beyond conscious thought.

Alo'hei do not respond to attempts to commune with them, although their electromagnetic and visible display shifts all the time and may be an attempt at communication that terrestrial minds simply cannot comprehend. They will follow a starship for a while but are not known to be hostile. Indeed, there is evidence that the Alo'hei are well-disposed or even kindly towards other starfarers; when a pinnace from the long-range exploration ship *Vaalimuu* lost power and began to fall into the atmosphere of an undisclosed gas giant, it was reportedly surrounded by an Alo'hei and dragged to safety before being ejected on a course aimed precisely at *Vaalimuu*'s primary docking area.

It is not known what Alo'hei eat or how they reproduce. Some have been observed to approach close to a star and ‘fluff out’ tendrils, looking for all the world like a mass of incandescent feathers. It is presumed that the Alo'hei gathers solar energy in this manner, after which it will head out-system to its group-mates. Alo'hei have been sighted in widely distributed systems, suggesting they are capable of interstellar flight but scientists have no idea how this is accomplished.

On the rare occasions that Alo'Hei have reportedly become hostile or been attacked, several defensive mechanisms have been observed. The Alo'Hei are also very difficult to target with conventionally aimed or guided weapons and even if a hit is scored, conventional weapons are ineffective against the dispersed matter of an Alo'Hei. The following tentative tactical assessments have been made:

- Missiles and torpedoes will simply not lock on to an Alo'Hei, requiring a manual ‘dumb’ launch with no benefit gained from the Smart trait.

- It is treated as having 12 points of armour (although this is more energy absorption than rigid protection).
- All damage dice are treated as D3 instead of 1D. Thus, a beam laser would do 2D3 damage and have no chance of causing real harm. However, the Alo'Hei would be aware that it is under attack and might feel some pain (or the equivalent), which could motivate it to move off or strike back.
- The gravitic nudge can push an Alo'Hei at Thrust 4.
- An Alo'Hei can use its gravitic nudge to impart a force on an object within Close or Adjacent range equal to the Alo'Hei's thrust (4) multiplied by its mass and divided by the mass of the object being shoved. Each 10G of force created in this way causes 1D of hull damage. Personnel on board a ship nudged like this suffer 1D of damage per 25G. Thus, a 400-ton patrol corvette could be flung away at 80G, causing 8D hull damage and 3D damage to all crewmembers. The gravitic nudge can also be used very precisely and gently to manipulate objects.
- The multispectral pulse seems to be a threat response but can occur when there is no obvious danger. It will white out all ships' sensors within Long range for one round (making them useless) and cause a Severity 1 critical hit to both Sensor and Computer locations within Medium range unless they are Hardened. Missiles and similar small electronic-based devices are rendered useless; their electronics are turned to slag. A pulse can be delivered every 3D rounds.
- A psionic screech has been reported but not by reliable sources. According to those who claim to have experienced it, the 'screech' takes the form of a massive sensory overload that causes 1D (Stun) damage per round. It can be sustained for 1D rounds and extends to Long range.

### Medium-sized Alo'Hei

Hull	8,000 tons, organic
Armour	Armour: 12
M-Drive	Thrust 4
J-Drive	Unknown
Power Plant	Unknown, possibly solar-based
Sensors	Possibly equivalent to Advanced
Weapons	Gravitic Nudge
	Multispectral Pulse
	Psionic Screech

# FEATURES OF THE GREAT RIFT



Several notable astrographic features exist within the Great Rift; some truly exist whereas others are the subject of rumour and conjecture.

## CALIBRATION POINT ISHLAGU

Ishlagu is a neutron star, the collapsed remains of a stellar body that did not quite have the mass to become a black hole. Its location is well known – indeed, Ishlagu is used as an astronavigational calibration point by ships for several sectors around, due to its extremely powerful and regular radio-frequency pulses. Ishlagu can be used to precisely fix a ship or object's location by cross-referencing its emissions with other known calibration points. The same method can be used to determine heading and speed for a ship travelling at high sublight velocity. Relativistic effects upon a vessel cause the received signals from Ishlagu to deviate from the known baseline; comparing the two enables a precise calculation of sublight speed and heading.

Ishlagu is essentially a beacon to many spacefarers and few really think of it as a star. Neutron stars destroy their planetary system in the supernova phase, so all that is likely to be left of their planets are a few broken planetoids orbiting at great distance from the primary. Receiving virtually no useful energy from the star, these bodies are dead and probably dangerous to visit.

However, Ishlagu has a planetary system of sorts. There are two known planets, designated Accretion and Fragment, and a planetoid belt. Both planets are the product of a second phase of planetary formation after the supernova event that began the collapse of Ishlagu into a neutron star.

### Accretion

Accretion is, as the name suggests, a large object thought to be formed by the accretion of debris around the rocky core of a gas giant. It is a super-earth, with a surface gravity of just under 2G, surrounded by a field

of small planetoids and particles slowly being drawn to the planet. In short, Accretion has not finished its accretion process and would be very dangerous to visit. It is of interest to planetary scientists both for study of the formation process and its unusual composition. Deep under Accretion's crust lies the rocky core of a gas giant, whilst the crust itself is formed of planetary fragments interspersed with supernova matter. Perhaps exotic materials might be present but there is no publicly available data on whether anything has ever been recovered or studied.

### Fragment

Fragment is a dwarf planet in an extremely elliptical retrograde orbit. At its closest pass, it is bathed in dangerously high levels of radiation, after which it recedes into deep space for several decades before beginning another approach to the star. Fragment is an irregular lump of rock, of no great interest to scientists. As a result, it has probably never been visited.

### The Ishlagu Planetoids

Ishlagu has a scattering of planetoids throughout the region once occupied by its star system. Many, either original planetoids or fragments of planets, are thought to have been blasted off into deep space and now drift towards unknown destinations. Some settled back into stable orbits, creating a thin planetoid belt that may have deposits of exotic materials. There are rumours of some kind of mining base within the planetoid field but the great difficulty of bringing resources to market would make this economically unviable and, therefore, unlikely unless something very rare has been found.

## THE HAVOC

The Havoc is an astronomical phenomenon comprising two black holes and a subgiant star, all orbiting one another. It is often referred to as the Havoc system but is correctly termed 'the Havoc'. The system's primary objects are a pair of black holes, of which Havoc Alpha is slightly larger than Havoc Beta. These orbit one

another and are projected to spiral together over the next few million years. They will then merge, which may send out bursts of radiation or gravitational energy over a wide region of space. It is not yet known what effect this will have on nearby star systems.

Havoc Gamma is an orange subgiant star, orbiting the binary pair of black holes and slowly losing mass to them. Streams of incandescent gas spiral from Gamma to Beta and Alpha, creating a complex and quite beautiful visual and electromagnetic image. Gamma will eventually be consumed by its siblings, although it is not clear whether it will disintegrate with sufficient mass remaining to cause a near-supernova event.

The Havoc is a deadly place, visited only by scientific vessels. It is said that objects have been detected orbiting very close to the event horizon of both black holes and that one in particular follows a relativistic spiral between the two, slingshotting around one black hole to be caught and returned by the other. The odds of this happening naturally are infinitesimally small; if this object exists, it was placed in a precisely calculated orbit by some intelligence. At its extremely high speed and subject to enormous gravitational forces, this object would experience extreme time dilation effects, essentially preserving it from the ancient past. Only an extremely advanced species could accomplish such a thing and why they would do so remains a mystery.

The existence of this object has never been proven but there is known to be a planet in the Havoc. Designated Havoc Omega, this body orbits in the trailing Trojan point of Gamma and is subject to great stresses. Little is known about Omega other than it has a dense heavy-gas atmosphere and strong magnetic field. No expedition has ever landed there, according to official databases.

## THE RINEAN SHOAL

The Rinean Shoal is a region, several parsecs across, where jump space is unusually difficult to enter. The reasons for this are not known but jump capabilities seem to be diminished over the entire shoal. A jump-1 capable ship cannot enter jump space at all in this region; attempting to do so will suffer damage to its drives and possibly some structural distortion as well. A jump-2 capable vessel can enter jump in the shoal but only jump one parsec before being dropped back into normal space. Higher jump ships also suffer reduced range – each parsec jumped counts as two for the purposes of determining a ship's range and fuel consumption.

At the heart of the shoal is a zone two parsecs wide where a jump-3 ship is needed to enter jumpspace

## JUMPSPACE SHOALS

A shoal is a region where jump drives do not function to their full capacity. Shoals are designated by the minimum jump number required to enter jumpspace within the shoal; thus, a jump-2 shoal requires a jump-2 or better drive to enter and requires sufficient fuel for a normal two-parsec jump to cross a single parsec. A jump-3 shoal requires a jump-3 drive and enough fuel for a normal 3-parsec jump per parsec travelled.

Jumping 'over' a shoal is not possible unless the vessel possesses sufficient range to completely clear the shoal in a single jump, expending fuel at the increased rate.

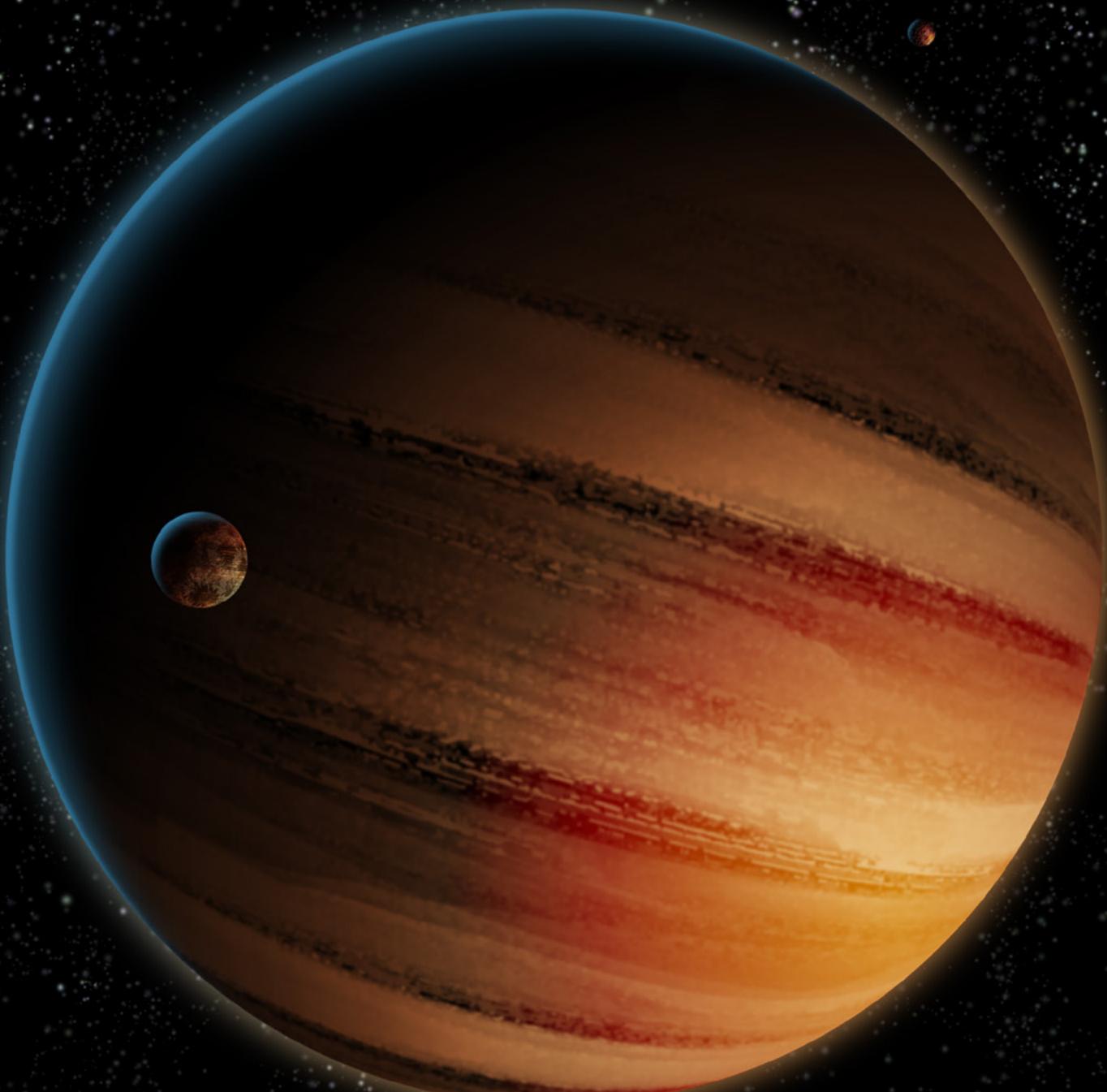
or cross a map hex and each hex counts as three for the purposes of determining fuel use. Jump times are not affected; a jump still takes a week but has greatly reduced range.

In the central shoal region is a star system which has rarely been visited and is, understandably perhaps, omitted from most charts. According to rumour this is a multiple-star system with more than one habitable world but no formal survey results have been recorded.

Shoals are thought to exist elsewhere in Charted Space and beyond, creating dangerous barriers to navigation, which may account for the higher than average loss of ships in some areas. It is possible that very high-jump shoals exist in some areas, effectively making jump travel impossible with existing technology.

## THE GREAT REEF

The Borderland subsector in the Trojan Reach has for many years had a bad reputation for a higher than average incidence of misjumps, officially put down to poor fuel quality or other mundane explanations. Similarly, the Abyss Rift in the Spinward Marches is known to be more dangerous than other areas. Both regions are examples of what is known as a jumpspace reef, a region where misjumps are more common than usual for reasons unknown. It has been suggested that this is a natural phenomenon or disturbance in the fabric of jumpspace due to some cosmic event. The Ancients, as usual, are also suspected of being at fault



## JUMPSPACE REEFS

A ship attempting a jump into, out of or across a reef hex is subject to a negative DM on its Engineer (J-drive) check. For a minor reef such as the Borderland Reef, DM-1 is applied on an intermittent basis. A major reef imposes DM-D3, as it fluctuates over time.

but the truth of the matter is that nobody in Charted Space knows why reefs exist.

The Borderland Reef is not very dangerous, if it exists at all, although it seems there is an intermittent phenomenon which interferes with jump drives in some parts of Borderland subsector. The Great Reef, on the other hand, is more dangerous. It spans an area greater than a subsector in size but it is patchy and any given map hex may or may not be affected. Smaller areas of reef space exist elsewhere in the Great Rift.

## THE EMADI DEEP

The Emadi Deep is another jumpspace phenomenon existing in the Great Rift, a region several parsecs across where jumps take longer than usual. Other regions of deep may exist elsewhere, which would account for the mysterious loss of vessels on what should have been routine jumps. Ships attempting to cross the Emadi Deep require extra fuel to maintain their jump field for an extended duration. This is typically a few extra days but can sometimes be much longer.

## DEEPS

A ship transiting into, out of or across a deep hex will spend additional time in jumpspace whilst travelling its normal jump distance. Normally the additional duration is +1D-1 days but if the dice results in a 6, it is rolled again and the results added. Multiple sixes can result in a ship remaining in jumpspace for a very long time. Fuel is consumed at a rate of 10% per extra day. So a 100 ton ship making a 2-parsec jump would use 20 tons of fuel for the jump plus 10% (2 tons) per extra day spent in jump. If the fuel runs out, the jump field collapses and the ship is destroyed.

## THE FISCHER TRENCH

The Fischer Trench is a jumpspace phenomenon originally encountered by the *Fischer* expedition, a scientific mission out of Verge sector. According to uncorroborated accounts, the *Fischer* mission encountered a region where its jump drive 'ran wild' and had to be permanently shut down. *Fischer* herself was badly damaged and abandoned not long after, although the two incidents may not be related.

The location of the Fischer Trench varies according to the version of the tale but is thought to be in the Riftspan Reaches. The commonest version of the story holds that *Fischer* refuelled from her supporting tankers, deep in the rift, then jumped to her next rendezvous. She did not arrive and, despite a tanker being maintained on station for over a year, the operation was eventually abandoned. *Fischer* was declared lost, and other exploration ships located no sign of her. The probable cause was ascribed to a misjump, since the tankers reported an unusual set of emanations as *Fischer* entered jump and greater than normal variance in their return jumps.

Six years later, the wreck of *Fischer* was located on a moon in Corridor sector. How she came to be there remains a mystery; her logs were hopelessly corrupted. Some say her equipment had been deliberately wiped, and that members of her crew escaped in a subordinate craft to eventually reach an inhabited star system.

According to the tale, allegedly told by these survivors, *Fischer*'s drive went out of control as she entered jumpspace, producing readings that suggested she was 'much deeper in jumpspace than she should have gone'. Some versions of the story tell how *Fischer* emerged from jumpspace to find years had passed, and that she was wildly out of position. With systems failing, her crew made a crash-landing on the first body they encountered, then used up one of the subordinate craft as a lifeboat.

A variant of the tale says that *Fischer* was attacked by unknown vessels after emerging from jumpspace, which caused her systems failures. However, there are even wilder stories surrounding her flight. Some say *Fischer* emerged from jump in a pocket universe and was attacked there by these unknown vessels, whilst the craziest of all claim she reached the bottom of a jumpspace trench where her crew disembarked onto a planetoid they found there. After a time they were attacked and 'something' got into the ship. *Fischer* wrecked her drives breaking out of the trench, after which the crew wiped her systems and abandoned her on a deep space moon.

## JUMPSPACE TRENCHES

The science of jumpspace physics is in its infancy among humans, despite centuries of using the drive to travel between the stars. Most jumpspace 'laws' are actually observations that allow jump travel to be carried out without any true understanding of how it works. It is conjectured that the jump-6 barrier, i.e. the apparent limit on jump travel, is an artefact of this lack of understanding and once scientists properly comprehend jumpspace, greater ranges or shorter jump durations will become the norm.

In the meantime, reports of strange jumpspace phenomena may well be down to badly calibrated drives or lack of understanding of the underlying principles. There are, however, tales of places where the jump drive does not function as normal; of ships 'pulled down' and a feeling of being 'deeper' in jumpspace than a vessel would normally go. Some scientists dismiss these as Travellers' tales but others wonder if this might be the key to higher jump capabilities. There are still more, on the other hand, who think these jumpspace trenches are best avoided in case there is something down there which humanity is simply not ready to meet.

Officially, *Fischer* 'experienced a highly unusual jump drive malfunction and was ultimately lost, although some members of the crew were able to self-rescue by heroic efforts'. Unofficially, the 'flight of the *Fischer*' is a Travellers' legend, which might have a kernel of truth about it. The wreck has never been relocated and all surviving crewmembers seem to have disappeared.

## POINT XF-1402

Point XF-1402 is a reference location in deep space, distributed unevenly according to a complex mathematical algorithm. Most such points are exactly that; reference points from which to calculate the position of an object or starship. Concealed in plain sight among them are several that are more than empty space; Point XF-1402 is one of these.

Located at Point XF-1402 is the brown dwarf quasi-star object B1-DK. There are other brown dwarfs in the Great Rift of course but B1-DK is unusual in that it has a borderline habitable planet orbiting it. Prosaically

designated B1-DK Alpha, or more commonly just Alpha, this world has an ecosystem of sorts, although its creatures are rather unusual and conditions are tough.

B1-DK Alpha has a small outpost crewed by a mix of military and scientific personnel. The scientists are mainly ecologists and biologists, with a few space and planetological scientists in the mix. They are outnumbered by military personnel who operate a refuelling station for naval couriers and the occasional trans-rift patrol ship.

One reason for the secrecy surrounding XF-1402 is the usefulness of an off-the-map location where ship crews can stand down for a few days on a deep-rift patrol. There may be other reasons too; according to naval scuttlebutt, a previous outpost on B1-DK or some very similar location was wiped out by unknown causes. It is not clear whether this was enemy action, a local threat or something more unusual. Whatever the cause, tight security is deemed necessary to preventing a reoccurrence.

## GUTTERBALL

Gutterball is the name given by Travellers to a semi-mythical gas giant located – so the stories go – within the Great Rift. According to the tales, it is a rogue body with an unusually high sublight velocity. It is highly unlikely that an object of such size could be accelerated to a significant fraction of the speed of light by natural events but persistent tales of such an object remain.

Gutterball is thus named because it is headed along the Great Rift in a spinward-rimward direction. If the tales are true, Gutterball must have originated in what is now Imperial space or passed through it during the past few thousand years – it may have been in Vilani space during the First Imperium.

The gas giant is said to have a moon system and some accounts claim there are ruined cities on them. Other versions of the tale claim that Gutterball is not behaving in the manner that would be expected if it were only under the influence of nearby gravity sources; some claim Gutterball is accelerating, some that it is slowing down and others that it is travelling on a curved trajectory, perhaps with a specific destination. There are those who like to believe that some ancient civilisation launched a gas giant on a million-year trajectory, perhaps to carry their people away from danger. If so, the rift would offer a clear path compared to heading through more crowded regions of space. However, if the technology to move such a large object at such high speed existed, these ancient sublight star-mariners might well have found a more efficient means of escape from their fate.

## THE BIG WRECK

The Big Wreck is thought to be a gigantic starship dating from the early days of the Vilani Imperium. It looks like a Vilani design and its doors, furniture and the like are suitably sized for humans. The wreck was found drifting in deep space in Corridor sector some years ago and despite being declared off-limits to unauthorised personnel, it has been visited by scavengers and scientists on several occasions since.

The Big Wreck appears to have been a huge exploration ship, equipped with early-model Vilani jump drives. Whether it was sent to explore the Great Rift or ended up there after a misjump remains unclear; records of this mission are strangely missing from early Ziru Sirka archives. There are, however, indications that several ‘great and worthy endeavours’ were undertaken in secrecy around this time and the Big Wreck might indeed have been one of those.

These great and worthy endeavours were apparently connected with information gleaned or inferred from Ancients sites on Vland. There is evidence that at least some of these endeavours bore fruit, with Ancients devices or sites located and a number of artefacts brought to a secret location for examination. The Big Wreck contains what appear to be a set of gargantuan cranes and other equipment that might be used to salvage very large objects or starships.

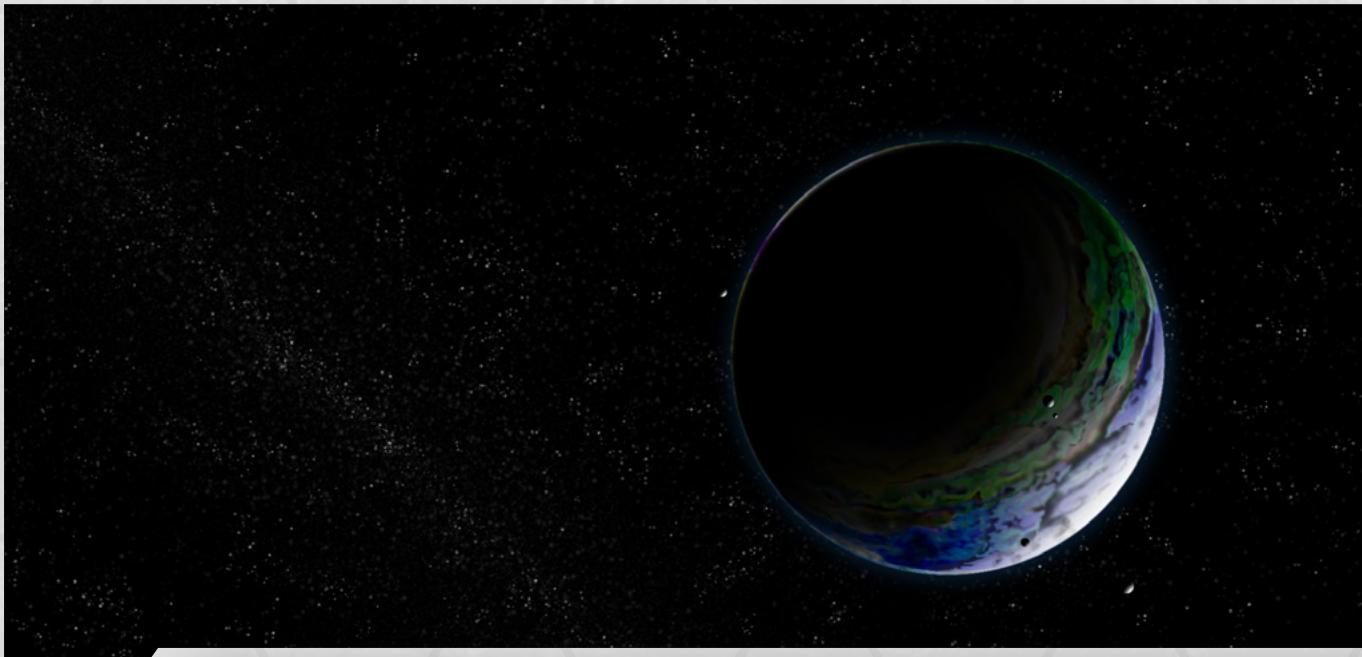
The crew of the Big Wreck perished millennia ago and most bodies have been removed for proper funeral rites on Vland. However, some chambers within the wreck remain sealed and not all of it has been properly explored. Attempts were made to place a guard of

some kind but this absorbed too much manpower and resources to be viable, so only the difficulty in locating and reaching the Big Wreck prevents scavengers from boarding it. This has not deterred everyone and there are even accounts of fights between rival gangs seeking to plunder the – quite possibly imaginary – riches and wonders to be found aboard this interstellar monument to Vilani endeavour.

## THE IMONIEGE GRAVITATIONAL ANOMALY

The IGA, as it is known, is detectable within a few parsecs with sensitive enough instruments. It is a region of apparently empty space, which nevertheless has a significant (if small) gravitational field. Since gravity is the result of mass, this would imply there is something present to cause the effect. However, the field appears to almost uniform – so cannot be caused by a single point source – and no physical objects capable of creating such a field can be detected within it.

It is impossible to jump into the anomaly but ships and probes dispatched at sublight speeds encounter no unusual hazards. Their instruments detect a slight gravitational field, increasing in intensity – albeit only a little – towards the centre. The field is over a light-year in diameter, making investigation of its central region a difficult business. Probes deployed some years ago have already detected several bodies – mostly comets, although one might be a starship wreck – slowly drifting towards the central point. The probes will arrive in a few more years but for now the anomaly remains a mystery.



# CORRIDOR



Corridor is strategically important for the Imperium, linking the main Imperial territories with holdings behind the claw. To coreward lies the region usually called the Vargr Extents, from where a potential cross-border threat might come. The states of the Extents tend to be small and are often unstable, reducing the chance of major conflict involving heavy warships. However, this environment does permit small-scale adventurism on the part of local states, plus piracy, inter-state warfare and the occasional crisis requiring Imperial intervention.

According to conventional spacer wisdom, ‘there’s only one Corridor but there are three Corridor sectors’. This adage refers to the fact that traffic to and from Imperial territories behind the claw must pass through a region of space that, at some points, is only six parsecs wide. This passage is often referred to as the Corridor, as distinct from Corridor sector.

Corridor consists of three distinct regions. The Corridor itself, the region adjacent to Vland and Gushemege sectors lying ‘within the claw’ and the coreward end of the sector, which is non-Imperial territory. However, this perception completely ignores the large part of Corridor that lies within the Great Rift. To Imperial citizens, and most spacers too, the Rift is nothing but a blank on the map.

The coreward segment of the sector contains several large mains and clusters of worlds, which facilitated expansion into the area. However, since astrography cares nothing for politics, many of these mains and clusters straddle the border.

The Ushamla Main is one such. Running from Nuplae in The Narrows to Tylupa in Khukish subsector, the Ushamla main is rarely used by Imperial ships headed for Deneb or Vland, since this would take the vessel out of Imperial territory. It is, however, extremely important to trade in the sector. Indeed, much of the trans-border commerce that takes place in Corridor goes by way of this main.

Likewise, the Corridor Main (running Coreward from Twophur in The Narrows), is an important trade link into vargr space. It gives easy access all the way to the rimward shores of the Windhorn and a jump-2 ship can transit onwards through Provence and Windhorn sectors. The coreward end of the sector has several other, smaller, mains and clusters, creating a local economy connected to the wider universe by trade ships passing through the cluster.

To rimward, the Shurgi Main contains many of Sashrakusha subsector’s worlds and gives access to most of the other Imperial worlds in the region way of jump-2 transit. It is a branch of the Vland Main, which has been extremely important to the economic growth of all three Imperiums throughout history. As a result, the Shurgi Main sees a vast amount of trade moving along it or between worlds on its segments.

Not surprisingly, most starfarers are more concerned with mains and clusters than empty spaces. The same is true for the Imperial Navy. Corridor is home to Corridor Fleet, which despite the extremely low density of star systems in the central part of the sector has a force composition similar to most other sector fleets. Forces are primarily concentrated along Corridor, with two numbered fleets assigned to each subsector instead of the usual one. In keeping with standard Imperial practice that ‘sector fleet fights wars, subsector fleet keeps the peace’, these numbered fleets contain a high proportion of patrol vessels whilst the sector fleet retains control of major assets such as capital ships. Sector fleet forces are assigned throughout the sector as necessary but usually kept concentrated for warfighting roles rather than being dispersed on patrol. Most cross-border operations are commanded at the sector fleet level, though they may include assets borrowed from the nearest subsector fleet.

The primary task of the Corridor Fleet is to keep the sector open for commercial traffic and information flow and to defend Imperial commerce against piracy, raiding and similar threats. It also acts as a strategic

reserve for territories behind the claw, capable of reinforcing forces based in Deneb, the Spinward Marches or Trojan Reach until additional fleets make the long transit from their bases.

Corridor Fleet is also responsible for the security of the region within the claw. This area faces few strategic threats, largely due to the barrier posed by the Great Rift. As a result, this area is assigned few heavy assets and most of those are obsolete ships or designs that did not live up to expectations. This segment of Corridor Fleet is a safe posting where well-connected officers can rise through the ranks without ever being placed in charge of a critical situation.

The small force of rift-capable assets – mostly high-jump cruisers and logistical support vessels – based in the region require daring and highly intelligent officers, however this segment of the fleet is an unpopular posting avoided by those with the connections to do so. Long and potentially risky cruises across the Rift are not the first choice of ‘social officers’ or those carrying a family tradition without desire to excel.

The segment of Corridor Fleet assigned to the coreward end of the sector is quite different in character. Its smaller patrol assets are among the most combat-

experienced in the Imperium, a result of frequent corsair raids. Its fast-reaction force of cruisers is skilled at intervening across the border without sparking major conflict. Limited actions to remove corsair bases or send a stern message to foreign states without causing sufficient damage to provoke a war require fine judgement. The heavy assets of the fleet occasionally back up these operations but mostly train to plunge into a major war with the Zhodani or the Aslan if it proves necessary.

A small trans-rift force is maintained on the coreward side of the Great Rift, although its high-jump assets are often poached for missions to coreward. There are persistent rumours that some trans-rift assets officially assigned to Corridor sector are not at their official bases. The most likely explanation, if this is true, is that the Imperial Navy has an interest in the Windhorn, a smaller rift located to coreward of Corridor and Vland sectors. High-jump ships might also be useful for intelligence work or to strike at distant targets in the Vargr Extents. Whatever the reason, it seems that trans-rift assets assigned to Corridor are below their ‘paper’ strength. The missing ships must be somewhere but the navy insists they are present, just rarely in port due to the need to maintain trans-rift and rift-fringe patrols.





# KHOUTH

SUBSECTOR

Name	Location	Bases	Statistics	Trade Codes	Travel Code	Allegiance	Gas Giants
Aka Gee	0605		B432579-B	Ni Po		Imperium	G
Ankirst	0105		C556112-9	Lo		Imperium	G
Auritaurus	0401	S	C859344-8	Lo		Imperium	G
Bersha	0807		E552302-5	Lo Po		Imperium	G
Caulins Belt	0307	N	A000268-C	As Io Va		Imperium	G
Degarla	0606	N	A611644-A	Ic Na Ni		Imperium	
Desolate	0608	W	B9B4502-A	Fl Ni		Imperium	
Dry	0210	S	C310877-A	Na		Imperium	G
Faraway	0308	S	D682546-4	Ni		Imperium	G
Greenrok	0601		A560236-C	De Lo		Imperium	G
Gzorraeth	0701		A590410-9	De Ni			G
Hesarus	0306	N	B553556-9	Ni Po		Imperium	
Khouth	0104		A8C3999-D	Fl Hi		Imperium	
Koergfoes	0205	N RS	B54359A-B	Ni Po		Imperium	G
Koppel	0502		E563305-7	Lo		Imperium	G
Mikesh	0206	S	C8B7ACB-D	Fl Hi In	A	Imperium	G
Mowanda	0709	N S	B200534-A	Ni Va		Imperium	G
Naxx-lygo	0509		C7B5464-8	Fl Ni		Imperium	G
Ofo-Nebus	0106	N	B541488-9	Ni Po		Imperium	G
Overlook	0301		E5758B7-5			Imperium	G
Pamock	0510		C561542-9	Ni		Imperium	G
Pergzitt	0209		B625354-B	Lo		Imperium	G
Rrev Rigr	0402		B100657-C	Na Ni Va		Imperium	
Semiplast	0609		C561662-8	Ni Ri		Imperium	G
Serk	0304	N	B89A866-C	Wa		Imperium	G
Sigma 7	0407		C000795-7	As Na Va		Imperium	G
Synez	0109		E864256-7	Lo		Imperium	
Taratun	0603	S	D893443-6	Ni		Imperium	G
Tersta	0102		C574522-7	Ag Ni		Imperium	
Tsetsurri	0804		D435775-6				G

Khouth subsector is widely considered the spinward end of Corridor. It is something of a frontier region, although only two worlds in the subsector lie outside of the Imperial border. The subsector capital, Khouth, is an important hub for trade across the border into the Vagr Extents, although most Imperial ships headed to Deneb or further spinward tend to take a more rimward route away from the border systems.

The subsector has several naval and scout bases, mostly set back from the borders for reasons of security. Systems within 2-4 parsecs of the border are heavily patrolled by smaller vessels and flag-showing forays on both sides of the border are common. Capital ships detached from the sector fleet are quite often used for this purpose, which is unusual but serves as a strong reminder of Imperial power. Despite this, raids by corsairs are quite common, with local Vagr states denying any involvement.

A high volume of trade moves through the subsector. Much is local but bulk freighters headed into Deneb ply the major trade routes, with some cargo dispersing into local markets. This creates a great deal of wealth for Khouth's major ports as these shipments are gradually broken down and sold on to end clients. Some items make their way across the border into Vagr space and trade also moves the other way.

Maintenance and refitting of the big trade ships is an important part of the subsector economy. Many vessels turn around and head back through Corridor rather than going all the way into Deneb or beyond. Crews and support personnel also create a very considerable local industry, with businesses providing services ranging from training and recruitment to entertainment and recreation.

## DESOLATE

As its name suggests, Desolate is not a welcoming place and might seem a curious choice for the designation of mainworld. Its highly corrosive atmosphere requires special equipment for survival, beyond what would have been necessary on any of the system's rockball planets and gas giant moons. The reasons for settlement were purely economic – Desolate may be a tough place to live and work but it is rich in resources.

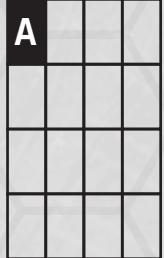
The on-planet population live in several industrial and mining centres, none of which has more than a few thousand residents. Most structures are underground, with only essential components exposed to the atmosphere. In addition to mining for minerals, local industry has expanded to include processing atmospheric gases to extract useful chemicals. A fairly high proportion of the shipping containers moving through Desolate's starport carry toxic, corrosive or otherwise hazardous materials, however safety records are very good.

Desolate's orbital starport is a large structure but only a small part of it is a commercial port. Some of the rest is given over to bulk transport docks for the world's mineral and chemical exports but the largest segment is owned and operated by the Imperial Interstellar Scout Service as a way station. This installation was constructed to serve the express boat network and still does so as its primary function. Extensive overhaul and servicing facilities exist for both Xboats themselves and the tenders that support them. There is also a well-equipped mental health facility specialising in preparing Xboat personnel for long periods alone in jumpspace and assisting any who begin to show signs of distress.

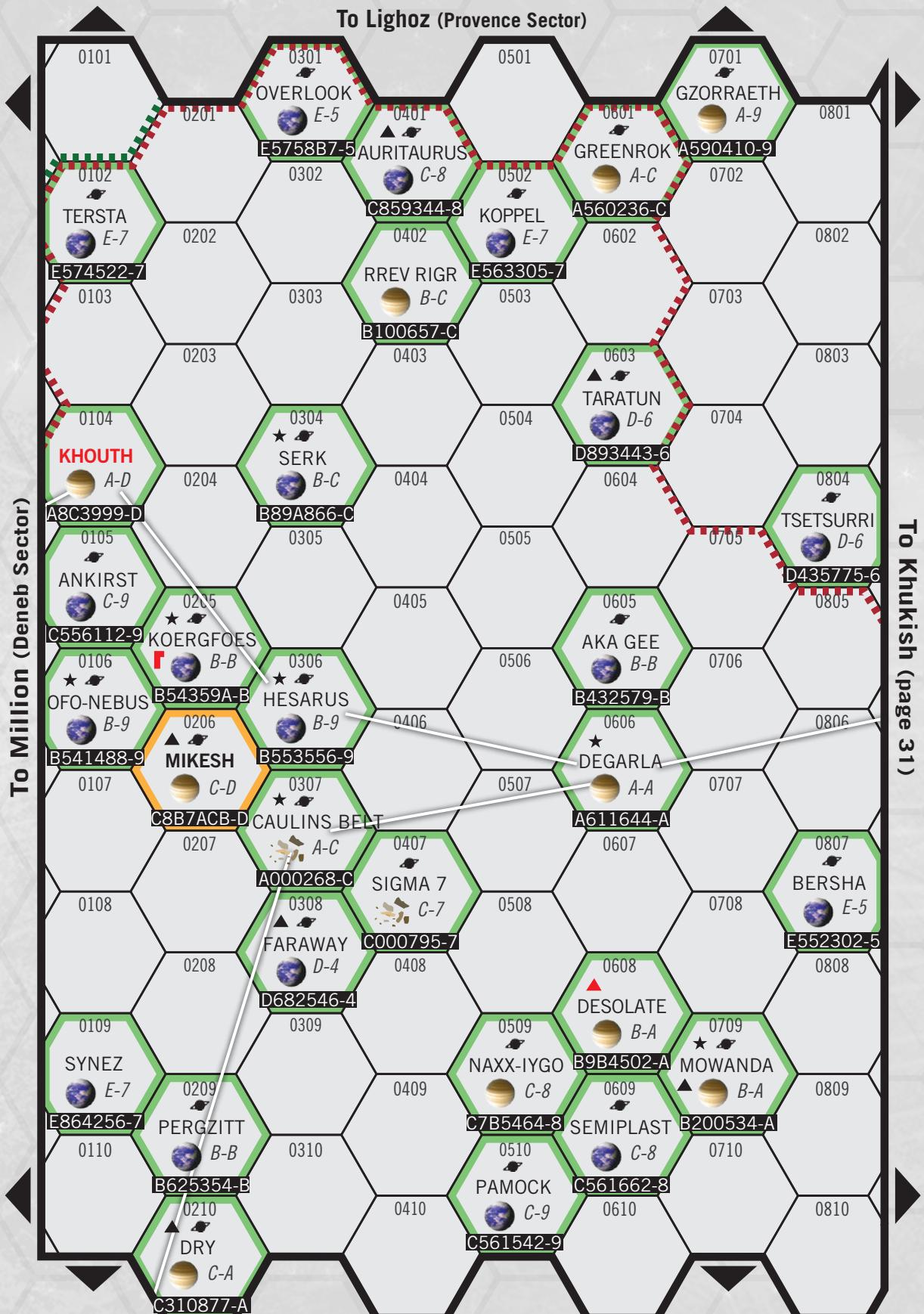
A large flotilla of courier vessels is based out of Desolate's way station, although at any given time most will be in other systems or en route between them. These vessels ensure rapid communications between worlds off the Xboat network and are always busy. A steady stream of couriers arrives at Desolate with up-to-date information from the worlds of the subsector, which is collated and analysed by the way station's large intelligence staff.

It is not uncommon for Scout Service personnel to move between branches, and few can remain enthusiastic about Xboat duty for long, so the way station is a prime recruiting site for current and former Scout Service personnel. Xboat pilots are sought out by deep-space expeditions for their mental resilience and reliability when beyond any reasonable chance of assistance, whilst former intelligence analysts are also useful for some expeditions. The planet itself provides opportunities for hostile-environment training should the need be perceived.

## Corridor



## KHOUTH SUBSECTOR



Gas Giant

B-6 Starport Class & Tech Level

Imperial Scout Base

Imperial Scout Way Station

Imperial Naval Base

Secure System

Amber Zone

X-boat Route

Imperium Border

Vargr Extents

Planet (dry)

Planet (water present)

Asteroids

Research Station

## GZORRAETH

Gzorraeth is a physically unremarkable desert world with a population of around 50,000, the majority of whom are Vargr. Surface temperatures are high but not intolerable, resulting in frequent sandstorms that blanket regions for days. Mountains are subject to constant harsh erosion and are rounded, with crags and outcrops where harder rock has been exposed. This uninviting world enjoys one major advantage however; it lies between Imperial space and territory claimed by the Irrgh Manifest, a Vargr state. Gzorraeth is not part of either and acts as a neutral point for trade, facilitated

by jump-1 links in both directions. This is why an unassuming world has an excellent Class A starport, which has attracted numerous investors and companies keen to do business across both borders. The port is far better policed than the lawless world below but still a hazardous place for those lacking the right contacts. Outsiders are considered fair game by criminal and near-criminal organisations at Gzorraeth's starport and the best way to avoid trouble is to be affiliated with someone they fear, respect or need to do business with. Well-connected visitors are in little danger; everyone else must take their chances.





# KHUKISH

## SUBSECTOR

Khukish lies on the Corridor, with 21 star systems inside the Imperial border. Khassu and Khukish are both TL15 worlds, making them extremely influential as a source of starship components and trade goods. Numerous businesses on these two worlds have contracts with the Imperial Navy or the major shipping lines and there are considerable employment opportunities for former naval or merchant-line personnel in the manufacturing and business sectors.

The star systems toward the coreward end of the subsector see a lot of corsair activity despite the best efforts of the Imperial Navy. The border is very porous in this subsector, largely as a result of cross-border trade with the central worlds. Some are Imperial client states, with strong ties to the Imperium and willing to host naval ships. Despite this, corsairs prey on the local merchant traffic and frequently make forays into the Imperium.

Given the nature of Vargr society, the big trade ships of Corridor are a target for more than economic reasons. A corsair leader who takes a 'Corridor Prize' (as these vessels are known) will command the respect and deference of lesser pirates, which can be a stepping-stone to an admiralty of sorts or even control over a world.

Naval and diplomatic operations in this subsector are particularly complex, as sometimes a corsair band will effectively become the navy of a world nominally friendly to the Imperium. This tends to happen when a corsair fleet becomes sufficiently large and organised that it cannot easily support its activities by raiding. Seeking regular payment from a world government to hunt other corsairs and protect shipping can be a shrewd career move, although many corsair bands fragment or jump back and forth between dodging the navy and being one. For an Imperial ship commander, this situation is fraught with possibilities for costly errors.

### KAASU

Kaasu is a high-technology, high-population water world and one of the most important economies of the region. Located close to Depot, Kaasu is a major supplier of both starship components and finished vessels to the Imperial Navy. Its orbital yards are extensive, with order books full for years into the future.

The people of Kaasu are proud of their shipbuilding traditions and enjoy a national holiday whenever a capital ship is delivered. The yards produce cutting-edge designs but build more cruisers and destroyers than dreadnoughts. This is largely for economic reasons; profit margins are greater on higher-volume ships. However, big warships maintain Kaasu's reputation as a primary shipbuilder for the navy and at any given time new designs are on trial or under development.

Kaasu's shipbuilders are willing to put together even a dreadnought as a private venture, in the hope that the Imperial Navy will adopt the class once its potential is demonstrated. Projects that are not successful in this manner are sometimes sold as one-offs to Imperial client states or planetary navies who can afford a prestige flagship. Others go into service as defence monitors for Kaasu itself or join its rather eclectic capital ship squadron. Kaasu is one of the few Imperial worlds whose planetary navy can field a force of dreadnoughts. These ships are often deployed on the coreward border, showing the Kaasu flag and reminding everyone of where to buy the best warships in Corridor.

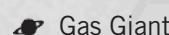
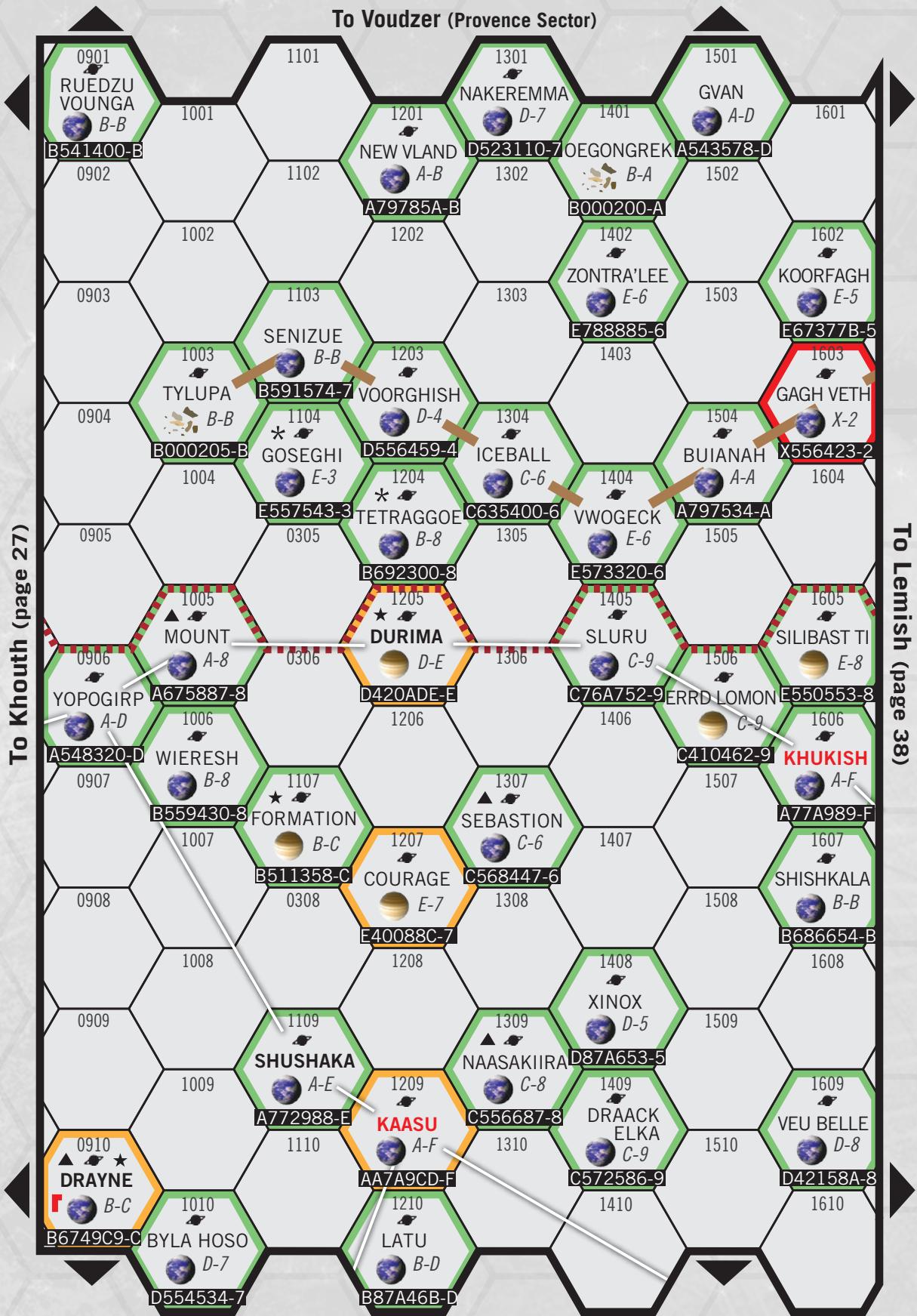
Kaasu's main yards also produce vessels for the major shipping lines and megacorporations, notably big freighters and liners. Smaller yards tend to specialise, producing paramilitary escorts and corsair-hunters popular along the vargr border, yachts and exploration or scientific vessels.

Name	Location	Bases	Statistics	Trade Codes	Travel Code	Allegiance	Gas Giants
Buiannah	1504		A797534-A	Ag Ni		Imperium	G
Byla Hoso	1010		D554534-7	Ag Ni		Imperium	G
Courage	1207		E40088C-7	Na Va	A	Imperium	G
Draack Elka	1409		C572586-9	Ni		Imperium	G
Drayne	0910	N RS S	B6749C9-C	Hi In	A	Imperium	G
Durima	1205	N	B420ADE-E	De Hi In Na Po	A	Imperium	G
Errd Lomon	1506		C410462-9	Ni		Imperium	G
Formation	1107	N	B511358-C	Ic Lo		Imperium	G
Gagh Veth	1603		X556423-2	Ni	R		G
Goseghi	1104	C	E557543-3	Ag Ni			G
Gvan	1501		A543578-D	Ni Po			
Iceball	1304		C635400-6	Ni		Imperium	G
Kaasu	1209		AA7A9CD-F	Hi In Wa	A	Imperium	G
Khukish	1606		A77A989-F	Hi In Wa		Imperium	G
Koorfagh	1602		E67377B-5				G
Latu	1210		B87A46B-D	Ni Wa		Imperium	G
Mount	1005	S	A675887-8			Imperium	G
Naasakiira	1309	S	C556687-8	Ag Ni		Imperium	G
Nakeremma	1301		D523110-7	Lo Po		Imperium	G
New Vland	1201		A79785A-B			Imperium	G
Oegongrek	1401		B000200-A	As Lo Va			
Ruedzu Younga	0901		B541400-8	Ni Po			G
Sebastion	1307	S	C568447-6	Ni		Imperium	G
Senizue	1103		B591574-7	Ni			
Shishkala	1607		B686654-B	Ag Ni Ga Ri		Imperium	G
Shushaka	1109		A772988-E	Hi In		Imperium	G
Silibast Ti	1605		E550553-8	De Ni Po		Imperium	G
Sluru	1405		C76A752-9	Ri Wa		Imperium	G
Tetragoe	1204	C	B692300-8	Lo			G
Tylupa	1003		B000205-B	As Lo Va		Imperium	G
Veubelle	1609		D42158A-8	Ni Po		Imperium	G
Voorghish	1203		D556459-4	Ni			G
Vwogeck	1404		E573320-6	Lo		Imperium	G
Wieresh	1006		B559430-8	Ni		Imperium	G
Xinox	1408		D87A653-5	Ni Wa		Imperium	G
Yopogirp	0906		A548320-D	Lo		Imperium	G
Zontra'Lee	1402		E788885-6	Ri			G

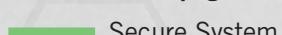
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Corridor

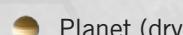
# KHUKISH SUBSECTOR



- B-6 Starport Class & Tech Level  
 ▲ Imperial Scout Base  
 ★ Imperial Naval Base  
 ⚡ Research Station



- Amber Zone  
 Red Zone  
 X-boat Route  
 Ushamla Main



- Planet (dry)  
 Planet (water present)  
 Asteroids  
 Imperium Border  
 \* Clan Base

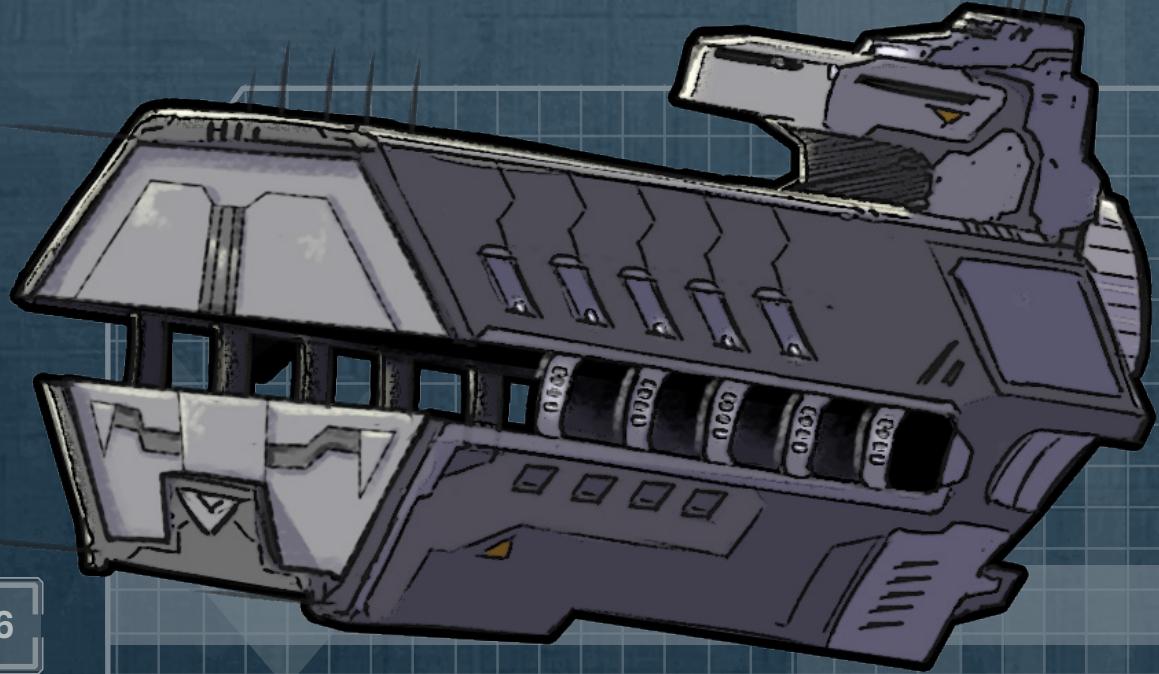
# DREADNOUGHT-MONITOR

[ADALARARGISH-CLASS]

**TL15**

		<b>TONS</b>	<b>COST (MCR)</b>
<b>Hull</b>	250,000 tons, Standard	-	12500
<b>Armour</b>	Bonded Superdense, Armour: 15	30000	15000
<b>M-Drive</b>	Thrust 6	15000	30000
<b>J-Drive</b>	Jump 2	12505	18757.5
<b>Power Plant</b>	Fusion (TL15), power 300,000	15000	30000
<b>Fuel Tanks</b>	2 Jump-2, 16 weeks of operation	106000	-
<b>Bridge</b>		60	1250
<b>Computer</b>	Core/80 fib	-	142.5
<b>Sensors</b>	Advanced, Distributed Arrays	15	15.9
	Sensor Stations x 20	20	10
	Military Countermeasures Suite	15	28
<b>Weapons</b>	Spinal – Railgun (TL13)	16800	3900
	Large Fusion Gun Bays x24	12000	1200
	Medium Missile Bays x48	4800	1200
	Triple Turrets (pulse lasers) x400	400	1600
	Triple Turrets (sandcasters x 2, beam laser) x 400	400	800
	Point Defence Battery (Type III) x100	2000	2000
<b>Ammunition</b>	Railgun shots x 50	1000	-
	Sandcaster barrel storage (8,000 barrels)	400	-
	Missile storage (24,000 missiles)	2000	-
<b>Screens</b>	Nuclear Damper x100	1000	1000
	Meson Screen x100	1000	2000
<b>Systems</b>	Fuel Scoops	-	1
	Fuel Processors (2,000 tons/day)	100	5
	Repair Drones	2500	500
	Brig x 4	16	1
	Medical Bay (60 patients)	48	24
	Armoury	250	62.5
	Workshop (24 Personnel)	72	10.8
<b>Staterooms</b>	Docking Space (50 tons) x 12	660	165
	High x 25	150	20
	Standard x 2000	8000	1000
<b>Software</b>	Barracks x 1000	2000	50
	Manoeuvre/0	-	-
	Evade/3	-	3
	Jump Control/2	-	0.2
	Library	-	-
	Intellect	-	1
	Auto-Repair/2	-	10
	Advanced Fire Control/3	-	18
	Anti-Hijack/3	-	10
	Battle System/3	-	36
<b>Common Areas</b>	Electronic Warfare/3	-	24
	Launch Solution/3	-	16
<b>Cargo</b>		4000	400
		12199	-

**TOTAL: MCR 123,761.4**



166,666

HULL POINTS

## CREW

CAPTAIN, ASTROGATORS X 3, PILOTS X 15,  
ENGINEERS X 404, MAINTENANCE X 167,  
GUNNERS X 2312, ADMINISTRATORS X 83,  
OFFICERS X 106, MEDICS X 19, MARINES X 1000

## RUNNING COSTS

### MAINTENANCE COST

MCr 123761.4/month

• • • •

### PURCHASE COST

MCr 103.1345

## POWER REQUIREMENTS

150,000

MANOEUVRE  
DRIVE

50,000

BASIC SHIP  
SYSTEMS

100

FUEL PROCESSOR

50,000

JUMP DRIVE

14

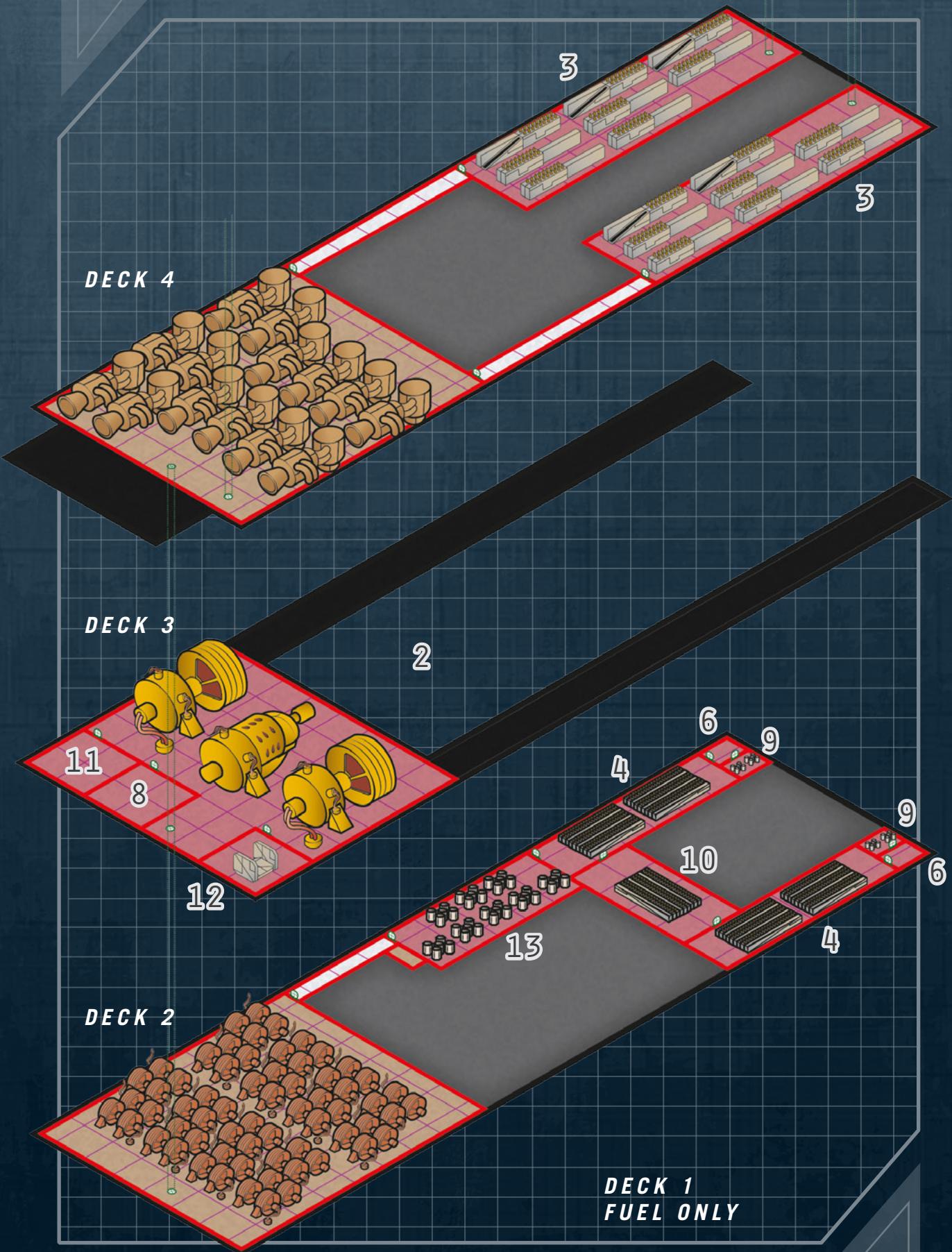
SENSORS

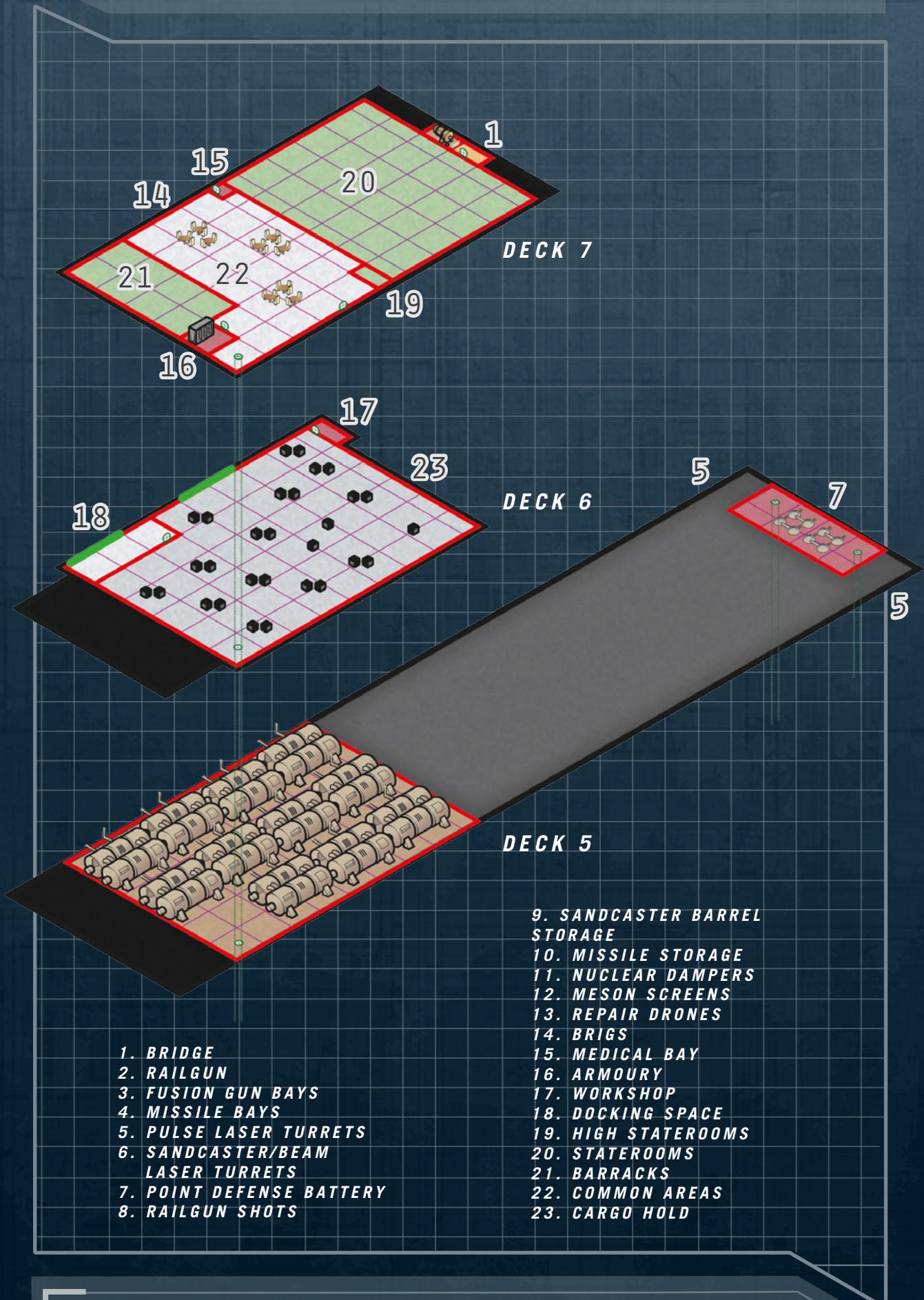
15360

WEAPONS

The *Adlarargish*-class lacks the high jump capability required for fast response to crisis, or deep-penetration offensive action, but this lack of strategic mobility is not considered a drawback. The forces of planetary navies do not range far from their homeworlds and do not require the fleet mobility of the Imperial Navy.

The architects considered the availability of a less mobile but powerful vessel might prompt the Imperial Navy to adopt a strategy based on these vessels as centres of local resistance that could be used as a pivot for faster forces. Essentially, a local reserve of low-mobility vessels could be moved to cover threatened systems, freeing high-end assets for counterattacks and mobile operations. In the event, the Imperial Navy did not adopt the *Adlarargish*-class and its name-ship remains an asset of its homeworld. *Adlarargish* is a common sight in the systems of the Khukish subsector, showing the flag and deterring trouble. The Imperial Navy may not have chosen to buy her but few potential foes would want to fight her.







# LEMISH

SUBSECTOR

Name	Location	Bases	Statistics	Trade Codes	Travel Code	Allegiance	Gas Giants
Aking	2307		C200564-A	Ni Va		Imperium	G
Alfive	2209	N	B578861-A			Imperium	G
Amwaz	2109		B592333-B	Lo	A	Imperium	
Angi	2106	S	D541632-6	Ni Po		Imperium	G
Aurolee	2206	N	B000769-D	As Na Va		Imperium	G
Brariun	2205		B629434-9	Ni		Imperium	G
Dazeys World	1905		C438220-B	Lo		Imperium	
Dhouthits	2201		B540552-7	De Ni Po			G
Dianah	2010		C564500-A	Ag Ni		Imperium	G
Double Sun	2304		X000403-7	As Ni Va	R		G
Dzaedenforr	2202		A877479-D	Ni			G
Eghani Nivek	2004		D654479-7	Ni			G
Foengos	2102		C662574-4	Ni			G
Ginning	2108	N	A6315AF-B	Ni Po	A	Imperium	G
Gravista	2405	S	C553879-4	Po		Imperium	G
Ighoth	1904		A433477-C	Ni Po			G
Kfotsaen	2003		C100403-9	Ni Va			G
Lemish	1808	N S	A79568C-C	Ag Ni	A	Imperium	G
Llaefong	1803		B42357B-B	Ni Po			G
Luuga	2208	S	B410767-C	Na		Imperium	G
Munhofen	1810		C543203-8	Lo Po		Imperium	G
Ngaethaena	2403		A666278-B	Lo Ga			G
Ngeroull	1704		B766684-6	Ag Ni Ga Ri			G
Pruughoe	2306		C9C769E-9	Fl Ni	A	Imperium	G
Spectii	2009		E773100-8	Lo		Imperium	G
Sutton	1906		B420575-C	De Ni Po		Imperium	G
Tamilaa	2006	N	B788747-A	Ag Ri		Imperium	G
Treedisk	2409	S	D420332-9	De Lo Po		Imperium	G
Tyee	1703		C436685-6	Ni			G
Vikenngis	2101	C	B000889-C	As Na Va			G
Voegrr	2303		B587201-C	Lo			G
Weyland	1908	N	B435267-9	Lo		Imperium	G

Like the other subsectors at the coreward end of the Corridor, Lemish is a major trade artery for the Imperium and thus of great strategic importance. Lemish, in common with other subsectors, has two numbered fleets assigned for its protection, although they are more specialised than usual.

The 60<sup>th</sup> Fleet has its primary bases at Lemish and Alfive and is tasked with commerce protection and peacekeeping in the rimward end of the subsector. As a result, it operates mainly smaller vessels, patrolling the major trade route along the rimward border. The 105<sup>th</sup> fleet, based mainly at Tamilaa and Aurolee, patrols the border and has a small additional force of cruisers for the purpose. Both fleets are primarily security rather than warfighting assets; in the event of a major cross-border operation, the sector admiral would assign forces from the sector fleet, leaving most of the subsector assets in place.

The 105<sup>th</sup> fleet in particular is very busy, mainly in terms of customs inspections, flag-showing visits and being a visible deterrent. However, there is enough trouble with pirates and raiders that the 105<sup>th</sup> is considered a desirable posting for those seeking to further their career with combat citations.

## AUROLEE

A planetoid belt lying almost on the Imperial border, Aurolee has become a 'navy world'. Its government is formed largely from former Imperial Navy personnel, as is its planetary fleet. Indeed, it is hard to see where the Imperial armed forces end and civilian population begins, a situation acceptable to a large proportion of the population, but there is considerable disaffection in some quarters. This tends to increase then die down again, usually in proportion to the number of corsair incidents the navy deals with.

As the site of a naval base, Aurolee is very secure and not greatly troubled by cross-border raids. Nearby worlds are less fortunate, although the Corridor sector fleet endeavours to deter raiding with punitive operations and cross-border sweeps. Many of these are staged out of Aurolee or supported by vessels based there.

Aurolee is renowned for the quality of the energy weapons and scientific instruments it produces. From starship-grade lasers and particle weapons to surgical lasers and astronomical interferometers, Aurolee's light and energy based equipment is the best Imperial Credits can buy. The Imperial Navy is one of the world's biggest customers but sales are strong across a range of market sectors.

## AUROLEE LASERS

Laser weapons built on Aurolee tend to have slightly better than usual focussing or reliability. However, those willing to pay for the best can select one of the following options. Each increases the cost of the weapon by +50% and only one benefit can be taken per weapon.

**Enhanced Firepower:** The laser weapon draws 1 extra Power but delivers an extra point of damage per die. Thus, a pulse laser costing MCr1.5 draws 5 Power and delivers 2D+2 damage.

**Point Defence Optimisation:** The laser weapon delivers one point of damage less than usual per die but gains DM+2 on point-defence fire against missiles or ships at dogfighting range. Thus, a beam laser costing MCr0.75 deals 1D-1 damage but has increased effectiveness against close-in targets.

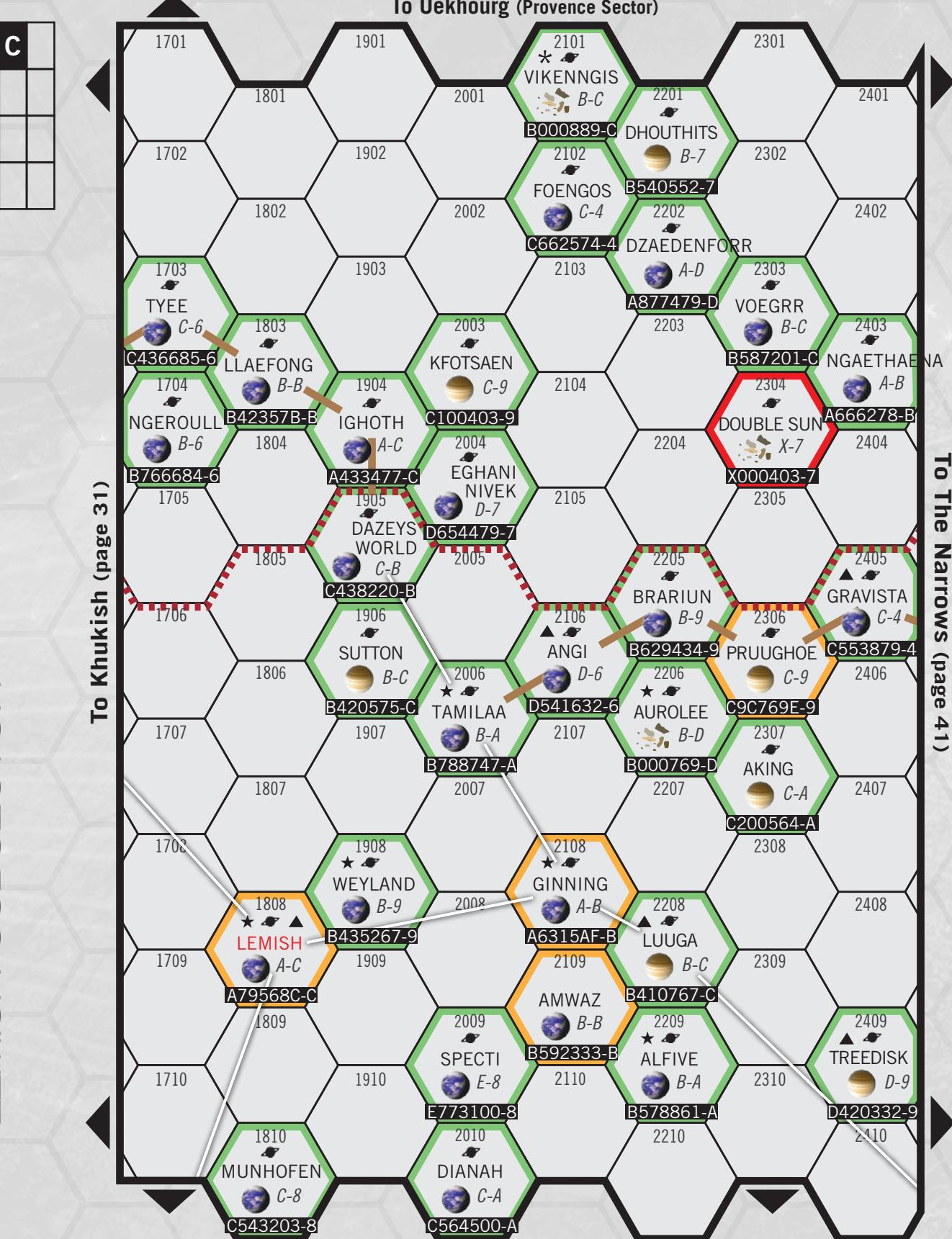
**Quick Charge:** The laser weapon delivers normal damage but runs through its cooling and charging cycle much quicker. When any shot hits a target, roll 1D. On a 2+, the weapon can immediately fire again at the same target. This requires a new roll to hit but gains DM+2.

Aurolee was recently chosen as a prime contractor and a main build site for the Advanced Emission Comparator project. Despite a great deal of publicity, details of this undertaking are rather vague. AEC appears to be a set of receptor buoys, which can be positioned in a grid and used to detect exotic particle emissions. It has been repeatedly stated that this project is purely scientific but there are those who believe it is a long-range spying device or perhaps a means to detect stealthy starships at a great distance.

Trials of the AEC, in its early form, have been conducted along the fringes of the Great Rift. Officially, the trials are intended to gather information on the performance of the devices in a low-clutter environment but some believe there is another purpose to the project; perhaps the Imperium is looking for something specific and has built a colossally expensive device for the purpose; although opinions on what the target may be vary considerably.

# LEMISH SUBSECTOR

Corridor



# THE NARROWS



## SUBSECTOR

Named because the subsector's Imperial territory is a strip just a few parsecs wide, with the Great Rift to one side and foreign powers on the other, the Narrows is one of the most strategically important regions in Imperial space. It has two numbered fleets; the 133<sup>rd</sup> and 134<sup>th</sup>, which are jointly responsible for local security. Despite the importance of the subsector, it has few heavy units of the sector fleet assigned to its defence; it is not feasible to defend Imperial space by maintaining a 'thin, hard crust' of capital vessels along the border so, in the event of war, reinforcements would arrive from the Vland sector fleet, concentrated to crush any invading forces. This means the worlds of the Narrows are sensitive to war scares and most maintain heavy planetary defences.

The economy of the Narrows benefits from trade passing through the Corridor and coreward into Vagr space, and proximity to the long-developed worlds of Vland sector. This has been a mixed blessing, with many worlds plundered in the past for their easily accessible resources, before their own industrial base became large enough to make use of them, but in the longer term it has enabled the Imperial worlds of the Narrows to develop into mature economies and important trade hubs.

### DILUB ROU

Despite being a balkanised hell-world, Dilub Rou is a very wealthy high-tech planet whose population enjoy a high standard of living. This came about mainly due to the world's fortunate position as what travel guides sometimes refer to as the Gateway to the Narrows. Dilub Rou's port offers access to both the coreward and rimward routes through the Corridor, commonly known as the Border Route and the Riftsedge Run. The latter title is not all that accurate; the Riftsedge Run swings away from the edge of the Great Rift after leaving the Narrows, and is closer to the coreward border than Rift space for some of its length.

The planetary population is dispersed between several modestly sized cities, all of which are self-governing and have their own downports. Many visitors to the system remain at the highport, never descending to the surface and most decisions are jointly taken by a council of representatives based at the port. The planetary population

has little interest in interstellar affairs, being content to live happy and complacent lives fuelled by commercial activity in orbit. Like many similar worlds, the people of Dilub Rou benefit from Imperial membership without really engaging with the Imperium itself.

Trade through Dilub Rou's starport is enormous. Some vessels turn around and head back to spinward, shuttling along the Corridor for their entire careers. Others proceed onwards towards Vland and the Imperial heartland. In addition to the big freighters and liners, smaller vessels ply the local trade routes or carry out missions of diplomacy and communication.

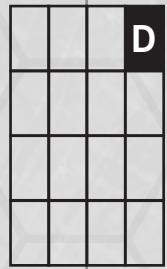
Dilub Rou has little in the way of industry. Most of its income comes from trade and commerce, or financial and brokerage services. Without its starport, the world's economy would collapse. Indeed, the TL15 designation assigned to Dilub Rou reflects what is available rather than what can be locally supported. Almost anything is available in the shops of the cities and starport but, other than a few specialised items, everything is imported. Carrying high-tech consumer goods between star systems is expensive but the costs are passed on to the consumer and since salaries are high, nobody really minds.

### LONG SHOT

Long Shot's 'mainworld' is the primary asteroid belt in the system. The secondary belt is also inhabited, with a few outposts on the system's rocky planets. The system was colonised for the specific and sole purpose of mining its abundant mineral resources and although early mining settlements have grown into cities, their essential character has not changed. Long Shot is governed by a consortium of mining companies, who have cemented their control over the system with paramilitary policing and a very strict set of laws. Labour disputes and dissent are common, with hardline responses doing little to improve the situation. Occasionally, there is call for Imperial intervention before a situation spirals into a civil war but this is typically dismissed as alarmist troublemaking. For the present, Long Shot continues to export large quantities of high-value ore and various rare minerals and so long as internal troubles do not disrupt mining operations, external involvement is highly unlikely.

Name	Location	Bases	Statistics	Trade Codes	Travel Code	Allegiance	Gas Giants
Ackaeck	2502	C	B586757-9	Ag Ri			G
Atudew	2810	S	C595240-8	Lo		Imperium	
Brytsee	2710		A79A237-B	Lo Wa		Imperium	G
Chosen	2603	RS	C534544-8	Ni	A	Imperium	G
Desiver	3107		C570421-9	De Ni		Imperium	
Dilub Rou	3208	N S	A420573-F	De Ni Po		Imperium	G
Esuto	3201		A572674-9	Ni			G
Gerbetord	3207	S	B75A512-C	Ni Wa		Imperium	G
Habretic	2010	S	C663110-9	Lo		Imperium	G
Hesaim	2701		B424451-E	Ni			G
Jed	2506	S	C757863-6	Ga		Imperium	G
Kidagir	2503		X542324-5	Lo Po	R		G
Kifrusis	2906	N	A568235-D	Lo		Imperium	G
Kotsingdifir	3202		C544697-6	Ag Ni	A		G
Krroughf	2904		D577522-5	Ag Ni		Imperium	G
Long Shot	3106	S	C00069C-B	As Na Ni Va		Imperium	G
Neghu Oug	2804		C63A641-9	Ni Wa			G
Nuplae	2606	N	B64A236-D	Lo Wa		Imperium	G
Oegoerrvu	2902	C	D410456-8	Ni			G
Oqwee	2901	N	B423452-D	Ni Po		Imperium	G
Plunge	2505	N S	B5409CC-C	De Hi In Po	A	Imperium	G
R'tinh Kills	3209	N S	B646110-B	Lo			
Rustsoura	3004	C	C400102-B	Lo Va			G
Salite	3104		B554300-B	Lo			
Seplus	2907		C797698-8	Ag Ni		Imperium	G
Shinaashag	2905	S	D5438A8-6	Po		Imperium	G
Twophur	2908		B653797-7	Po		Imperium	G
Uerrgno	2903		D867996-4	Hi Ga			G
Uughrae	2806		C63A641-9	Lo Ga		Imperium	
Vellutsaer	2801	C	E9B3531-8	Fl Ni			G

# THE NARROWS SUBSECTOR

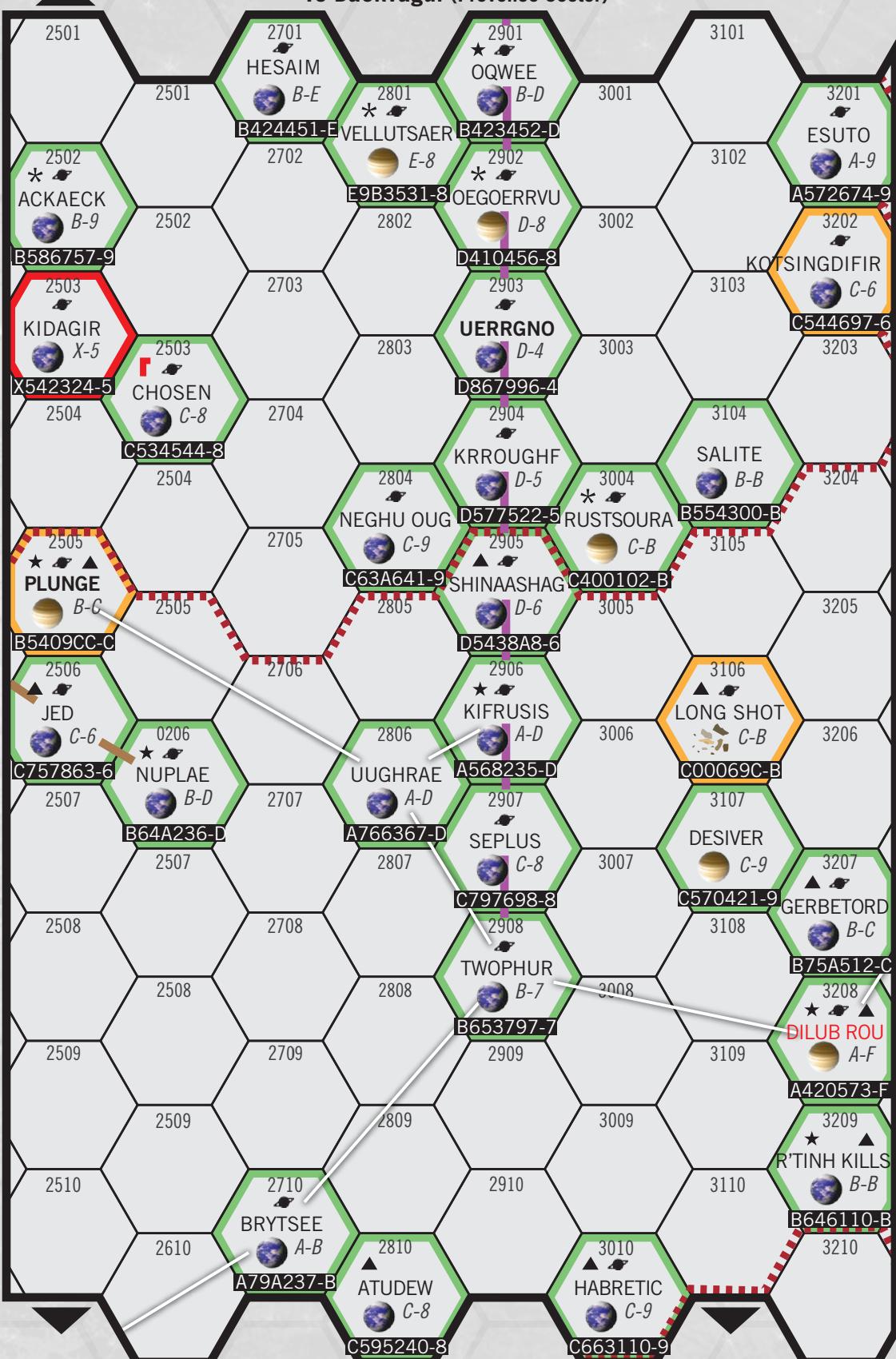


Corridor

To Voskhod (Vland Sector)

To Lemish (page 38)

## To Daekvagul (Provence Sector)



To Uantil (page 53)

- Gas Giant
- B-6 Starport Class & Tech Level
- Imperial Scout Base
- Imperial Naval Base
- Research Station

- Secure System
- Amber Zone
- Red Zone
- X-boat Route
- Corridor Main

- Planet (dry)
- Planet (water present)
- Asteroids
- Imperium Border
- \*
- Clan Base
- Ushamla Main



# IAN

SUBSECTOR

Name	Location	Bases	Statistics	Trade Codes	Travel Code	Allegiance	Gas Giants
Aga Sugek	0113		A9B8356-B	Fl Lo		Imperium	G
Antiquity	0816	N	A423420-C	Ni Po		Imperium	G
Beta Regillis	0512	S	D543567-5	Ni Po		Imperium	G
Daban	0411		C514858-8	Ic		Imperium	G
Dywosik	0614		C547547-9	Ag Ni		Imperium	G
Erlu	0213	N	B7C0626-9	Ni		Imperium	G
Ian	0416		A5988BE-C		A	Imperium	G
Ikhur	0611		B756532-B	Ag Ni Ga		Imperium	G
Irasumshu	0417		E554A74-6	Hi		Imperium	G
Jubal	0311		E300497-9	Ni Va	A		G
Ka Eto	0119	N	B615345-C	Ic Lo		Imperium	G
Khikhushir	0115		D676534-5	Ag Ni		Imperium	G
Kiran	0112	N	A554856-D			Imperium	G
Kumorie	0513	S	B431758-C	Na Po		Imperium	G
Linix' Cha	0511		E422578-8	Ni Po		Imperium	G
Lobok	0218		C582876-8	Ri		Imperium	G
Lysio	0815	S	B594546-9	Ag Ni		Imperium	G
Muugagen	0312		D553465-7	Ni Po		Imperium	G
Raiga	0516		X664532-3	Ag Ni	R	Imperium	G
Shinku	0111		E879102-8	Lo		Imperium	G
Teras	0714	N	B438247-B	Lo		Imperium	
Vom	0617	S	C423578-9	Ni Po		Imperium	G
Yubitty	0313		C96A987-7	Hi Wa		Imperium	G

This subsector is not untypical as rift-edge regions go. The coreward end of the subsector is characterised by a cluster of star systems, which sprawls out into Deneb to spinward and Khouth subsector to coreward. Rimward, stellar density is lower, rapidly dropping to almost zero.

Ian subsector is far more secure than Khouth, being further from the Vargr border and effectively protected by the Great Rift to coreward. It is sometimes referred to as 'little Deneb' as the worlds of the subsector have closer ties with Deneb sector than the Imperial territories to trailing. Ian is very much a part of what economists call the Denebian Economic Zone, acting as an exit and entry port for goods headed through the Corridor to the Imperial heartland.

The subsector is also well known as the location of Antiquity, which has one of the largest and best-preserved Ancients sites in Charted Space. This site is unusual in that some parts of it are still functional. Most are completely off-limits to casual visitors, although some apparently harmless functions can be viewed from close-by platforms. The world is a major tourist destination, although its location makes visiting it an expensive undertaking. Nevertheless, there are sufficient wealthy people interested in the Ancients to support a regular run by luxury liners. Given the people travelling on these liners, security tends to be very tight and the vessels are well-armed. It is not uncommon for an Antiquity liner to be escorted by small warships.

Antiquity is the source of the Antiquity Beacon, a highly variable signal that changes frequency and strength on a complex but partially predictable basis. It may be that further study will detect sub-patterns in the beacon's shifting emissions but at the current time it still has the capability to defy the best predictive models available to scientists. The Antiquity Beacon's purpose is not known but presumed to be related to navigation or position-fixing. Imperial scientists consider the position of such a beacon on the shores of the Great Rift to be no coincidence and have postulated that it may be some kind of lighthouse for vessels operating in the void.

## ANTIQUITY

Formerly an obscure world named Askizan, Antiquity shot to prominence in 385 with the discovery of an extensive Ancients site. Not only was this one of the largest ever found, it was largely intact and functional.

Despite hundreds of years of study, the Ancients site at Antiquity remains a mystery – a few minor effects have been documented but scientists still cannot fathom its purpose. It has been suggested that whilst the site is still doing *something* it is no longer carrying out any useful function. Antiquity has become a tourist destination for those who can afford the trip and has a significant proportion of amateur scientists among its population. The site is considered safe to visit – largely because nothing bad has happened for eight centuries – but some areas remain off-limits to unauthorised personnel. The world's naval base is officially concerned with security of local systems but is widely assumed to be present to protect the Ancients site... or just possibly protect the outside universe if the site wakes up and starts causing trouble.

## RAIGA

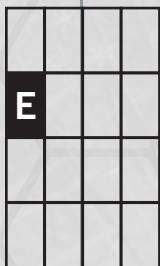
Raiga is designated a Red Zone, with access forbidden to anyone without official clearance. This is partly for the protection of its developing culture and partly to protect visitors from the Raigans. Whilst not especially violent, Raigan society is characterised by xenophobia and cultural pride that often results in unexpected confrontations. Access to the world is typically granted only to anthropologists and cultural researchers vouched for by a major educational or research establishment.

The people of Raiga are human, probably the descendants of Vilani Imperium era colonists isolated by the Long Night. They are fully aware of their cousins across Charted Space but want nothing to do with them. Raiga's position in the Corridor makes the construction of a good starport desirable to many commercial interests, which would likely be accompanied by the creation of supporting industries. Facilitating this would require colonising at least part of Raiga with offworld workers but the local population could not be brought up to a suitable Tech Level on any useful time frame even if they were willing.

Although various plans have been put forward to create a colony on some remote land mass, far from any indigenous settlement, all such schemes have been rejected. Pressure is increasing, however, and it may be that sooner or later Raiga's indigenous population become a forgotten footnote as the world's new settlers join the interstellar culture of the Imperium.

# IAN SUBSECTOR

Corridor



To Atsah (Deneb Sector)

To Khouth (page 27)

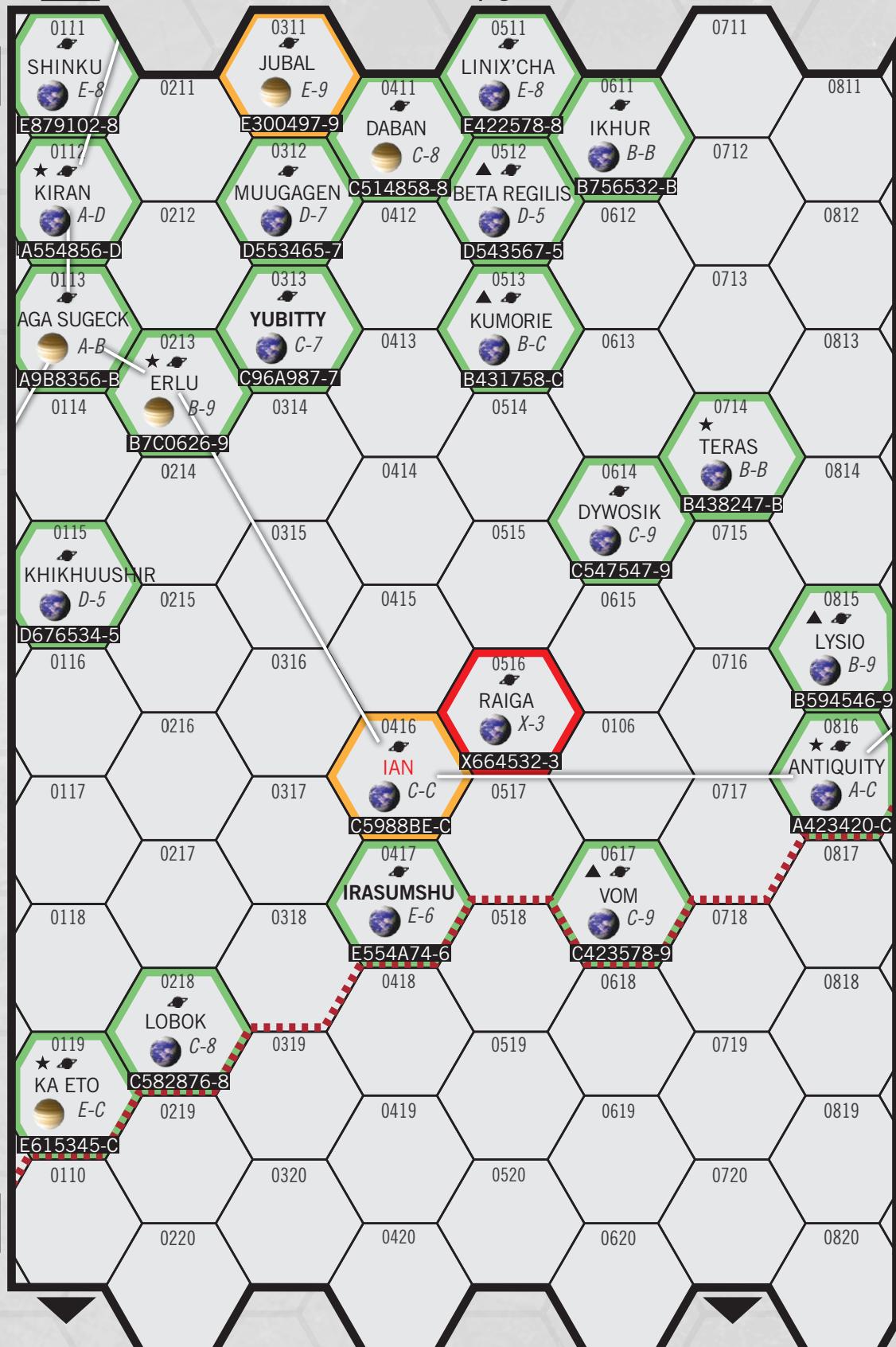
To Strand (page 46)

To Shush (page 54)

- Gas Giant
- B-6 Starport Class & Tech Level
- Imperial Scout Base
- Imperial Naval Base

- Secure System
- Amber Zone
- Red Zone

- Planet (dry)
- Planet (water present)
- Imperium Border
- X-Boat Route





# STRAND

SUBSECTOR

Name	Location	Bases	Statistics	Trade Codes	Travel Code	Allegiance	Gas Giants
Ahngrim	0918		D9D6642-2	Ni		Imperium	G
Ashima	1515		E543942-8	Hi In Po		Imperium	G
Biinersa	1111		B849401-B	Ni		Imperium	G
Buagki	1112	N	A426353-C	Lo	A	Imperium	G
Demick	1013		A532879-D	Na Po		Imperium	G
Depot	1511	N	A68646A-D	Ni Ga	A	Imperium	G
Emfashi	1218		D658341-5	Lo			
Heald	0913		A541664-B	Ni Po		Imperium	G
Itasis	1413		C542375-9	Lo Po		Imperium	G
Justends Four	1514		D567100-5	Lo		Imperium	G
Kearb	1418		CAC8341-9	Fl Lo		Imperium	G
Nubotech	1513		C562556-9	Ni		Imperium	G
Six Lights	1216	N	B577441-9	Ni		Imperium	G
Strand	0916	N	A545654-C	Ag Ni		Imperium	G
Tobibak	1011		C96A410-A	Ni Wa		Imperium	G
Toddie-Lee	0912	N	A566420-D	Ni		Imperium	G
Valeneg	1414	S	C412120-7	Ic Lo		Imperium	G
Vanquest	1611	S	B63A8A8-9	Wa		Imperium	G
Vigh	1213		C200257-A	Lo Va		Imperium	G
Zudagim	1415		E68299A-5	Hi		Imperium	G

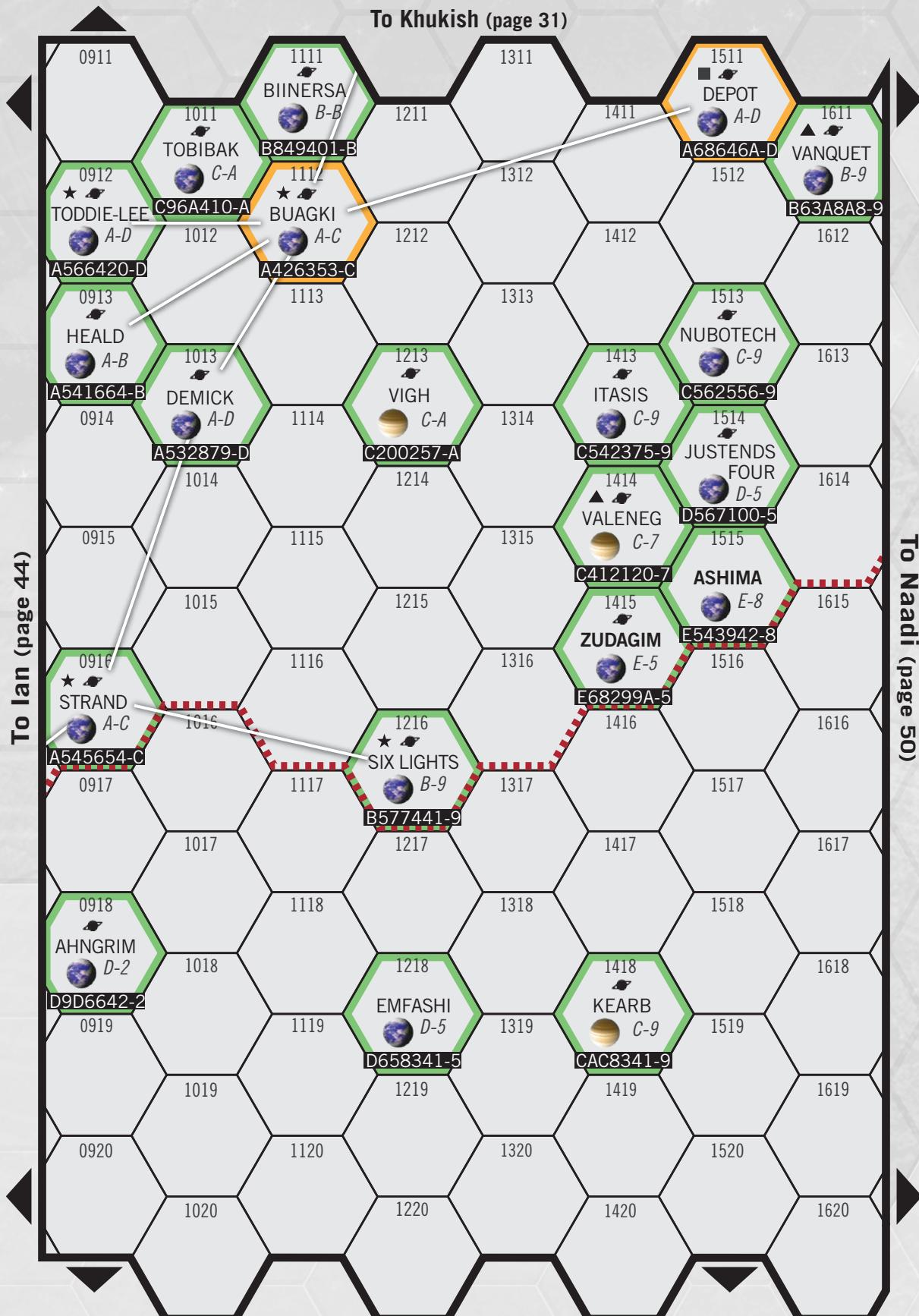
Like the Ian subsector, Strand lies well behind the Imperial border to coreward and is generally secure. Only three worlds in the subsector are not members of the Imperium, lying ‘just offshore’ in the Great Rift and reached by a jump-2 transit. The subsector thus faces no serious external threats but is still considered strategically important due to the amount of shipping moving along the Corridor.

The Imperial Navy’s Corridor Fleet has its base at Depot, with its command structure and most of its heavy assets based there. At any given time, vessels will be positioned elsewhere in the sector or engaged in operations, training or flag-showing along the border, but Depot is where the battlewagons live and there are always big ships undergoing maintenance or standing ready to deal with a crisis.

# STRAND SUBSECTOR

Corridor

F



Gas Giant

B-6 Starport Class & Tech Level

Imperial Scout Base

Imperial Naval Base

To The Empty Void (page 57)

Secure System

Amber Zone

Imperial Naval Depot

Planet (dry)

Planet (water present)

Imperium Border

X-Boat Route

# ANGANTYR'S FOE

ANIMAL	HITS	SPEED
Angantyr's Foe	120	8 m
SKILLS	Melee (natural) 2, Recon 2, Survival 2	
ATTACKS	Tail Lash and Bite (8D)	
TRAITS	Armour (+16), Heightened Senses, Large (+8)	
BEHAVIOUR	Omnivore, Hunter	

Of all the creatures of Ahngrim, Angantyr's Foe is among the largest and fiercest, named after a famous warrior of Norse mythology; Angantyr was the tallest son of King Ahngrim, who may be the source of the world's name.

Angantyr's Foe resembles a long-bodied triceratops, with a horned armour plate on its head and shoulders, and a broad but agile eight-legged body, with a wickedly spiked tail heavy enough to knock over a tree. It is an apex predator but, usually, acts as an omnivore. If suitable prey is not available, Angantyr's Foe will try to keep hunger at bay by eating vegetation, which it does in an inefficient and highly destructive manner. The range of one of these creatures is thus easy to detect, although they are nomadic and will wander in search of new territory from time-to-time.

These wanderings can bring the normally solitary Angantyr's Foe into contact with others of its kind. If conditions are right, juveniles sometimes form a temporary pack of two to six individuals and adults may take a mate. Mated pairs are strangely affectionate for such a destructive creature but intolerant of others and will drive off their juvenile offspring as soon as they are old enough to fend for themselves. It is not clear what drives the choice between mating for life and killing one another, as males and females of suitable age have been known to battle just as viciously as two of the same gender.

Angantyr's Foe seems to consider humans and other sentients as threats or rivals and will hunt down anyone venturing into its territory whether they have hostile intentions or not.



Depot is also the staging point for navy ships moving along the Corridor to reinforce other sectors; during the Frontier Wars, much of its battleship and cruiser strength was sent to the Spinward Marches and squadron movements here can sometimes indicate rising tensions elsewhere. Likewise, the return of a long-absent squadron to Depot is usually taken as a sign that events have settled.

The surrounding systems benefit from large amounts of navy money entering the economy. This is on a small scale in bars, shops and entertainment facilities visited by personnel on liberty or furlough and much grander amounts when naval contracts are issued for everything from rations and boots to hull plates and particle accelerator components.

## AHNGRIM

Ahngrim lies outside the Imperial border, two parsecs out in the Great Rift. Along with Emfashi and Kearb, it is routinely patrolled by warships out of the base at Six Lights, although crews do not consider this to be a 'rift mission' due to the short distances involved.

Ahngrim has an unusually dense atmosphere, only breathable by humans at high altitude, so settlements are restricted to high ground on the shoulders of mountain ranges and the occasional mesa. The majority of the million or so inhabitants dwell in the Ahngrim-Home mountain range, with those living elsewhere being very isolated.

Ahngrim-Home has a small landing area for starships but is not welcoming to outsiders. There is little to trade with the low-tech locals, although Imperial uniforms and ship markings produce a warmer welcome, since the navy and Scout Service have both pursued a policy of scrupulously good behaviour when visiting. Non-official vessels are subject to grave suspicion.

Of course, the locals have no ability to prevent landings elsewhere on their planet and would probably not even know if a starship visited one of the smaller settled areas or a crew delved into the high-pressure lowlands. This is a potentially hazardous undertaking, for various reasons. Just finding a safe landing site is tricky in the riotous vegetation of the valleys and plains and once on the ground, a crew may encounter the world's megafauna. These creatures have evolved to enormous

size in part due to the high-pressure atmosphere, their mass giving physical support and removing problems of oxygenating the blood.

Expeditions visit Ahngrim, unofficially, for two reasons. One is to hunt the megafauna which, whilst not illegal, is frowned upon within the Imperium. Trophies and even whole carcasses are sold on a semi-underground market whose participants value such things. Other visitors come to study the creatures or search for rumoured lost settlements in the lowlands. According to some tales, Ahngrim was once home to a minor race, which could tolerate the dangerously high pressures encountered on their world. These people became extinct long ago but may have left behind artefacts or ruins of interest to scientists and collectors.

## EMFASHI

Lying just two parsecs 'offshore' in the Great Rift, Emfashi nevertheless resembles a deep-rift world in many ways. Very few ships visit, mainly for economic reasons but also as a result of the inhabitants' extreme xenophobia. The world was settled by an isolationist group wanting nothing of interstellar governments or politics and, with very few exceptions, offworlders are made extremely unwelcome. This rarely escalates to violence but there have been enough incidents that Emfashi has become a slang word for 'I want to be left alone and I'll punch you in the face to prove it'.

## ZUDAGIM

Zudagim is one of six underdeveloped worlds lying on the rift shore of the Strand subsector. The surface is very dry, a situation made much worse by the concentration of almost all the world's surface water into a single sea. As a result, some areas receive virtually zero rainfall for decades on end and the ecosphere is very limited. Apart from a few succulent plants, Zudagim has almost no life of its own and introduced species have not done well. The world was colonised long ago and today a population of around eight billion is jammed into a small area of land around the only sea. The overcrowded mid-tech cities of Zudagim are potentially a hungry market for TL6-8 goods but thus far the world has seen little incoming trade and seems destined to continue being what some observers call 'a backwater without any water'.



# NAADI

## SUBSECTOR

Name	Location	Bases	Statistics	Trade Codes	Travel Code	Allegiance	Gas Giants
Antezeno	1811	S	C637335-9	Lo		Imperium	G
Darkmoon	2111		D78A66B-7	Ni Ri Wa		Imperium	G
Denlaar	1713	S	C695426-6	Ni		Imperium	G
Enrick Down	1912		C542432-6	Ni Po		Imperium	
Faplion	2012	S	C525340-7	Lo		Imperium	
Farplace	2116		C550459-A	De Ni Po		Imperium	
Getz	1712		C553259-9	Lo Po		Imperium	
Hishumaki	2311	N	B545542-B	Ag Ni		Imperium	
Naadi	1711	N S	A578572-B	Ag Ni		Imperium	G
Sent'ere	2212	S	C400265-B	Lo Va		Imperium	G
Shargishu	1913		X000447-7	As Ni Va	R	Imperium	G

The Naadi subsector contains only a thin strip of worlds across its coreward edge, with the remainder of the subsector lying in the Great Rift. The subsector's two naval bases are home to the 152<sup>nd</sup> and 255<sup>th</sup> Fleets, both of which are maintained at lower than usual strength. Although on paper equivalent to other numbered fleets, these forces are routinely robbed of vessels to increase the patrol and escort strength of other fleets in nearby subsectors.

The Scout Service, on the other hand, maintains several bases in the subsector despite the small number of inhabited worlds. Some support communications through the Corridor, whilst others exist for scientific and research purposes. The scout bases at Sent'ere and Denlaar play host to an array of scientific, survey and exploration vessels of which many are active along the fringes of the Rift.

Merchant traffic is light in this subsector, with the exception of Naadi itself. The subsector capital is an important link in the Imperial express boat network and sees a great deal of traffic moving through the system. Some is local, radiating out into nearby systems, but as a stop on one of the standard routes through the Corridor, Naadi also supports and services long-range freight and passenger vessels. Its port and startown are popular with naval personnel from nearby Depot as well, creating a vibrant hub of commerce, entertainment and culture.

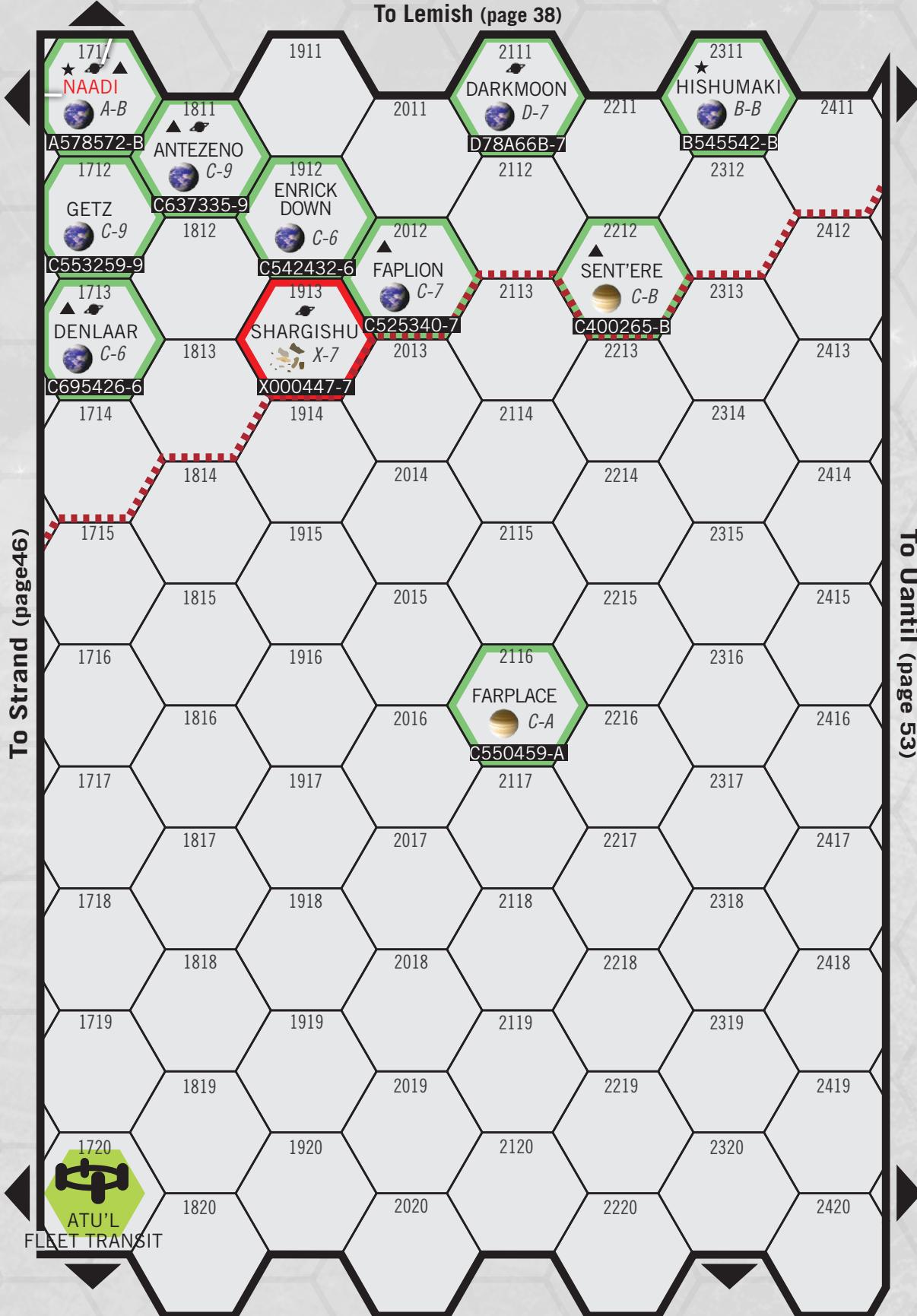
## FARPLACE

Farplace lies four parsecs out in the Great Rift, which represents the distance a world can be from the shore and still receive semi-regular traffic. This is mostly Scout Service vessels out of Faplion and Sent'ere, with the occasional chartered civilian vessel making the transit with tanker support.

# NAADI SUBSECTOR

Corridor

G



Gas Giant

B-6 Starport Class & Tech Level

Imperial Scout Base

Imperial Naval Base

To Atu'l (page 59)

Secure System

Red Zone

X-boat Route

Planet (dry)

Planet (water present)

Asteroids

Imperium Border

The primary reason for interest in Farplace is its location in the Great Rift. The Scout Service uses its port as a forward base when conducting deep-space and exploration missions into Atu'l and Uantil subsectors, so there are usually a handful of Scout Service personnel on-planet at any given time. Vessels coming through the port are anything but regular and tend to arrive as a group or single large vessel, which can swamp the port's capacity. At other times, there will be no traffic for months on end, other than an occasional scout vessel assigned to chart and map the outer system and monitor long-range instruments set up at the fringes of the system.

Although a desert world with a thin atmosphere, Farplace can support its small population with relative ease and its mature technological base is sufficient to sustain itself. Society is austere, with few high-tech items. Those that do exist are dedicated to maintaining the ability to repair and replace components and support a tough but fulfilling lifestyle. The people of Farplace are not unfriendly to outsiders but have an isolationist attitude that reduces interest in the outside universe to almost nil. It is said that civilisation elsewhere could collapse without the people of Farplace noticing or caring. This is an exaggeration but certainly Farplace is self-sufficient to a near-total degree.





# UANTIL

## SUBSECTOR

Name	Location	Bases	Statistics	Trade Codes	Travel Code	Allegiance	Gas Giants
Kiiguuroesa	2811		X200456-7	Ni Va	R	Imperium	G
Mee	2611		B9D86BA-9	Ni	A	Imperium	
Naagasa	2511		B5278AB-9		A	Imperium	G

Uantil subsector contains just three Imperial worlds, of which one is designated a Red Zone and the others rated Amber. Officially, the subsector is assigned two numbered fleets like the others of the Corridor but this is a bureaucratic exercise. The 214<sup>th</sup> and 215<sup>th</sup> Fleets exist only on paper, with no bases in the subsector and no vessels assigned. A small placeholder staff based out of R'tinh Kills in the Narrows oversees routine intelligence gathering and collation in the subsector, with vessels occasionally transferred to one of the two subsector fleets for patrols through the three worlds of the subsector.

The two numbered fleets in Uantil receive the same budget as any other formation, even though they do not really exist. These funds are available to the navy for contingencies and special operations and it is widely believed that much of the money is used to fund operations in the Great Rift. There is little benefit to be had from maintaining a courier network across this end of the Rift – the time taken to get across and then reach a suitable destination on the far side would be at best marginally less than the time to go around. However, records of the 214<sup>th</sup> and 215<sup>th</sup> Fleets indicate several couriers, tankers and long-range vessels transferring in and out of their control over time.

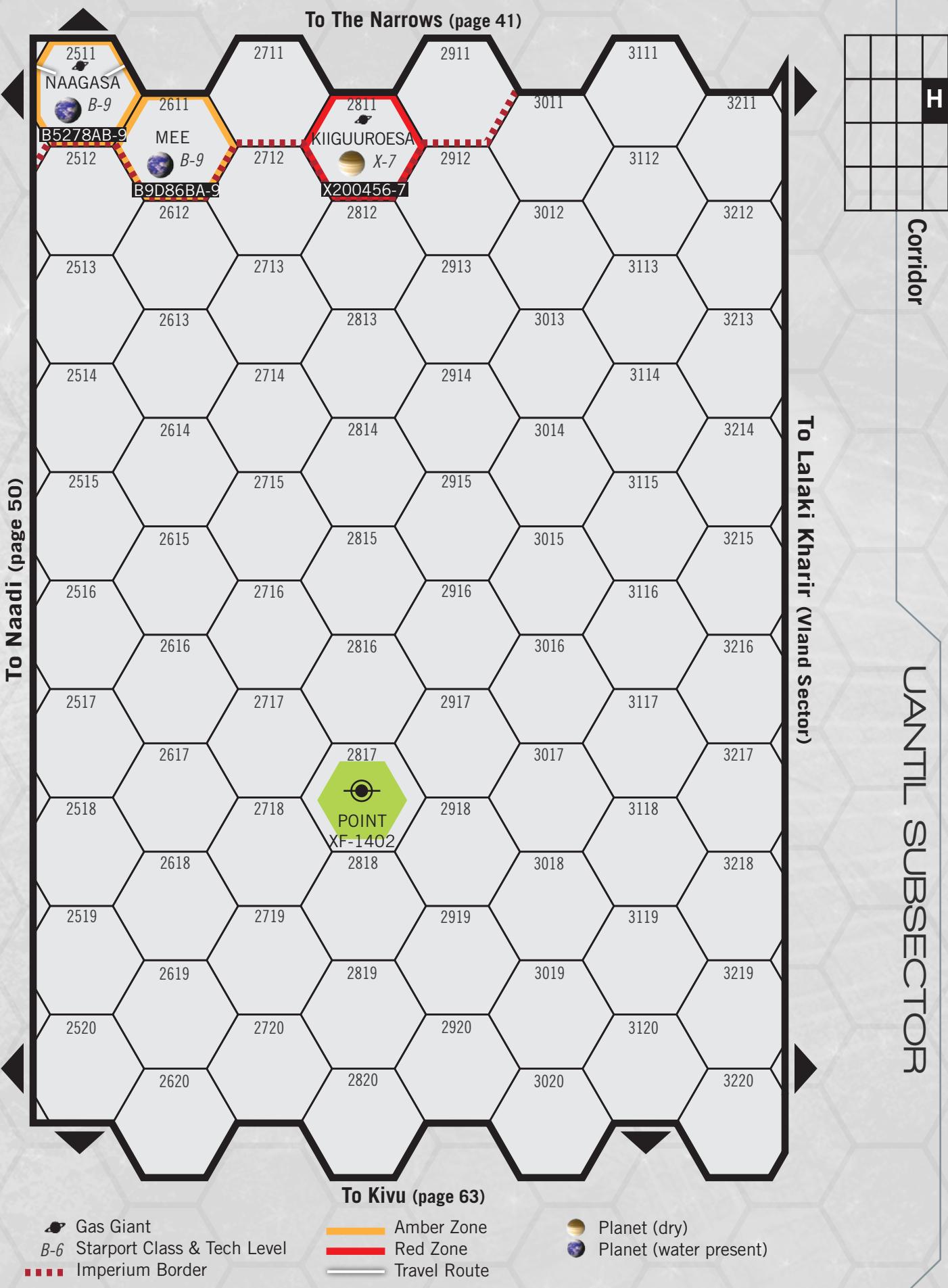
Curiously, some vessels seem to be misidentified. A vessel designated long-range naval dispatch boat Diigkhis recently entered port for repairs after an unspecified incident whilst engaged on rift-fringe communications duty. The list of spares used in her subsequent refit does not match any component found in a small courier but did include an entire jump drive high-output generator assembly of a sort used in high-jump rift cruisers. The Imperial Navy has not commented on this serious administrative error.

## KIIGUROESA

Kiiguuroesa is a rockball world inhabited by around 60,000 people, the remnant of a Vilani Imperium-era colony that never grew beyond a single city and a few outposts. Kiiguuroesa's starport and a segment of the city took a direct hit from a meteorite shower a few years ago, killing several thousand people and rendering part of the city uninhabitable. Emergency assistance rapidly materialised but the promised long-term rebuilding effort floundered amid a sea of buck-passing and bureaucratic delays.

As a result, the population of Kiiguuroesa became angry and desperate. Expeditions into the ruined parts of the city to salvage much-needed equipment encountered bands of offworld scavengers, further entrenching the locals' new xenophobia. Bitter fights took place in the ruins and at some point the local population began attempting to capture any spacecraft that landed. These were stripped for parts, which were in turn used to shore up remaining systems.

Kiiguuroesa is Red Zoned both to keep scavengers out and because any ship that lands risks attack. It is long overdue for formal Imperial intervention, but other events keep arising to push the project to the back of the queue. The occasional scouting or factfinding mission, some conducted by the Imperial authorities and others by private concerns who obtain permission to visit, risks a trip to Kiiguuroesa but the conclusions are the same each time – the locals are hostile and desperate but managing to survive despite the damage to their city. Intervention will be necessary at some point but can be delayed a little longer in favour of more pressing concerns. When intervention does come, it may be necessary to save the people of Kiiguuroesa at gunpoint unless someone can find a way to convince them to accept outside help.





# SHUSH

SUBSECTOR

Name	Location	Bases	Statistics	Trade Codes	Travel Code	Allegiance	Gas Giants
Shush	0221		C662242-7	Lo			G

The Shush subsector lies in the Great Rift, with just a single star system. A low-population world, Shush itself is reachable by jump-3 vessels and so is not completely isolated, although it receives very little traffic.

## SHUSH

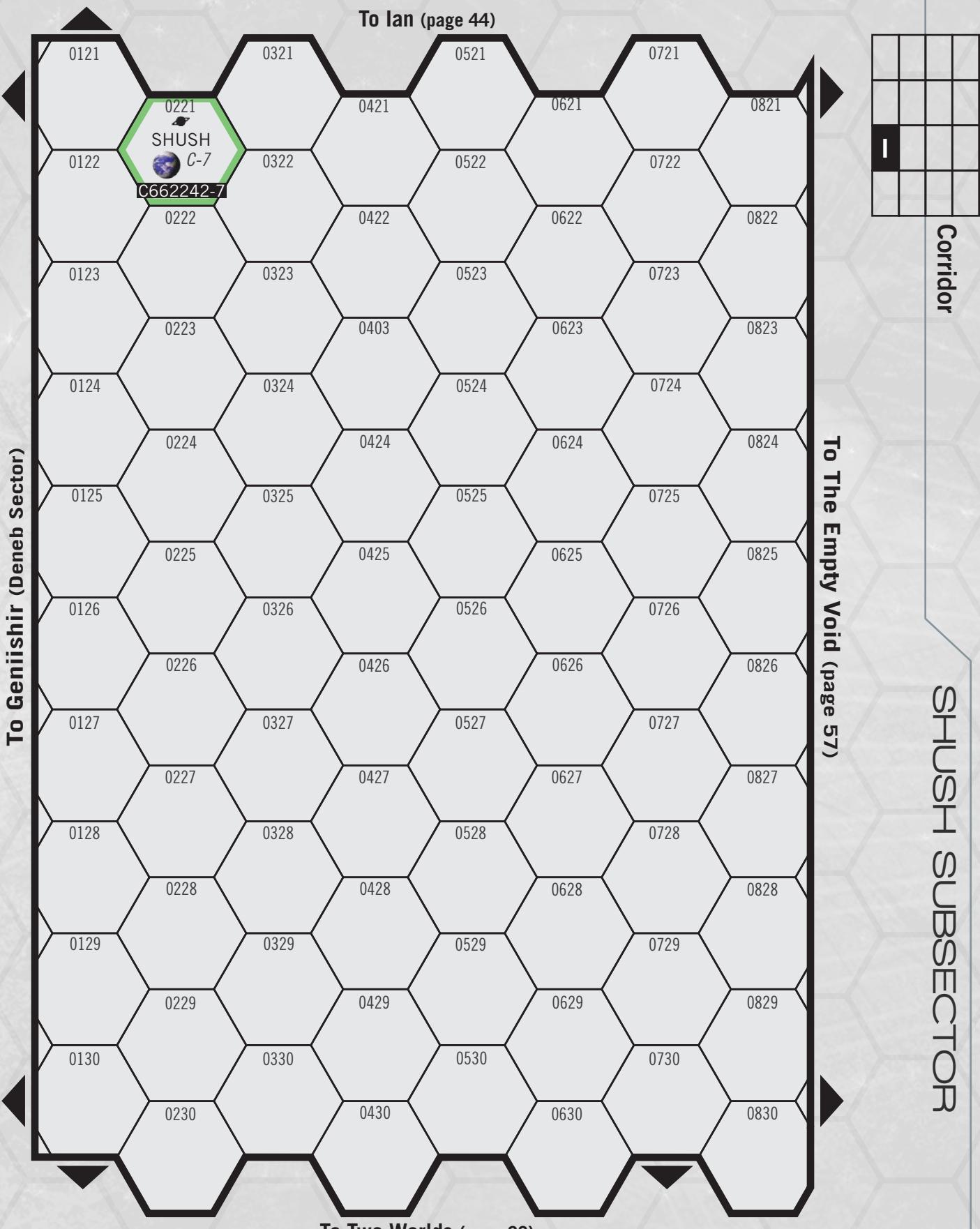
Shush has a great deal of potential as a colony, possessing a standard atmosphere and although there is relatively little surface water, the world is entirely habitable. However, its position in the Great Rift has ensured that Shush never received much attention from developers or settlers. It is not on the way to anywhere and is three parsecs out from the nearest world. With no prospects for passing interstellar trade, the world would need to develop a significant economy to attract traders – and without interstellar commerce that requires a level of investment that is highly unlikely to be made.

The six hundred or so people living on Shush are openly hostile to most outsiders, although this manifests itself as rudeness and disdain rather than violence. It seems that the locals simply want to be left alone and resent any intrusion into their lives. There are exceptions; a few starships seem entirely welcome and there is

a single trade vessel that makes the transit to Shush every few years. Its arrival is celebrated by the entire population and there are usually a couple of people aboard who have come to join the colony.

There is some speculation about Shush; one popular rumour is that the colonists are psionics, trying to find others like them to join their community. Others suggest there are dissidents or fugitives from Imperial justice among the colonists and that someday the Imperial authorities will swoop in and round up the lot of them. However, it could be argued that being stuck on a world ten light-years from the nearest Imperial starport and with only one starship coming through every few months is little different to being imprisoned, only without the expense to the authorities. If Shush is a haven for dissidents and criminals, it may be in the best interests of the Imperium to simply leave them there.

Exploration ships sometimes call at Shush but more commonly they skim fuel from the gas giant and move on. Similarly, naval and scout vessels rarely land at the world's tiny port. Patrol and survey missions pass through from time-to-time, ignoring the mainworld and its population of isolationist xenophobes.





# THE EMPTY VOID

SUBSECTOR

Name	Location	Bases	Statistics	Trade Codes	Travel Code	Allegiance	Gas Giants
Lasher	1430	N	B8C2200-9	FI Lo		Imperium	G

The Empty Void is not quite as empty as its name suggests, for it has a star system and there may be rogue comets and planets. Ships out of Lasher report the occasional sensor anomaly that could turn out to be something interesting.

## LASHER

There are unpopular postings and then there is Lasher. A hellworld with an insidious atmosphere, Lasher's entire permanent population is made up of scientists, support workers and their dependents. Some scientific personnel study the world itself but most are engaged in research into deep-space phenomena and navigational techniques.

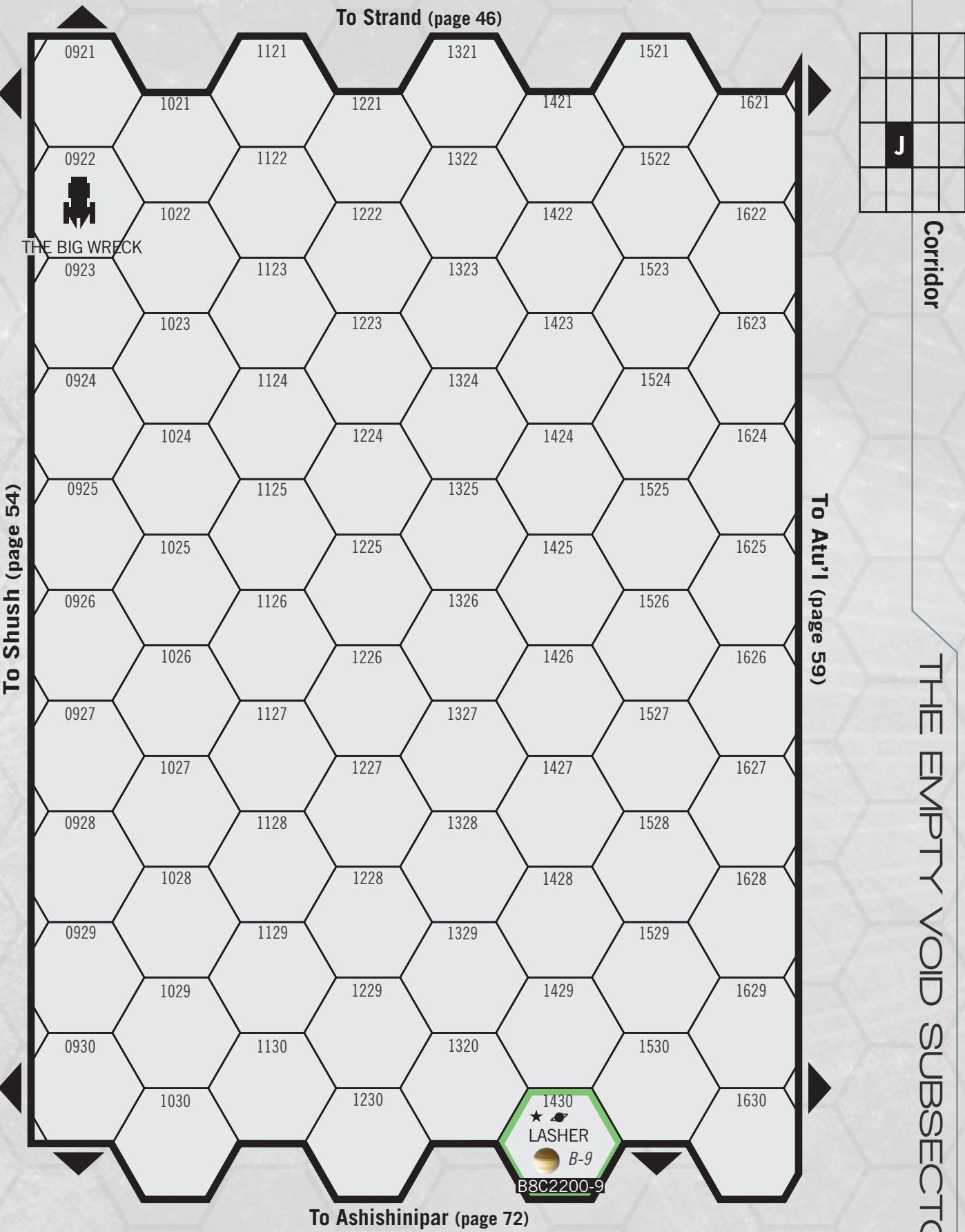
The world's low population listing does not include naval staff posted there, operating a naval installation that serves as a starport when non-military starships make their rare visits. The few vessels that call are usually exploration ships or supply vessels; the arrival of the latter is eagerly anticipated as Lasher does not have the capability to create consumer goods or luxuries.

The naval facility at Lasher is the subject of occasional press ridicule as the 'last bastion of Imperial defence

against... absolutely nothing'. Conspiracy theorists like to invent reasons why the navy would have a base so far on the fringe of a subsector named for the fact that it is an empty void. A squadron of high-jump warships, supported by tankers, is maintained at the base but its primary purpose is as home to the Corridor Fleet Deep Space Operations Training Flotilla.

The flotilla comprises several high-jump ships ranging from small couriers to tankers and a cruiser. It not only trains personnel and conducts 'acclimatisation cruises', intended to offset the nervousness many personnel experience when operating in deep space, but also develops and refines deep-space techniques for navigation, jump drive calibration and the like.

Occasionally, ships from the base support a scientific expedition or accompany its vessels as escorts. Since no naval threats are likely in the Rift, it is presumed that the escort is used as a training opportunity or perhaps a rescue ship in case of disaster. Vessels out of Lasher have managed to rescue ships stranded in deep space, although success rates are understandably low.





# ATU'L

## SUBSECTOR

Name	Location	Bases	Statistics	Trade Codes	Travel Code	Allegiance	Gas Giants
Atu'l	2121		C898234-8	Lo		Imperium	G
Rill	1923		E688672-4	Ag Ni Ri		Imperium	G

Atu'l subsector has only two star systems, both client states of the Imperium. Although deep in the Rift, these two systems are not as isolated as others in similar locations, due to the existence of the Atu'l Fleet Transit. The AFT is a chain of deep-space refuelling stations permitting a jump-4 ship to transit from Sumeszu naval base in Sashrakusha subsector to Six Lights base in Strand or vice versa. This is used to carry information and personnel between the two components of the Corridor sector fleet but can be used in an emergency to transfer a small force of warships one way or the other.

The AFT route goes by way of Deep Space Calibration Point Ashkiile, the existence of which is an open secret. It has been used by sufficient numbers of naval and scout ships, plus the occasional scientific vessel, that its general location is known to many spacefarers. Its precise coordinates are not disclosed and its existence not publicly acknowledged, however, so finding it would still be a difficult undertaking.

Calibration Point Ashkiile is constructed on a rogue planetoid, which has no ice or water of its own. A small permanent station is maintained there, kept fully provisioned and topped up with fuel by a chain of tankers. Ships making the Atu'l transit across the Great Rift use the station, sometimes stopping over for a few hours to conduct drive calibration and safety checks. Ships bound for Emephdee in the Sinta subsector also sometimes use the calibration point rather than transiting along the rift shore. This enables the navy to conceal some of its ship movements.

From Calibration Point Ashkiile, vessels are required to make a chain of deep-space jumps to prepositioned fuel caches, finally reaching Atu'l for a mid-rift stopover. An occasional sweep of the Rill system can be undertaken but most ships travel on by way of additional fuel caches to Kearb in the Strand subsector and finally to Six Lights.

## ATU'L

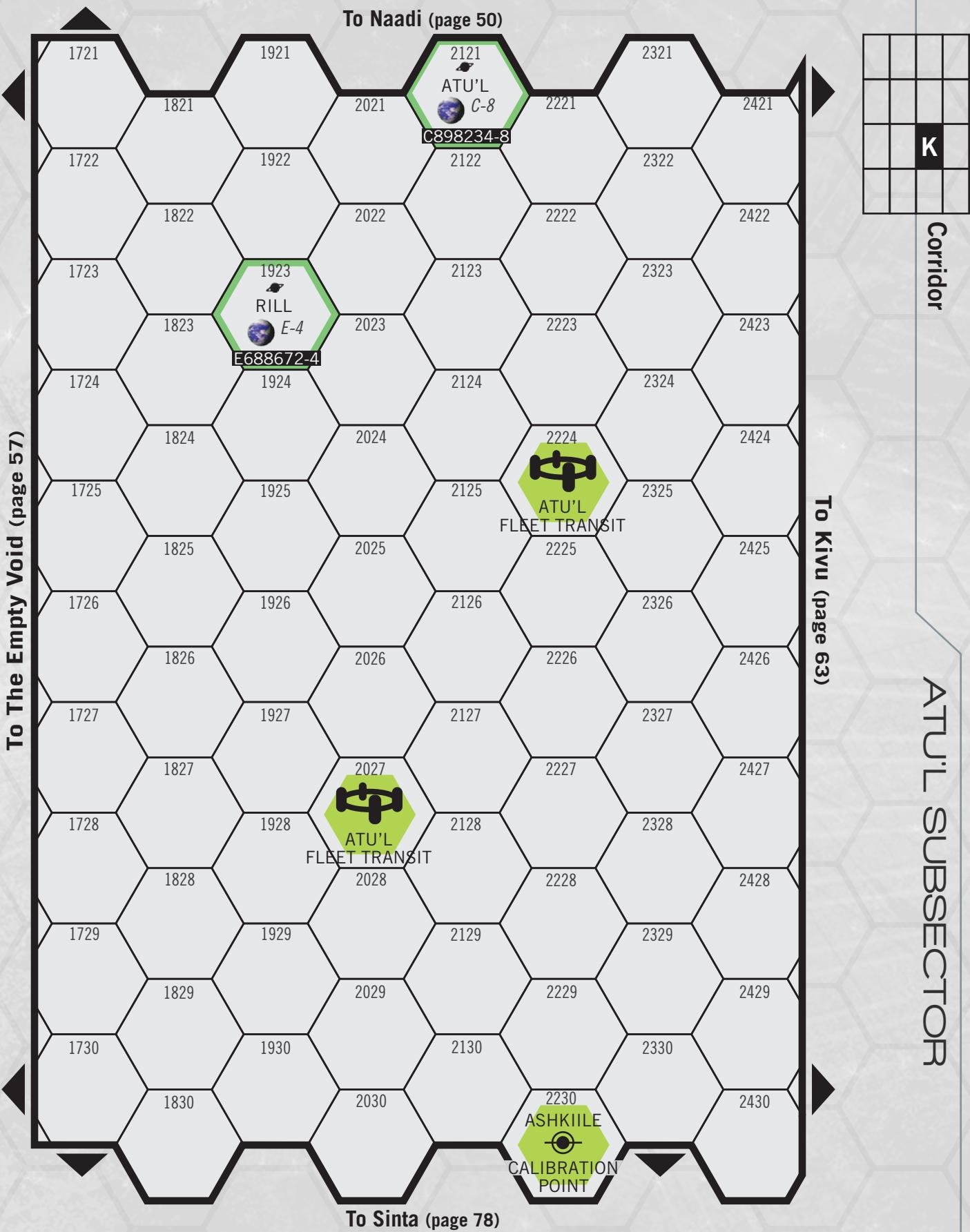
Atu'l is listed as an Imperial client state but this means only that the small starport is maintained using Imperial funds. Atu'l is useful as a mid-rift port, which prompted significant investment on the part of the Imperial Colonial Office. However, a plan to offset running costs by a partnership with private enterprise proved unworkable, leaving the port underfunded. After an influx of hopeful workers, there has been a gradual drifting away of the workforce, with the remainder surly and resentful of the Imperial authorities and corporations who were supposed to fund the development of their new home. Atu'l is not a friendly place to visit, which further deters investment or spending of money in the port's few businesses.

## RILL

Lying deep in the Great Rift, Rill receives little traffic other than the occasional navy ship making a trans-rift transit. The world itself is habitable enough, although unattractive to colonists and investors due to its remote location. The majority of the population are Chirpers, who have a mature stone-age culture and live a nomadic life, hunting over large swathes of territory away from the human settlements.

The Chirpers are not usually hostile to the world's humans but have been known to attack explorers moving into certain areas. They also will not tolerate settlement of some territories, although these seem to have no greater or lesser value to humans than anywhere else. Scientists have postulated that some areas are sacred to the Chirpers or that they have a tradition of ownership that can provoke them to violence if their lands are entered. In most regions, however, they simply move away from human encroachment and vanish into the countryside.

The human population has a steam-powered society with a few small cities and numerous outlying settlements, connected by railroads and seagoing



Gas Giant

B-6 Starport Class & Tech Level

Secure System

Planet (water present)

## CHIRPERS

Chirpers are omnivorous, bird-like creatures straddling the line between extremely smart animals and sentients. They can speak, after a fashion – indeed their name comes from a bird-like quality to their speech. Chirpers can use tools in a variety of inventive ways and be taught to perform quite complex tasks. They are also capable of being a real nuisance as they tend to steal small and shiny objects, then vanish with them.

Typically massing around 25kg, Chirpers are small and fast, and extremely adept at hiding. In the wild, they typically have a stone-age culture, living as peaceful hunter-gatherers. Enclaves displaying a higher level of sophistication have been reported, including tribes of Chirpers inhabiting technologically advanced ruins and making use of surviving systems.

Within the Third Imperium, Chirpers are considered intelligent and protected by law, usually granted reservations and left alone, which seems to suit them. It is not clear how strictly Chirpers adhere to the terms of their reservation agreements, nor if they understand them, but for the most part contact between Chirper and non-Chirper populations is extremely limited.

Archaeological evidence suggests that Chirpers were once present on far more worlds than they currently inhabit. It is not clear how they got there or what happened to populations.

steamships. Hot-air dirigibles are also used, providing cheap air transportation in the dense atmosphere but these are always at risk of attack from the world's large flying predators. Most dirigibles mount light automatic weapons and many ground installations have what would be called anti-aircraft emplacements on another world. On Rill, however, they are essential defences against flying predators.

There are also dangers on the ground, with large and territorial creatures sometimes attacking trains in the wilderness. A handful of armoured trains, equipped with machineguns, anti-air weapons and light artillery, fight a constant war to keep the railroad links open. Track repair especially is a dangerous business, requiring a heavily armed escort, and a major expedition is required for any track extension.

## KHAHK

ANIMAL	HITS	SPEED
Khaahk	12	12 m
SKILLS	Flyer 2, Melee (natural) 2, Recon 2, Survival 1	
ATTACKS	Claws (2D)	
TRAITS	Armour (+1), Heightened Senses, Flyer (slow)	
BEHAVIOUR	Carnivore, Hunter	

The Khaahk is named for its raucous, unnerving cry. It is a flying predator native to the mountainous regions of Rill, similar in many ways to a Terran Pterosaur. Notable differences include a feathery covering on the body and possession of prehensile feet capable of gripping objects; a Khaahk cannot fly off with a human victim but it could pull one off an airship.



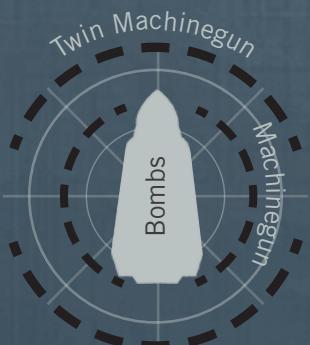
Khaahk are extremely aggressive and territorial, and will attack intruders into their territory. Several Khaahk can share overlapping territories, avoiding conflict by cooperative instinct. This sometimes results in expeditions or airships being mobbed by several of these deadly predators.

## ARMOUR

FRONT 3

REAR 3

SIDES 3



# HIGH GUARDIAN MILITARY DIRIGIBLE

Autopilot (skill level)	-	TL	4
Communications (range)	-	SKILL	FLYER (AIRSHIP)
Navigation (Navigation DM)	-	AGILITY	-3
Sensors (Electronics (sensors) DM)	-	SPEED (CRUISE)	SLOW (IDLE)
Camouflage (Recon DM)	-	RANGE (CRUISE)	6000 (9000)
Stealth (Electronics (sensors) DM)	-	CREW	9
		PASSENGERS	4
		CARGO	1 TON
		HULL	110
		SHIPPING	50 TONS
		COST	CR250000

## WEAPONS

Hardpoint (medium bomb) x 12  
 Ring Mount (early machinegun, left side) x 3  
 Ring Mount (early machinegun, right side) x 3  
 Ring Mount (twin early machinegun, front)  
 Ring Mount (twin early machinegun, rear)

## EQUIPMENT

Fresher  
Galley

## DESCRIPTION

*High Guardian* is a large military dirigible used to support ground expeditions such as railway track repair and extension work, or to conduct sweeps outside home territories in the hope of driving back hostile creatures. She has a good reputation as a

fighting airship but is not quite a household name; that honour goes to legendary craft such as *Invincible* and her half-sister *Redoubtable* or the prosaically named but extremely famous *Gun Platform Seven*.

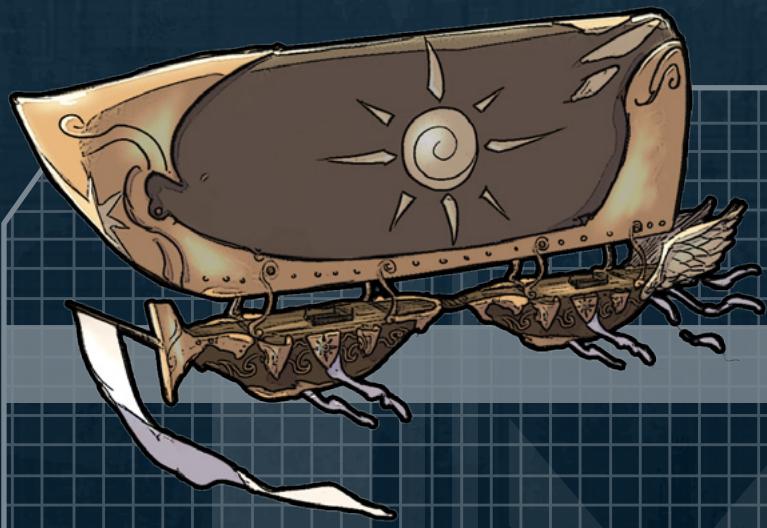
In terms of layout, *High Guardian* has a large rigid-frame gasbag under which two gondolas

## TRAITS

None

are suspended. These are linked by walkway, on the underside of which are hardpoints for twelve bombs. If bombs are not carried, the hardpoints can be used to attach supply canisters or other small cargo items. Bombs are aimed by leaning over the side of the gondola and manually pulling a lever to drop a single bomb.

*High Guardian* can be operated by a flight crew of three – commanding officer, helmsman and engineer. However, she normally carries gunners for her weapons, who also share some of the many technical tasks required to keep an airship aloft. Her normal combat crew is nine personnel, requiring crewmembers to move from weapon to weapon as threats shift position.



WEAPON	RANGE	DAMAGE	MAGAZINE	MAGAZINE COST	TRAITS	FIRE CONTROL
Medium Bomb	-	2DD	1	Cr4000	AP 25, Blast 25, One Use	-
Early Machinegun	400	3D	30	Cr100	Auto 3	-
Twin Early Machinegun	400	3D+3	30	Cr200	Auto 3	-



# KIVU

## SUBSECTOR

Name	Location	Bases	Statistics	Trade Codes	Travel Code	Allegiance	Gas Giants
Betters	3030		DA87544-5	Ag Ni		Imperium	G
Center	3229	S	C5436A9-5	Ni Po		Imperium	G
Emm	3230		C643365-7	Lo Po		Imperium	G
Kivu	3129		A56567B-9	Ag Ni Ri		Imperium	G
Tucker	2930	S	D8796A8-7	Ni		Imperium	G
Uiolksdah	3225		B426787-C				

Kivu subsector is of very low strategic importance to the Imperium, containing five mid-tech Imperial worlds and one independent star system. A string of Imperial scout bases along the rift fringe support the occasional scientific expedition but other than that, there is little activity.

## CENTER

Center is a typical Imperial member world. Rather dry, with a thin atmosphere, Center supports a modest mid-tech society but lacks the production capability and technological sophistication to contribute to the interstellar economy. Some Travellers refer to worlds of this sort as ‘MTB’ (for missed-the-boat), as they have few prospects for progression beyond their current state. According to current theory, a colonised world needs to attract enough investment to step onto the interstellar stage within a few years or it will never do so. Center’s chance seems to have passed long ago and even the commission of a scout base did little to benefit the local economy. The base is small, and serves mainly to support high-jump couriers crossing the Great Rift by way of Keshiil in neighbouring the Dusa subsector. The scout base has become a focus of resentment and is currently isolated from its host society. The construction of heavy walls and fences did nothing to improve relations and the situation is likely to continue for the foreseeable future.

## UIOLKSDAH

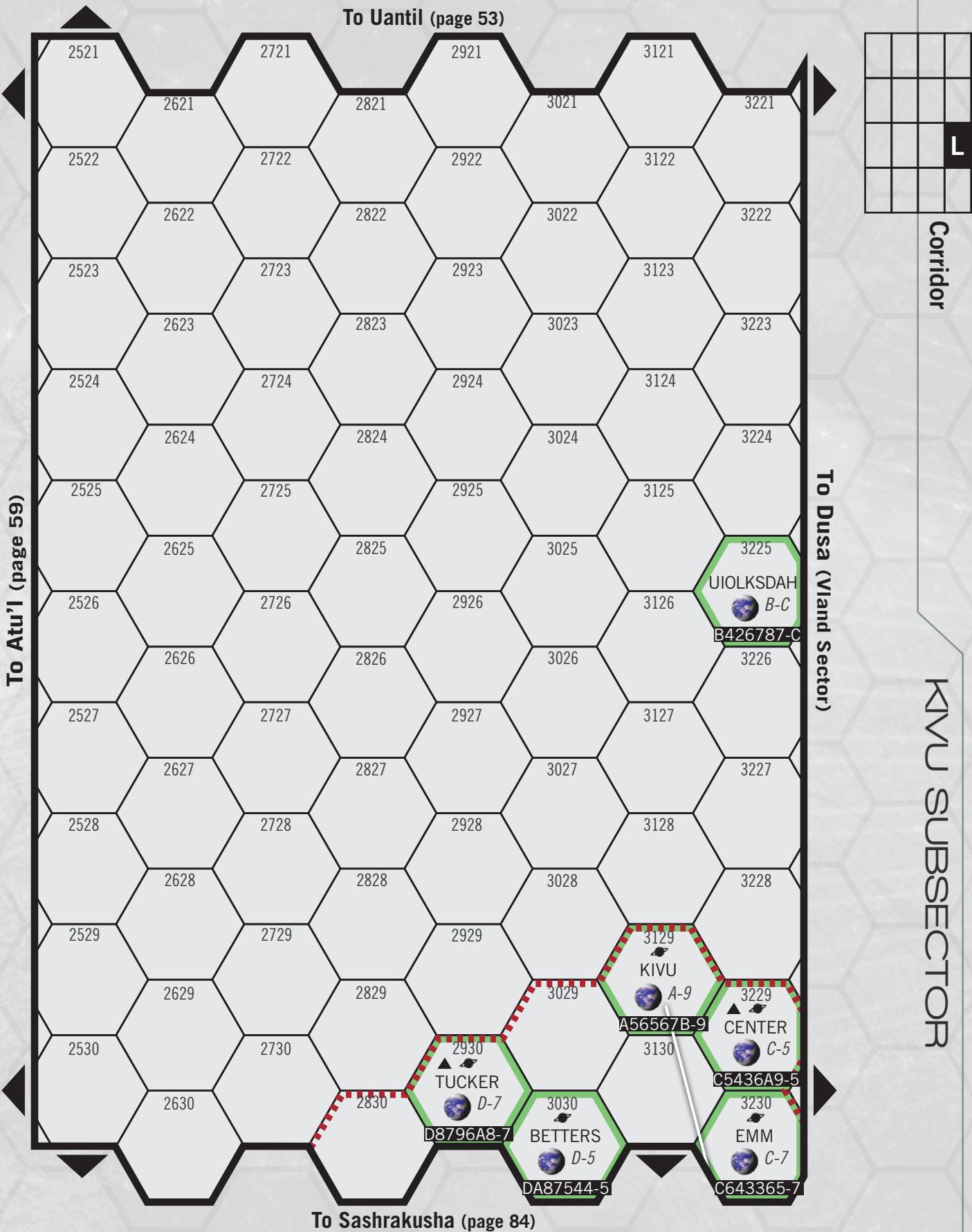
A non-aligned world lying four parsecs from Kivu, Uiolksdah’s population have an anti-Imperial outlook. Their hostility is towards the Imperium itself rather

than its peoples, meaning official vessels such as scout and naval ships are unwelcome but the few traders and independent vessels that visit the world are greeted more warmly. Links with the wider universe are tenuous but Uiolksdah has a modest flotilla of spacecraft and has created outposts on other bodies in the system.

Most spacefaring activity in the system takes the form of asteroid mining in the planetoid belt or supply and ore ships transiting to and from the mainworld. The systems’ rockball worlds have small outposts on them, ostensibly for scientific purposes. In reality, these are primarily territorial claims-enforcement stations, surrounded by missile launchers and sometimes host to a handful of fighters rotated between stations.

The people of Uiolksdah are fearful of territorial encroachment by the Imperium or its corporations and have been known to fire warning shots in the direction of suspect ships. This has resulted in tension, especially when corporations lobby for the Imperial Navy to protect their ships as they go about their lawful business – as corporate lawyers define it. To the people of Uiolksdah, these vessels are precursors to a wave of rapacious mining companies just waiting to plunder the system’s mineral resources. These fears are not without grounds; encroachment of this sort has happened elsewhere.

Thus, ships that proceed to Uiolksdah’s starport with legitimate reason to be there – notably trade – are welcome but vessels poking around the outer system or prospecting for minerals in the planetoid belt are considered suspect, as is anything with an Imperial sunburst on the side.



Gas Giant  
Starport Class & Tech Level  
Imperial Scout Base

Secure System  
Travel Route

Planet (water present)  
Imperium Border

# SWIFTSTRIKE-CLASS INTERCEPTOR

TL12

TONS COST (MCR)

Hull	30 tons, Close Structure	-	1.35
Armour	Crystaliron, Armour: 4	1.5	0.27
Reaction Drive	Thrust 10 (very advanced, -40% fuel consumption)	6	1.5
High Efficiency Batteries	(TL12) Power 180	3	0.6
Fuel Tanks		15	-
Bridge	Cockpit	2.5	0.015
Computer	Computer/15	-	2
Sensors	Military Grade	2	4.1
Weapons	Fixed Mount (pulse laser)	-	1.1
Cargo		0	-

TOTAL: MCR 10.935

CREW

PILOT

RUNNING COSTS

MAINTENANCE COST:

Cr911/month

• • • •

PURCHASE COST:

MCR 10.935

POWER REQUIREMENTS

6

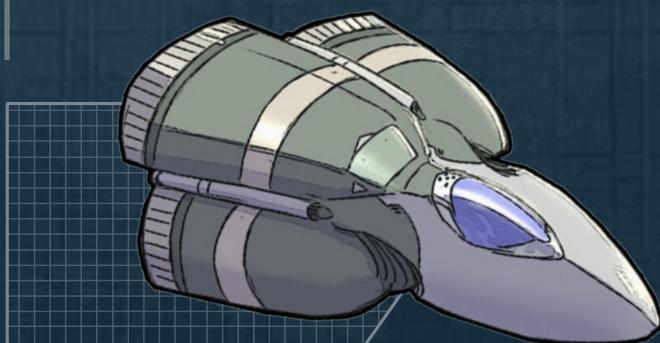
2

4

BASIC SHIP SYSTEMS

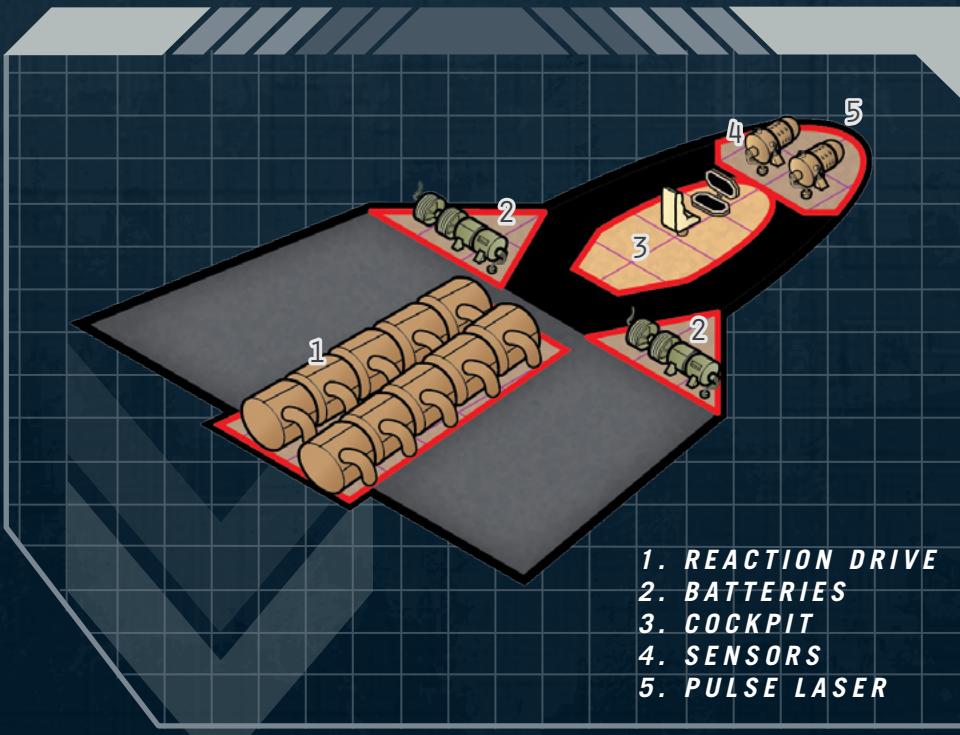
SENSORS

WEAPONS



13

HULL POINTS



The *Swiftstrike* is an example of Uiolksdah's design philosophy. Rather than a conventional manoeuvre drive and powerplant configuration, the designers chose to use a high-powered reaction drive and battery pack, creating a fast and agile craft, albeit with low endurance. For this reason, the *Swiftstrike* is designated an interceptor rather than fighter. Its role is to rapidly close with and identify suspect craft or intruders, deliver a series of shots, then quickly disengage before its batteries and fuel are drained.

The *Swiftstrike* has an endurance of two hours at full thrust but in practice tends to make more comfortable manoeuvres unless engaged in combat and patrol endurance is determined by battery charge rather than fuel. It has no need of streamlining as it is unlikely to ever enter an atmosphere of real density.



# TWO WORLDS

SUBSECTOR

Name	Location	Bases	Statistics	Trade Codes	Travel Code	Allegiance	Gas Giants
Esi-obe	0638		A542886-C	Po			G
Ishirdu	0338		X776301-5	Lo	R	Imperium	G

As its name suggests, the Two Worlds subsector contains only two inhabited systems. These form part of a sparse scatter of systems in the Great Rift, some of which are of interest to the Imperium. The subsector was once considered as part of a possible trans-rift route and expeditions were launched from Sinta in 153 and 160. The first reached Ashishinipar, the second Asharam (then known as Yoma) but neither could locate suitable refuelling points to push onward.

In 1090, the Scout Service vessel *Reftbreaker*, capable of two consecutive 4-parsec jumps, reached Asharam and refuelled there. Although *Reftbreaker* did not make a full crossing, she demonstrated it was possible – travel onward by way of Catacomb would have enabled the mission to reach Deneb sector. *Reftbreaker* instead returned to Sinta by the same route, her crew receiving a hero's welcome.

## BOULDERFIELD

X000000-0

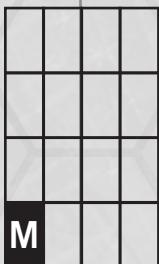
Boulderfield, sometimes also referred to as the Boulder Field, is not a star system but a large field of planetoids floating in deep space. This may be the result of a star system that failed to form, although some scientists have postulated that perhaps a star was extinguished (and its constituent gases dispersed sufficiently to prevent re-ignition) by some incredibly powerful means. Certainly, interstellar gas is dense here, kept from dissipating by the weak gravity of the planetoid field.

The gravity field created by countless tiny chunks of rock and ice, as well as the larger planetoids, is sufficient to make jumping from within the field (or deep into it) extremely hazardous. A laborious transit is necessary for vessels entering the Boulderfield and, as a result, the inner areas of the field have not been accurately charted.

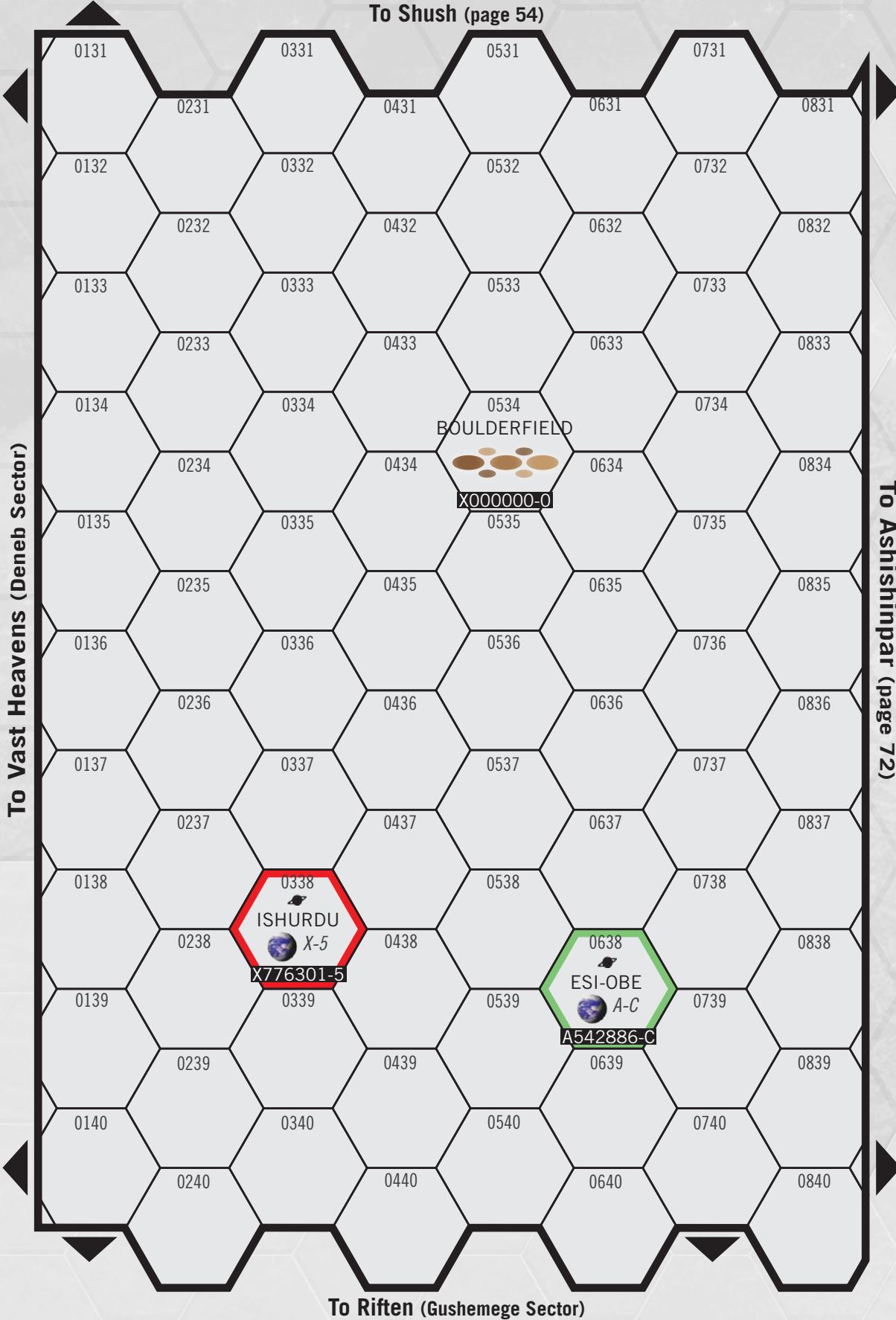
Boulderfield features high concentrations of rare elements, notably molybdenum, lanthanum and osmium, making mining operations worthwhile despite the vast expanse of empty space that must be crossed to ship the ore home. Large mobile mining platforms move around inside the field, supported by supply ships and ore haulers jumping to its fringes. Mining Boulderfield has been described as one of the best-paid and most lonely jobs in Charted Space and it is becoming harder to find good workers as accidents claim increasingly more lives.

In addition to the known hazards of deep-space operations, several vessels have been lost under mysterious circumstances. Most were supply craft and not large but a large mining support ship has also gone missing. No trace has ever been found of any of these craft. There are rumours that as prospectors push deeper into the field, they are beginning to find evidence of earlier mining operations. Planetoids have been neatly sliced apart by unimaginably powerful tools or weapons, or somehow hollowed out without openings to the exterior. These rumours have attracted some scientific interest but no formal investigation has been conducted.

# TWO WORLDS SUBSECTOR



Corridor



# MINING SUPPORT VESSEL

IAMSHII-CLASS

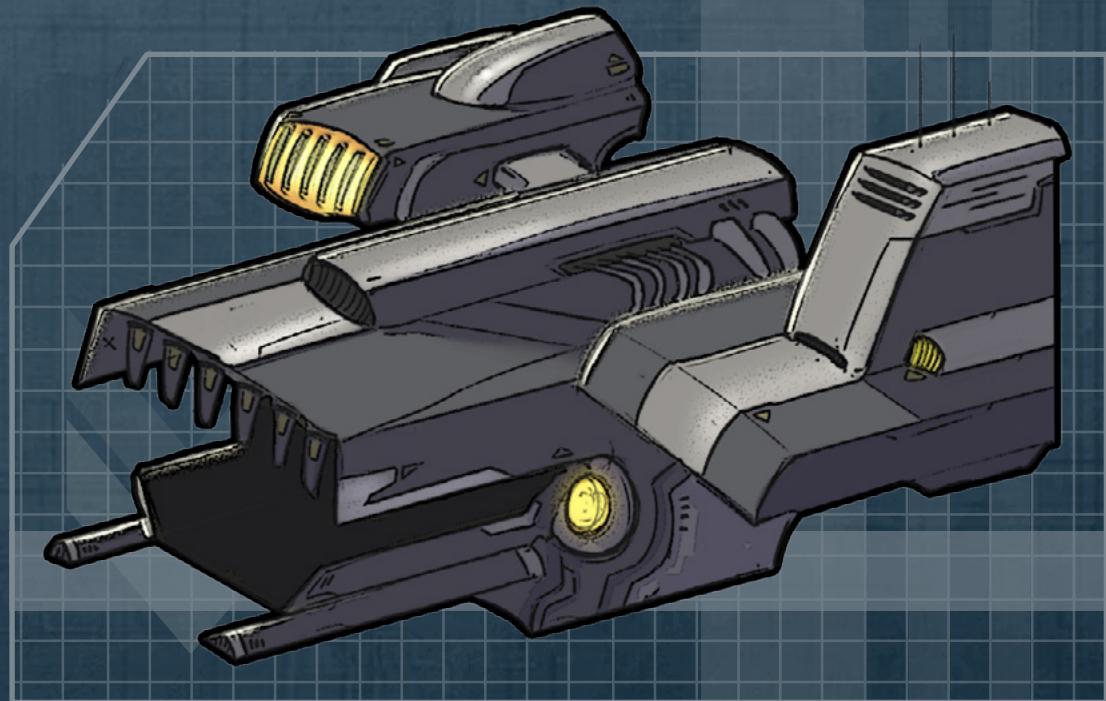
TL12

TONS

COST (MCR)

<b>Hull</b>	20,000 tons, Dispersed Structure	-	500
<b>Armour</b>	None	-	-
<b>M-Drive</b>	Thrust 1	200	40
<b>J-Drive</b>	Jump-1	505	757.5
<b>Power Plant</b>	Fusion (TL12), Power 9,000	600	600
<b>Fuel Tanks</b>	2 Jump-1, 200 weeks of operation	7000	-
<b>Bridge</b>		60	100
<b>Command Bridge</b>		80	150
<b>Computer</b>	Computer/20	-	5
<b>Armoured Bulkheads</b>	400 ton 'citadel' area and power plant	100	200
<b>Sensors</b>	Improved Mineral Detection Suite	3 -	4.3 5
<b>Weapons</b>	Large Mass Driver Bays x4 Dual Turrets (beam lasers) x 20	2000 20	480 30
<b>Ammunition</b>	Mass Driver Ammunition (8 attacks)	160	-
<b>Systems</b>	Fuel Processors (200 tons/day) Sensor Stations x 12 Advanced Probe Drones x 250 Mining Drones x 500 Laboratory (8 scientists) Docking Clamps (Type II) x 40 Docking Clamps (Type III) x 20 Brig	10 12 50 1000 32 200 200 4	0.5 6 40 500 8 80 40 0.25
<b>Staterooms</b>	Standard x 60 Emergency Low Berths x 20	250 20	30 20
<b>Common Areas</b>		1000	100
<b>Residential Zones</b>	Medium (250 persons) Luxury (50 persons)	1000 500	100 375
<b>Mineral Refinery</b>		3000	3000
<b>Software</b>	Manoeuvre/0 Jump Control/1 Library Planetology/3	- - - -	- 0.1 - 7
<b>Cargo</b>		1882	-

TOTAL: MCR 7179.85



**7200**

HULL POINTS

### CREW

CAPTAIN, PILOT, ASTROGATOR, OFFICERS X 4,  
ENGINEER X 38, MAINTENANCE X 20, MEDIC,  
GUNNER X 4, ADMINISTRATORS X 10

### RUNNING COSTS

#### MAINTENANCE COST

MCr 0.598/month

• • • •

#### PURCHASE COST

MCr 7179.85

### POWER REQUIREMENTS

**2000**

MANOEUVRE  
DRIVE

**4000**

BASIC SHIP  
SYSTEMS

**2000**

JUMP DRIVE

**4**

SENSORS

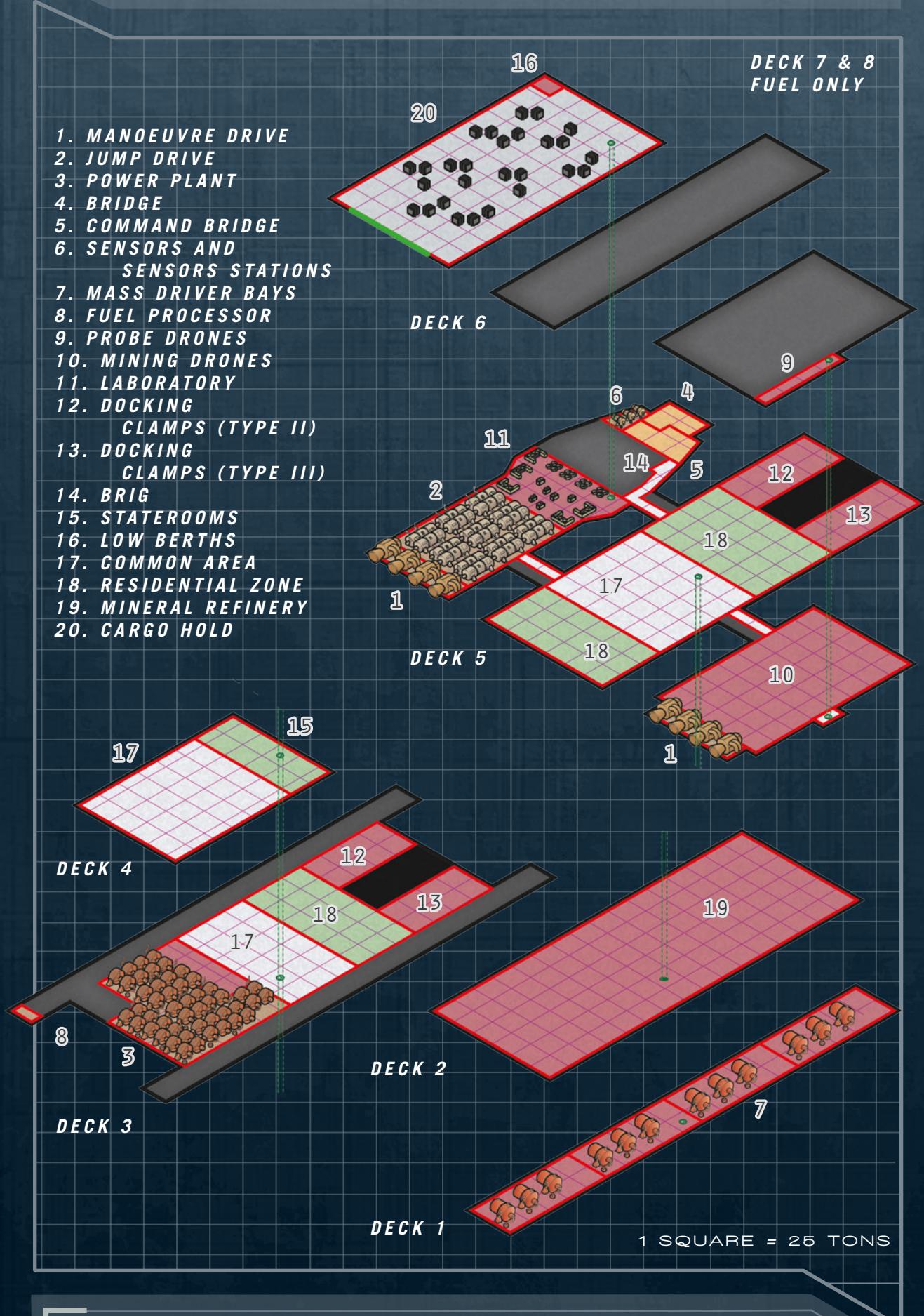
**10**

FUEL PROCESSOR

The *Lamshii*-class is a mining support vessel capable of undertaking mining operations on its own but is usually the centrepiece of a mining flotilla that will include small craft such as cutters to land equipment on an asteroid's surface, larger utility vessels to support the teams in the field and a number of freighters and tankers to transport ore to market as well as keeping the flotilla supplied.

Hull form is a dispersed structure, with the ship's key functions concentrated within two armoured 'citadel' sections. These house the powerplant, a little fuel, plus command and control facilities and living space. The citadel ensures the survival of at least some personnel in the case of collision with a large asteroid.

The vessel also has a set of mass drivers that could in theory be used as weapons, but are more commonly employed to hurl chunks of ore out of an asteroid field to be caught by other vessels or as a rather quick-and-dirty method of smashing up a large planetoid. A basic self-defence capability is provided by a few laser turrets, considered sufficient to deter hijacking attempts.



## ESI-OBE

It is not clear when Esi-Obe was colonised. Its people are human, with a few members of other races here and there, but culturally they have few distinct traits that suggest descent from any of the major powers. The earliest legends of Esi-Obe tell of a band of heroes who stole some means of transportation from the gods and led their people to safety amid great disaster. Some experts believe that human migration to Esi-Obe occurred during the Ancients' Final War and perhaps their technology is hidden somewhere in the system. Whether that is true or not, the people of Esi-Obe have a healthy spacefaring culture, although they lack the ability to construct long-range ships capable of reaching other systems. Friendly relations are maintained with the Imperium, with the occasional expedition stopping over to refit and resupply at Esi-Obe's excellent starport.

## ISHIRDU

Ishirdu is designated an Imperial Client State, although its inhabitants would disagree with that status. It is home to the Irdu, a minor human race with a very high potential for psionic talent. First contact with the Irdu came in 160 as the Imperial Navy attempted to find a viable trans-rift crossing. Not only was the Ishirdu route no more useful than the expedition in 153 by way of Ashishinipar but the psionic abilities of the Irdu sufficiently worried the navy that the world was claimed as an Imperial area of interest to place an interdiction order upon it. Since that time, the Irdu have had few offworld visitors. Orbital beacons warn against landing and record the identity of any ship passing through the system. A scout vessel occasionally collects the records, in theory permitting prosecution of captains violating the interdiction order. In practice, few offences have been followed up since any charges would likely come years after the visit. The system's remoteness is a more effective deterrent than any force of law.





# ASHISHINIPAR

## SUBSECTOR

Name	Location	Bases	Statistics	Trade Codes	Travel Code	Allegiance	Gas Giants
Ashishinipar	0931		B8949BA-9	Hi In	A		
Nadnamnarni	1033		B200211-9	Lo Va			G
Tristira	1140		C87A740-5	Wa		Imperium	G
Tarin Sink	1432	RS	DAE5301-6	Lo		Imperium	G

Ashishinipar subsector contains four inhabited star systems. Two are client states of the Imperium; two are independent. Tarin Sink is the site of an Imperial research station and the subject of many rumours. Accessible primarily by a high-jump transit through Emephdee, which has a naval installation and can easily control local traffic, Tarin Sink is a very secure and remote location. There are those who are convinced this alone proves something very sinister is going on, although the official version is more mundane. Tarin Sink's research station is a repository for bizarre and confusing devices and writings unearthed over time, pored over by baffled scientists who regularly publish papers to the effect that they have no clue what this device does or that inscription says.

## ASHISHINIPAR

Lying at the end of a series of jump-4 transits from the worlds of the Sinta subsector, Ashishinipar seemed a good prospect for a trans-rift route but despite repeated efforts no way to push to spinward or coreward was ever found. Ashishinipar has a spacefaring society, with colonies in its planetoid belt and on some of its eleven terrestrial planets, all – ostensibly at least – ruled from the mainworld by governors appointed by the planetary dictator. In practice, some colonies are all but independent and, at any given time, at least one is likely to be in dispute with the mainworld government. This creates a volatile political situation, although open conflict is very rare. The Travellers' Aid Society has issued an Amber advisory for the system as tension is increasing, although this rating has been voted the 'most unnecessary advisory in Charted Space' several times. Imperial ships do visit Ashishinipar, but not frequently and never on a casual basis.

## TRISTIRA

A mid-tech water world located too far from any other world to be accessible, Tristira was considered as a possible link in a high-jump route across the Great

Rift but proved to be a false hope. Since the original explorations, the world has been largely ignored although it has become an Imperial Client State. This would not have been the wish of the populace, had they ever been consulted, but was imposed as a security measure. With Tristira officially listed as an Imperial Client State, the Imperial Navy has jurisdiction to patrol the system whenever necessary without the bureaucratic process associated with trans-border operations.

Precisely why the navy felt the need to operate freely in this remote star system has never been revealed but after a few years interest waned and visits became very rare. It was long after this that the locals learned they had been 'sort-of-annexed' by the Imperium. This caused some resentment but there was nothing anyone could do and no immediate effects were felt. However, Tristira remains ill-disposed to Imperial visitors to this day.

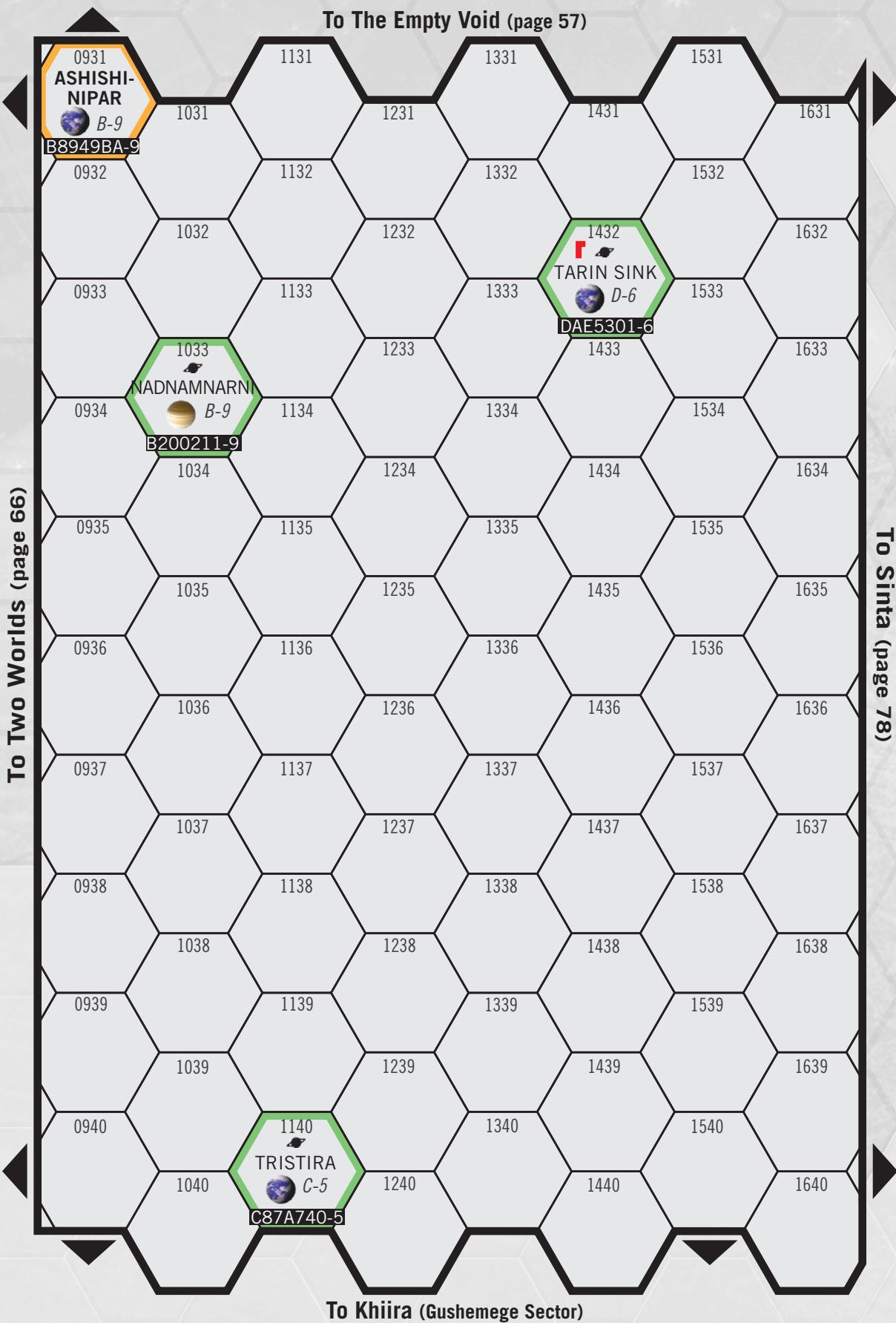
Tristira's science and technology have developed largely in isolation – the occasional exploration or naval ship that visited the world did not provide any technological insights other than knowledge that interstellar travel and artificial gravity were possible and a basic spacefaring capability was created.

Tristira's spacefarers do not benefit from artificial gravity and make do with chemical rockets and low-powered ion drives, although they have still managed to reach the nearest bodies in their star system. Mining installations operate in the planetoid belt, launching chunks of ore on a slow intercept course to the mainworld. The locals have even managed to hollow out a couple of small planetoids and fit them with basic drives, repositioning them as orbital forts over their homeworld. To an interstellar traveller used to easy, routine spaceflight, these efforts may seem puny and the results horribly primitive but to the people of Tristira they represent a prodigious effort and the beginning of a journey to the stars.

# ASHISHINIPAR SUBSECTOR

Corridor  
N

## To The Empty Void (page 57)



Gas Giant  
Starport Class & Tech Level  
Research Station

Secure System  
Amber Zone

Planet (dry)  
Planet (water present)

# INTERPLANETARY TUG

TL5

TONS

COST (MCR)

Hull	140 tons, Dispersed Structure Hamster Cage (10 tons)	- 2	4.2 -
Reaction Drive	Thrust 1 (early prototype, +50% fuel consumption)	8	80
Fuel Tanks		70	-
Bridge		10	1
Systems	Solar Panels Docking Clamps (Type I) x 2	20 2	2 1
Cabin Space		20	0.1
Cargo		8	-

TOTAL: MCR 88.3

TYPE 7

CREW

PILOT, NAVIGATOR

RUNNING COSTS

MAINTENANCE COST

Cr7368/month



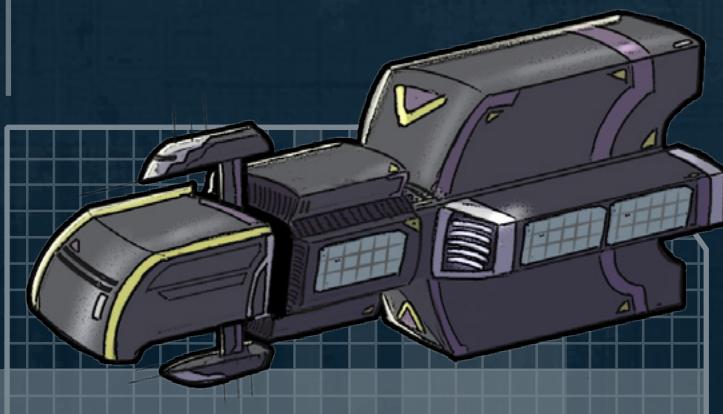
PURCHASE COST

MCR 88.3

POWER REQUIREMENTS



BASIC SHIP SYSTEMS

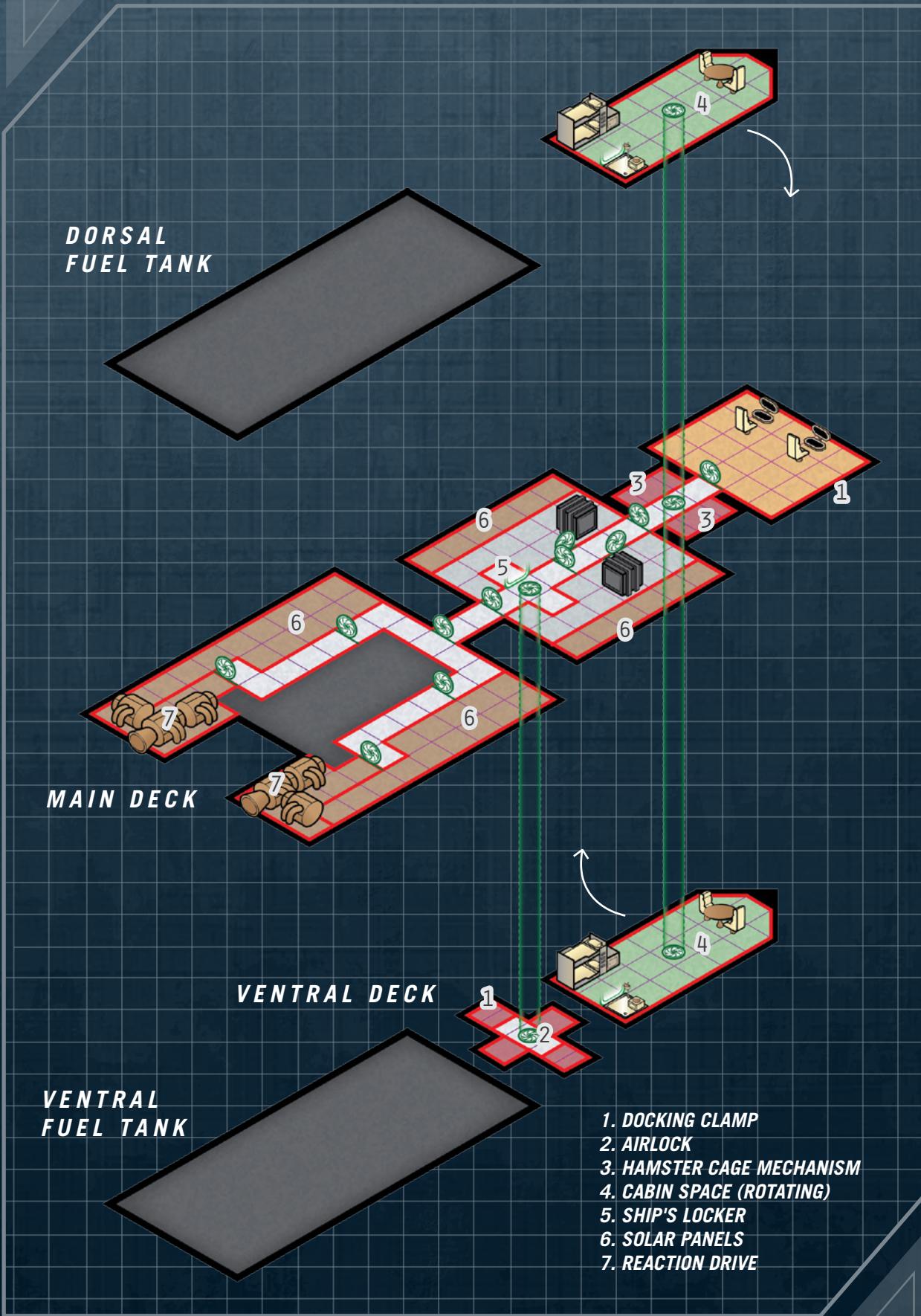


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HULL POINTS

The Type 7 is an interplanetary tug rather than a true spacecraft, acting as prime mover for two small attached craft or cargo pods. The Type 7 cannot land but plies between orbital facilities or docks with other spacecraft to deliver cargo. It looks horribly primitive to spacefarers used to gravitic systems and advanced electronics and this impression is entirely merited. Much of the central spindle is taken up with fuel tanks for the reaction drive, with a small control space – it is not really worthy of the term ‘bridge’ – at the fore end. A pair of arms just aft of this section carry contrarotating crew cabin areas in a partial hamster cage configuration, allowing the crew to sleep and work in a low but acceptable gravity environment.

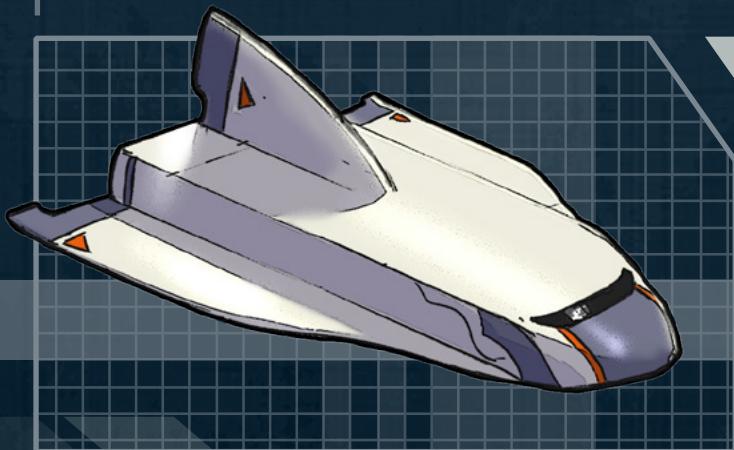
The Type 7 can in theory deliver 16 hours of thrust at 1G but in practice most manoeuvres are made at less than 0.1G. Transits are long and slow, involving a great deal of time coasting. Given the cramped nature of accommodation, crews need to be well adjusted or rotated groundside for a long furlough after each mission.



# PLANETARY LANDING SHUTTLE

ANGLIAR-CLASS

TL5		TONS	COST (MCR)
Hull	30 tons, Streamlined, Heat Shielding	-	4.8
Reaction Drive	Thrust 4 (early prototype)	4.8	48
Fuel Tanks		12	-
Bridge	Dual Cockpit	2.5	0.15
Cabin Space		3	0.3
Cargo		7.7	-
<b>TOTAL: MCR 53.25</b>			



11

HULL POINTS

## CREW

PILOT, NAVIGATOR

## RUNNING COSTS

### MAINTENANCE COST

Cr4438/month

• • •

### PURCHASE COST

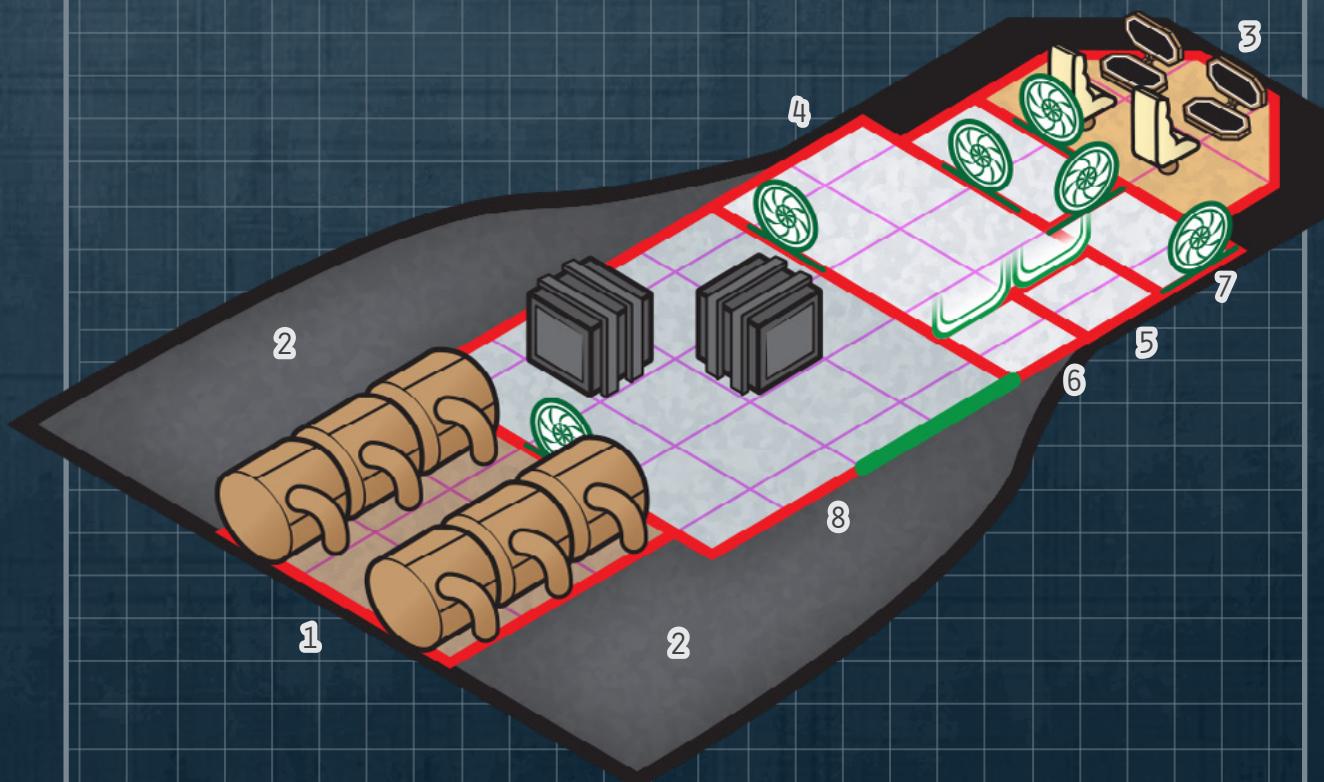
MCR 52.25

## POWER REQUIREMENTS



BASIC SHIP SYSTEMS

The *Angliar* is a standard interface shuttle also used to move cargo pods between installations and tugs. It is little more than a small 2-person crew cabin and reaction drive with some cargo space in between. The hull is streamlined and heat-shielded, allowing an aerodynamic entry to atmosphere, whilst launch from the homeworld is made with strap-on boosters. Typically, a Type 7 tug will haul one cargo pod and one *Angliar*, unless a shuttle is available at the destination. During an interplanetary transit, the shuttle crew transfers to the tug, whose cramped living spaces seem luxurious by comparison.



1. REACTION DRIVE
2. FUEL TANKS
3. DUAL COCKPIT
4. CABIN SPACE
5. FRESHER
6. SHIP'S LOCKER
7. AIR LOCK
8. CARGO HOLD



# SINTA

SUBSECTOR

Name	Location	Bases	Statistics	Trade Codes	Travel Code	Allegiance	Gas Giants
Ackang	2439		E9B4630-8	Fl Ni		Imperium	G
Divad	2283	S	C8C0885-9		A	Imperium	G
Dodardudos	2140		C583527-6	Ni		Imperium	G
Doyerterfit	2440	S	D543103-7	Lo Po		Imperium	G
Ea'tiva	2039	N	B686110-9	Lo Ga		Imperium	G
Emephdee	1832	N	A551464-9	Ni Po		Imperium	G
Fabeticu	2333		X566777-1	Ag Ri	R	Imperium	G
Inarli	2137		B677989-C	Hi In		Imperium	G
Jafla	1840		A898114-D	Lo		Imperium	G
Kacxhun	2135		E427456-7	Ni		Imperium	G
Kikasad	2334		C76A464-6	Ni Wa		Imperium	G
Kloackin	2239	N	B572834-9			Imperium	
Knofodu	2435	S	D8B4684-8	Fl Ni		Imperium	
Kysar II	2235		A310133-F	Lo		Imperium	G
Mok-Retinae	2336		C556441-7	Ni		Imperium	G
Setii Goek	2234		E43669D-8	Ni	A	Imperium	
Sinta	2037	N S	A201830-D	Ic Na Va		Imperium	G
Tahspeck	2335		AA9A651-A	Ni Wa		Imperium	G
Tainbee	2040		A757476-C	Ni Ga		Imperium	G
Terragesh	2338	N	A560459-B	De Ni		Imperium	G
Whikee	2136		C423669-9	Na Ni Po		Imperium	G

# SINTA SUBSECTOR

Corridor

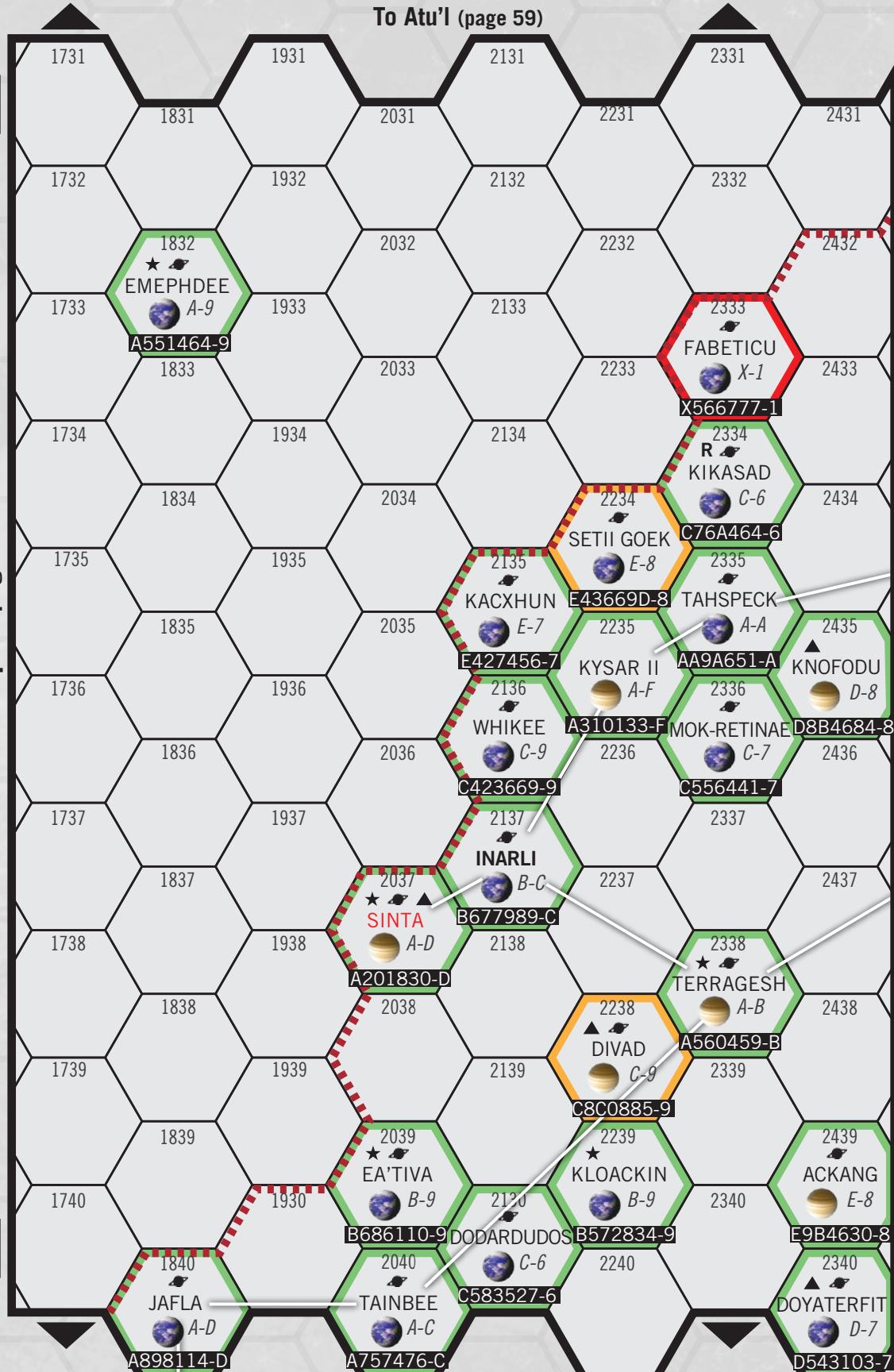
O

To Ashishinipar (page 72)

To Taapvaia (Gushemege Sector)

To Atu'I (page 59)

To Sashakusha (page 84)



- Gas Giant
- B-6 Starport Class & Tech Level
- Imperial Scout Base
- Imperial Naval Base

- Secure System
- Amber Zone
- Red Zone
- X-boat Route

- Planet (dry)
- Planet (water present)
- Imperial Reserve

The Sinta subsector contains twenty Imperial worlds and one client state, Emephdee. The latter is a naval base, home to most of the trans-rift assets based in the rimward end of the sector. The Imperial member worlds enjoy good communications with the heartland of the Imperium and do not share the 'Corridor culture' of the coreward parts of the sector.

## SINTA

Sinta is an unwelcoming rockball of a world on the edge of the Great Rift. With no atmosphere, its only positive feature is the possession of water ice at the poles and within deep canyons. This made it a slightly better prospect for colonisation than a completely dead world but not by much. Despite this, the world's economic importance, based initially on easily accessible metal and mineral deposits, enabled it to grow into the subsector capital.

Sinta's status may be despite or because of its location at the very edge of the Great Rift. Ships plying the trade routes of the local star cluster must turn around at Sinta, resulting in both enhanced trade and development of support industries tailored to interstellar commerce. This in turn made Sinta a favourable location for a naval base, increasing its wealth and importance further.

Today, Sinta is a trade terminus and 'navy world' where large amounts of money are spent on entertainment and supplies. Unusually for such a world, Sinta has virtually no laws. Instead, its people are ruled by social custom, enforced by ostracism and exclusion from what is otherwise a friendly and welcoming society. There is little need for formal lawmaking when citizens have so much to lose from anti-social behaviour. Violence and large-scale theft are dealt with on a case-by-case basis, with penalties agreed by long-standing custom. These tend to be harsh; although murder is not actually a crime as such on Sinta, it will still result in being placed in an airlock that is slowly depressurised over the next few hours. Crime, or what would be crime elsewhere, is rare on this world.

Sinta's naval and scout bases support a fair amount of activity in the Great Rift. Some of this is high-profile exploration work – notably the voyage of *Reftbreaker* in 1090 – but far more entirely routine missions are undertaken. The usual route is by way of gas giant refuelling at Kacxhun, then on to Emephdee. Tarin Sink and Lasher are the usual destinations of these missions, which include at least three extremely dull resupply runs out to the base at Lasher for every patrol or survey mission.

# ATTENTION

Visitors are advised to familiarise themselves with Sinta Social Custom.

Persons failing to conduct themselves in the proper manner may BE SUBJECT TO PENALTIES.

Penalties include:

- Ostracization
- Fines
- Caning
- Trade embargo
- Branding
- Decompression

**THEFT AND VIOLENCE WILL NOT BE TOLERATED.**

For more information and advice, visit the Traveller Helpdesk located in Atrium North.

# REFTBREAKER MODIFIED SEEKER

XX

TL15

TONS COST (MCR)

Hull	100 tons, Streamlined	-	6
Armour	None	-	-
M-Drive	Thrust 1 (size reduction x3)	0.7	3
J-Drive	Jump-4 (decreased fuel x2)	10	28.125
Power Plant	Fusion, Power 60	3	6
Fuel Tanks	2 Jump-4, 13 weeks of operation	73	-
Bridge	Small	6	0.5
Computer	Computer/20	-	5
Sensors	Military Grade	2	4.1
Systems	Fuel Scoop	-	-
	Fuel Processors (20 tons/day)	1	0.05
Software	Manoeuvre/0	-	-
	Jump Control/4 (10)	-	0.42
	Library	-	-
Cabin Space		4	0.2
Cargo		0.3	-

TOTAL: MCR 52.375

CREW

PILOT, ASTROGATOR

RUNNING COSTS

MAINTENANCE COST

Cr4365/month



PURCHASE COST

MCR 52.375

POWER REQUIREMENTS

10

20

2

MANOEUVRE  
DRIVE

BASIC SHIP  
SYSTEMS

SENSORS

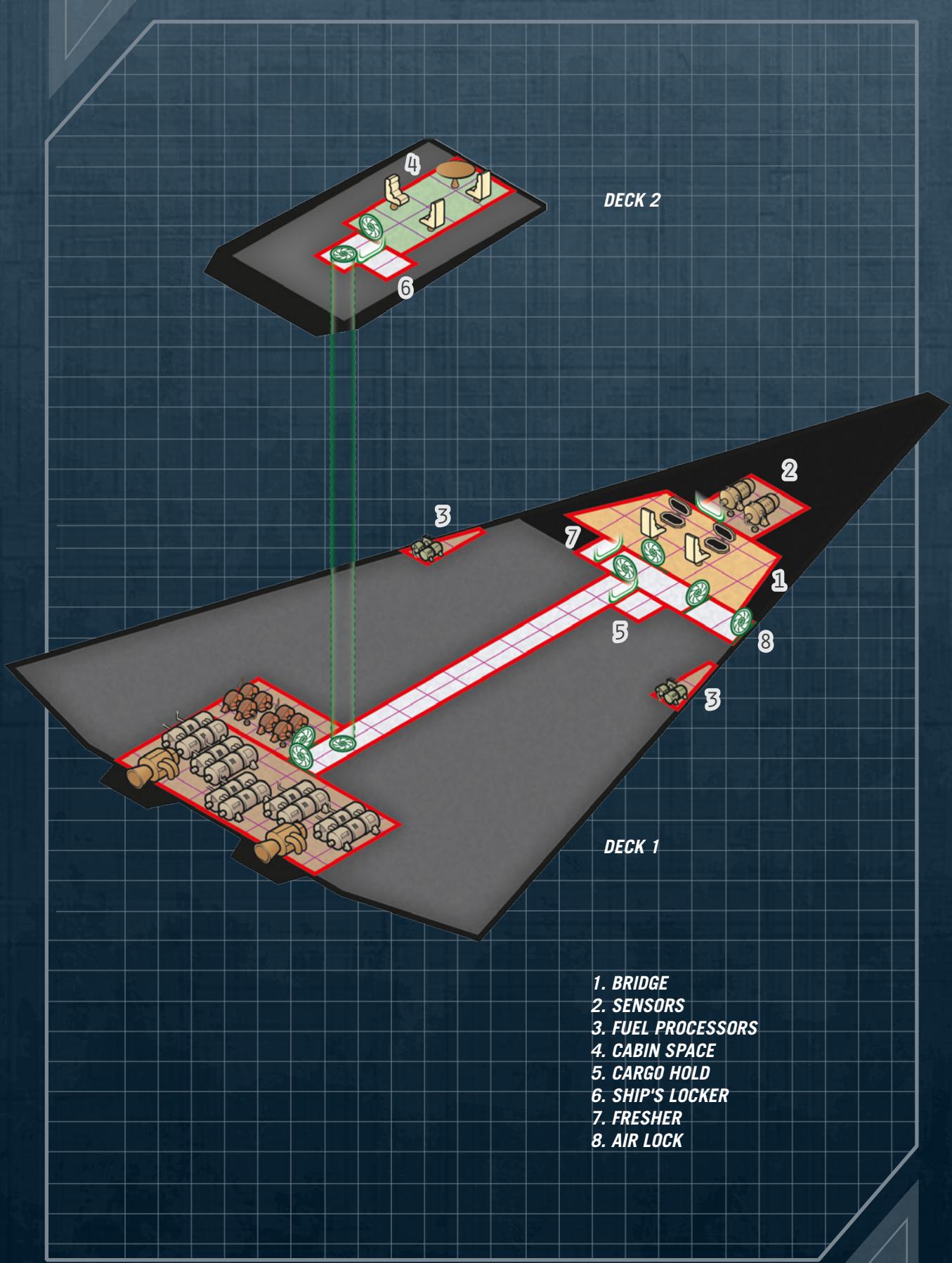


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HULL POINTS

The *Reftbreaker* was a one-off project, since replicated with varying degrees of faithfulness. The original was a Type-J seeker converted by General Products into a vessel that sacrificed everything to gain a two-jump-4 capability. This permitted a historic one-ship crossing of the Great Rift in 1090.

Jumps were made with dimmed cabin lights, in the ancient tradition, with no power to run external sensors at the moment of insertion. In this manner, *Reftbreaker* made the transit from Sinta in Corridor to Asharam (then called Yoma) in Deneb. Even with the large jump capability, the mission required deep-space refuelling at comets located by long-range instruments not carried by *Reftbreaker*. The expedition leader, Kirsamii Riilam, was knighted by the Emperor and received a barony on Jafla. His companion and engineer, Thomas Szrenic, was also called to the Imperial Palace for honours but never arrived. He is said by some to have committed suicide under mysterious circumstances but there have been sightings of 'some crazy old scout' matching his description on the worlds of the rift shore, achieving notoriety as a ranting prophet of doom.



1. BRIDGE
2. SENSORS
3. FUEL PROCESSORS
4. CABIN SPACE
5. CARGO HOLD
6. SHIP'S LOCKER
7. FRESHER
8. AIR LOCK



# SASHRAKUSHA

SUBSECTOR

## LANCIAN CULTURAL REGION

The Lancian Cultural Region is a semi-official recognition of the influence of the Lancian Movement; it is not a political entity, although shared culture and ideals tend to create common ground among local populations. This in turn creates a consenillsus on many political matters, although the governments of the region are anything but cohesive in their outlook.

The Lancian Movement began during the Long Night, on the world of Kukhun in Gushemege sector, arising in response to severe threats to the population of Kukhun, including an encroaching ice age and bitter civil war, and came to dominate the world's culture. Over time, the Movement expanded to encompass the population of neighbouring worlds and today is the dominant belief system of the Lancian Cultural Movement.

Although named for the goddess Lancia from Kukhun mythology, today's Lancian Movement is very much cultural rather than religious and has no worship of gods. Instead, the main tenets are creativity and an aversion to pointless destruction. Lancian influence over Imperial art and entertainment is considerable, although less in the regions behind the claw due to the great distances involved.

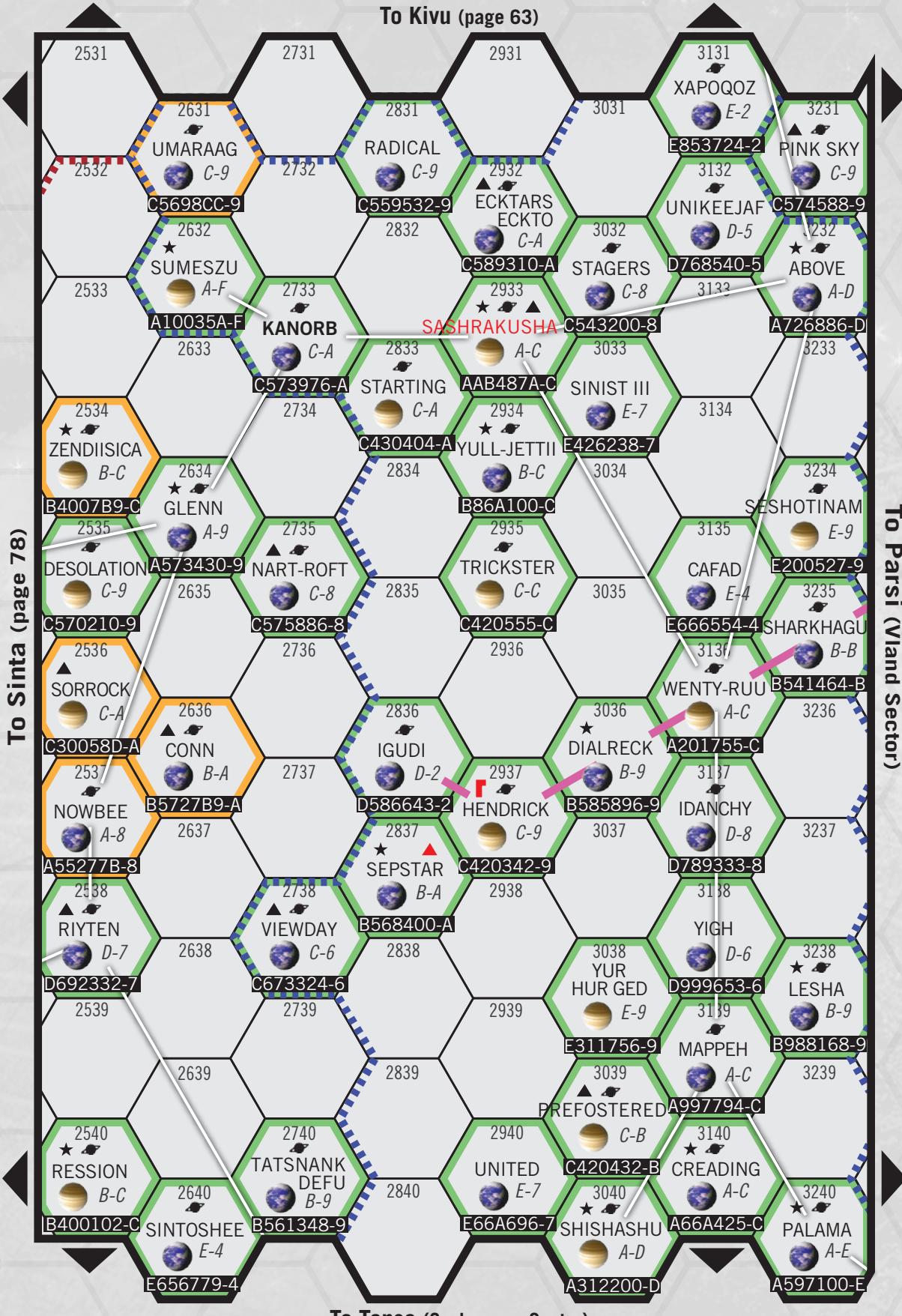
Name	Location	Bases	Statistics	Trade Codes	Travel Code	Allegiance	Gas Giants
Above	3232	N	A726886-D			Imperium	G
Cafad	3135		E666554-4	Ag Ga Ni		Imperium	
Conn	2636	S	B5727B9-A		A	Imperium	G
Creading	3140	N	A66A425-C	Ni Wa		Imperium	G
Desolation	2535		C570210-9	De Lo		Imperium	G

Name	Location	Bases	Statistics	Trade Codes	Travel Code	Allegiance	Gas Giants
Dialreck	3036	N	B585896-9	Ri		Imperium	
Ecktars Eckto	2932	S	C589310-A	Lo		Imperium	G
Glenn	2634	N	A573430-9	Ni		Imperium	G
Hendrick	2937	RS	C420342-9	De Lo Po		Imperium	G
Idanchy	3137		D789333-8	Lo		Imperium	G
Igudi	2836		D586643-2	Ag Ni Ri		Imperium	G
Kanorb	2733		C573976-A	Hi In		Imperium	G
Lesha	3238	N	B988168-9	Lo		Imperium	G
Mappeh	3139		A997794-C	Ag		Imperium	G
Nart-roft	2735	S	C575886-8			Imperium	G
Nowbee	2537		C30058D-A	Po		Imperium	G
Palama	3240		A597100-E	Lo		Imperium	G
Pink Sky	3231	S	C574588-9	Ag Ni		Imperium	G
Prefostered	3039	S	C420432-B	De Ni Po		Imperium	G
Radical	2831		C559532-9	Ni		Imperium	
Ression	2540	N	B400102-C	Lo Va		Imperium	G
Riyten	2538	S	D692332-7	Lo		Imperium	G
Sashrakusha	2933	N S	AAB487A-C	Fl		Imperium	G
Sepstar	2837	N W	B568400-A	Ni		Imperium	
Seshotinam	3234		E200527-9	Ni Va		Imperium	G
Sharkhagu	3235		B541464-B	Ni Po		Imperium	G
Shishashu	3040	N	A312200-D	Ic Lo		Imperium	G
Sinist III	3033		E426238-7	Lo		Imperium	
Sintoshee	2640		E656779-4	Ag Ga		Imperium	G
Sorrock	2536	S	C30058D-A	Ni Va	A	Imperium	
Stagers	3032		C543200-8	Lo Po		Imperium	G
Starting	2833		C430404-A	De Ni Po		Imperium	
Sumeszu	2632	N	A10035A-F	Lo Va		Imperium	
Tatsnank Defu	2740		B561348-9	Lo		Imperium	G
Trickster	2935		C420555-C	De Ni Po		Imperium	G
Umaraag	2631	S	B400102-C	Ri	A	Imperium	G
Unikeejaf	3132		D768540-5	Ag Ni		Imperium	G
United	2940		E66A696-7	Ni Ri Wa		Imperium	G
Viewday	2738	S	C673324-6	Lo		Imperium	G
Wenty-ruu	3136		A201755-C	Ic Na Va		Imperium	G
Xapoqoz	3131		E853724-2	Po		Imperium	G
Yigh	3138		D999653-6	Ni		Imperium	
Yull-jetii	2934	N	B86A100-C	Lo Wa		Imperium	G
Yur Hur Ged	3038		E311756-9	Ic Na		Imperium	
Zendiisica	2534	N	B4007B9-C	Na Va	A	Imperium	G

# SASHRAKUSHA SUBSECTOR



Corridor



The Sashrakusha subsector is very much an Imperial heartland region rather than a frontier. It is one of the most secure parts of the Imperium, shielded from external threats by many parsecs of Imperial controlled space in most directions and by the Great Rift.

Much of the subsector falls at least nominally within the Lancia Cultural Region, an area heavily influenced by the artistic mindset of the Lancia Movement. This originated on Khukun in Gushemege sector, among humans transplanted there long ago by the Ancients. Lancia society is characterised by creativity and an inclination towards the arts, although this manifests in different ways depending on local cultural influences.

The people of Sashrakusha are little affected by the proximity of the Great Rift, although its naval and scout bases launch the occasional trans-rift expedition. Persistent rumours claim exotic minerals come in through the scout base at Umaraag and are slipped into the trade routes via the port at Sumeszu in blandly labelled containers. The source and eventual destination of these materials, if they exist at all, remain a mystery.

## XAPOQOZ

Xapoqoz is in many ways an unimportant world that contributes virtually nothing to interstellar prosperity. Indeed, deploying a single navy ship in the system on patrol for a week costs far more than the planetary economy is ever likely to generate. The system is generally bypassed by trade vessels other than the few headed to Tucker in Kivu subsector.

Xapoqoz is tidally locked, with one side of the planet permanently facing its star and the other in perpetual night. Combined with dry conditions and a thin atmosphere, this results in an unusual ecosphere that makes it difficult to raise food crops. If high-tech assistance were available, this might not present much of a problem but human society on Xapoqoz is primitive. Life is tough for the locals, who have little time for the few offworlders who visit.

There are around 37 million humans on Xapoqoz, mostly dwelling in or close to the 'twilight zone' between the permanent day and night sides of the planet. Settlements are typically robust and compartmentalised, with cities formed from interconnected villages. This is inefficient in economic and industrial terms but enhances survivability in event of a disaster.

The remainder of the population, around three million or so according to the best estimates, are Zapoqi. Very little is known about these creatures, who are very different to the human population. Zapoqi live for an extremely long time, several millennia at least, and are virtually immobile. They resemble spiny stone columns, around two metres in height, and do not usually interact with humans. Indeed, it was not until the 700s that the Zapoqi were recognised as being sentient.

Communication with the Zapoqi is almost impossible, although neural activity scanners indicate they are constantly engaged in high-level abstract thought. It is not known if the Zapoqi are telepathic or if a human telepath could communicate with one. They seem content to stand on the day side of their planet, subsisting on ultraviolet radiation from their star and think their thoughts.

Zapoqi are not found on the night side and rarely in the twilight zone and it is not known what happens to them if cut off from ultraviolet radiation. The occasional Scout Service team attempts new forms of communication from time-to-time, in the hope of discovering what these creatures have seen in their incredibly long lifetimes. Beyond this, the Zapoqi remain enigmatic.

## ZENDIISICA

The Zendiisica system contains no habitable planets but its abundant mineral resources nevertheless made it a good prospect for colonisation. As a 'rockball' world, Zendiisica has no ecosphere of its own but has become something of a showcase for plant and animal life from across the sector. Each of Zendiisica's cities is host to a zoological park as well as artificial crop-production areas; the parks are themed for different worlds, with flora and fauna from elsewhere mixed in, whilst food production areas are subject to constant experimentation. The ultimate goal is to find the most efficient mix of plants – or crossbreed new species – which will maximise production in the available space. Progress has been steady, with great care taken to avoid a calamity – another reason why the cities each have their own artificial ecosphere. Most people on Zendiisica are vegetarians as a result of the unavailability of meat, except as an expensive import, and many find the taste and texture unpleasant when they do finally encounter a steak or burger. Not surprisingly, Zendiisica has produced a number of very prominent scientists working in the food-production sector and has a popular brand of starship ration packs named after its cities.

# RIFTSPAN REACHES

The Riftspan Reaches are sometimes referred to as the Aslan Corridor, since it is of similar strategic value to the Hierate as Corridor is to the Imperium. The comparison is valid in some ways but should not be taken too far. Whereas Corridor is threatened by outside forces, the Riftspan Reaches are far more secure for the simple reason of inaccessibility. Similarly, whilst Corridor sees vast amounts of trade moving back and forth, the Aslan trans-rift route is important more for communication than commerce.

Astrographically, the sector is dominated by the Great Rift, with three major groupings of star systems. All are the territory of the Aslan Hierate, although different clans predominate in each. Rimward of the Great Rift lies the main territory of the Hierate, with the coreward holdings being of lesser size and importance. In the central region of the sector lies a cluster of worlds not normally shown on star maps as being Aslan territory for obscure reasons. This cluster spreads across the Ayokiylair and Ryuhleia subsectors and acts as a bridge across the Great Rift.

Named on human charts as the Central Riftspan Cluster, these worlds are under the control of various Aslan clans but have a rather nebulous status akin to a protectorate or area of interest to the Hierate. This is of little consequence to human visitors; they are very much Aslan worlds. However, for diplomats and treaty-writers, there are some important differences. It is possible to consider the cluster to be neutral territory for some diplomatic purposes and for those unwelcome in the Hierate to be accommodated. This applies equally to outsider diplomats and Aslan exiles.

The Hierate is far less coherent than the Imperium in terms of political and military stance, with the result that naval forces assigned to the sector vary considerably. Each clan with interests in the sector maintains its own forces, which cooperate to varying degrees as required. The same goes for exploration; clans conduct their own expeditions and rarely share findings with others. This has resulted in many discoveries of the same phenomena and bitter small-scale conflicts in remote places. The winner of these all-but-forgotten fights between exploration teams gets to take home knowledge of whatever has been discovered, potentially gaining a strategic asset for their clan.

There are no large mains or clusters on either side of the rift, although several medium-sized chains of

## ASLAN POLITICS

Aslan politics are dominated by a clan system, with some clans controlling one or more worlds and/or major business interests. Some clans are vassals of a more powerful clan and will support them with votes or arms as necessary. Inter-clan feuding is commonplace; open warfare is a little less frequent but the odd skirmish is considered an acceptable political gambit.

The 29 most powerful clans of the Aslan Hierate form the *Tlaukuh*, a council that strongly influences, but does not rule, the Hierate. Alliances shift within the *Tlaukuh* and even more so outside it, although long-established relationships between clans can withstand a minor difference of opinion.

The strict inheritance rules in Aslan society result in large numbers of *i hatei* – sons who will not inherit and their followers – who seek their own fortunes. A proportion of *i hatei* bands travel beyond the Hierate, pushing the boundaries of both their clan's territory and the Hierate. Clans may disavow the actions of *i hatei* at times but it is through their actions that the clan hopes to grow in power.

It is not generally in the interests of a given clan to rein in its *i hatei*. This can lead to conflict with outsiders as *i hatei* encroach on their territory and are resisted, potentially dragging the parent clan into battle. However, resistance to *i hatei* is part of the game of politics played within and without the Hierate. Those who walk the fine line between repelling incursions and causing a clan to lose too much face may gain the respect of one clan – or another – and become a potential ally.

worlds do exist, with jump-2 access to many more star systems. It is common for these mains and clusters to develop a local economy based on slow but efficient jump-1 transports, with higher-jump ships providing transportation to other markets. Starports at the entry and exit point of a cluster tend to act as trade hubs rather than more central ports.



# AULRYAKH

## SUBSECTOR

Name	Location	Bases	Statistics	Trade Codes	Travel Code	Allegiance	Gas Giants
Areiha'is	0102		B54847A-B	Ni		Hierate	
Aulryakh	0507	N	A542A54-E	Hi In Po		Hierate	G
Ehaosah	0201		B562478-B	Ni		Hierate	G
Eioiye'	0701		A7A8777-D	Fl		Hierate	G
Fahaiye	0402		B633487-A	Ni Po		Hierate	G
Ftyayu	0104		A664855-D	Ri		Hierate	G
Hastaofta	0407		B200497-C	Ni Va		Hierate	G
Ieafe	0703		B310885-C	Na		Hierate	G
Iohfou	0303		C430785-A	De Na Po		Hierate	G
Oilraro	0403		C5867BB-8	Ag Ri	A	Hierate	
Seihueiakh	0602		C567314-9	Lo		Hierate	G
Staikhah	0204		B54036B-B	De Lo Po		Hierate	G
Stoafaohail	0804		E000755-A	As Na Va		Hierate	G
Teikhahfauoa	0404		B56258A-A	Ni		Hierate	
Triwayah	0103		C783214-8	Lo		Hierate	
Wyoyohku	0503		C31078A-A	Na		Hierate	G
Yailaw	0306		B310885-C	Na		Hierate	G
Yolrilao	0108		B69A687-9	Ni Wa		Hierate	G

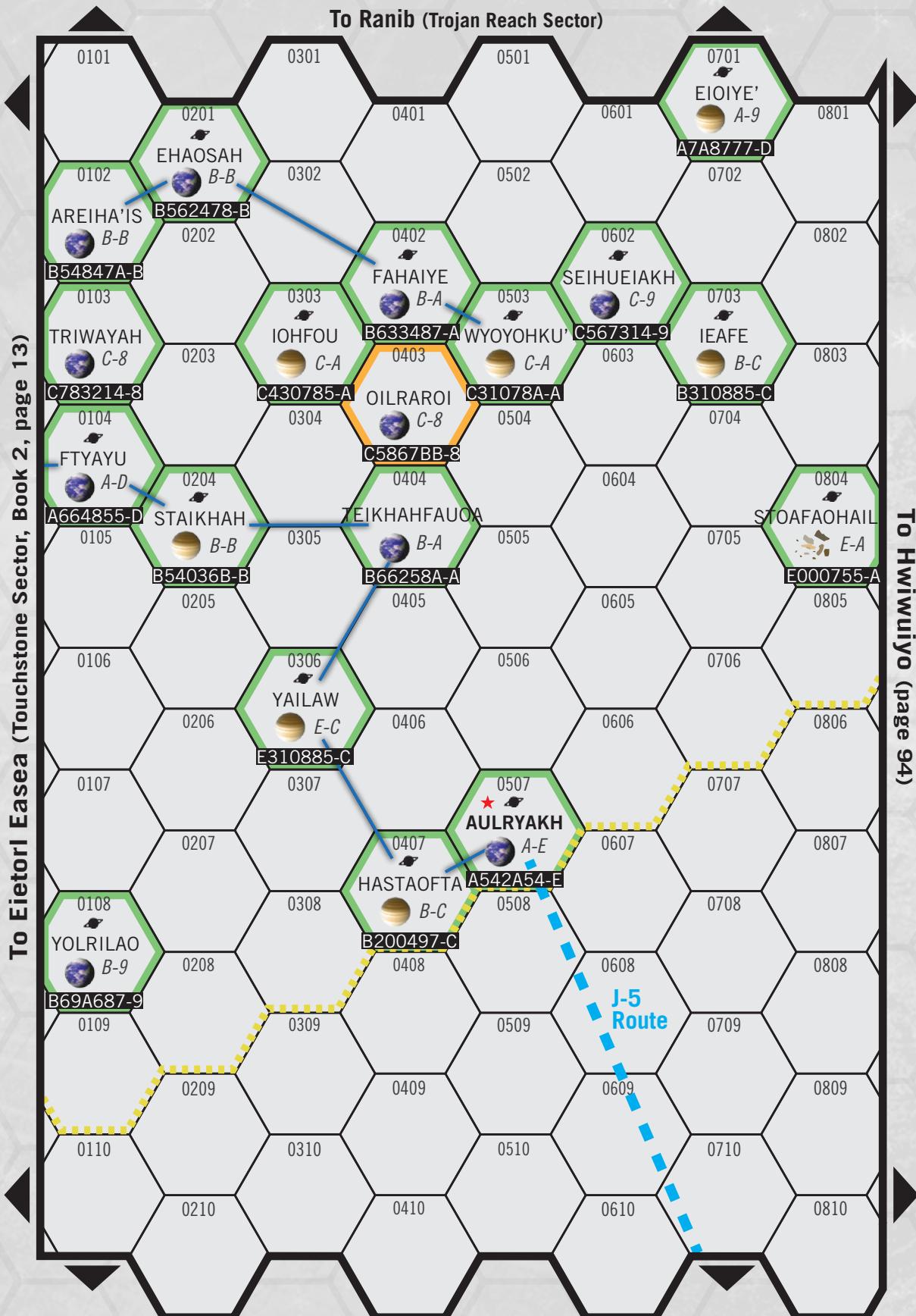
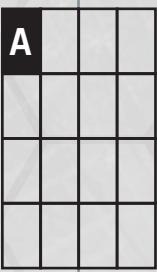
The Aulryakh subsector is the entry point for the transrift route into the Hierate's holdings on the coreward side of the Great Rift. The world of Aulryakh itself, although anything but a desirable garden world, has grown in importance into a high population major trade and manufacturing centre, host to a naval base operated by the *Tlaukuh*, from which a sizable force of vessels can be deployed... at least in theory. In practice, the clans providing these vessels tend to use them as bargaining chips in the constant jockeying for control

over this critically important port. The clans with the most or largest ships often dictate policy, resulting in the port being closed to their rival clans.

This makes trade across the Great Rift more difficult for clans out of favour with the *Tlaukuh* or whose enemies have gained ascendancy in the struggle for control over the port. The *Tlaukuh*'s representatives try to maintain control as best they can but typically only prevent powerplays from going too far rather than suppressing

# AULRYAKH SUBSECTOR

Riftspan Reaches



them entirely. The *Tlaukhu* benefits from the situation; the importance of the port at Aulryakh means that many clans want to be seen to have contributed a ship or two – to not have a ship at Aulryakh is a byword for poverty and political impotence.

The fleet at Aulryakh thus tends to be large but even more disunited than most multi-clan Aslan forces. Elements of the fleet are far more likely to make forays coreward into Aslan territories on this side of the rift than into it or along its edge, although semi-regular patrols are maintained to worlds on the jump-5 route and those close to the rift shore.

## TRIWAYAH

Triwayah is a new and undeveloped territory, still under the control of the *i hatei* who seized it. Others had tried to make this world a possession of their clan in the past without any success and the present owners have run into the same problems; Triwayah is a dry world with a dense atmosphere, the local ecosystem is extremely sparse and mineral resources are poor. The owners trumpet the fact that they control an entire planet but it is not a valuable one. Indeed, their parent clan is reluctant to shovel investment into such a poor prospect. This has resulted in further loss of face for the *i hatei* and the longer their situation goes on, the more desperate they will become. Too proud to pack up and leave, they are forced to make the best of a bad situation and hope that either things somehow get better or they are honourably defeated and driven off by a new set of hopefuls.

## YOLRILAO

Yolrilao is a distinctly second-rate world by Aslan standards. Almost completely covered in water and with a taint to its dense atmosphere, it has little of the wide-open space that Aslan – however technologically sophisticated they may be – prize for territory. Yolrilao's ruling clan is typical of such worlds – they control an

entire planet but not a good one, which is normal for a vassal clan owing allegiance to greater powers.

Most of the seven million inhabitants live on a single island chain, supported by aquaculture and seabed mining. More distant land masses, such as they are, are gradually being claimed by bands of *i hatei* using ‘borrowed’ fishing vessels. The settlements they create are barely self-sufficient at best and represent a drain on the clan’s resources rather than an asset. In time, some of these settlements may grow sufficiently to begin producing significant industrial or economic output but, with no investment available, the process will be very slow.

Prospects for the clan’s advancement are not good; there is little unclaimed territory in the region and Yolrilao’s clan lacks the capability to launch expeditions to seize land from other clans or on worlds beyond Hierate borders. Lacking better opportunities, the clan has begun building rather basic spacecraft – which bear an uncanny resemblance to the farming submarines constructed alongside them – and prospecting for resources on other worlds in the system.

Several outposts have already begun small-scale resource production and Yolrilao is undergoing an explosion of prospecting and surveying operations. Most ships involved are extremely crude and unreliable, resulting in predictably high casualty rates. However, this new thirst for adventure in space has sparked interest in an even more daring undertaking.

In the heart of Yolrilao’s submarine construction facility, a team is hand-building the world’s first interstellar vessel. Ordinary ships are available to the clan – small traders bought on the open market – but this vessel is intended for a greater purpose. It is an exploration ship, intended to crawl out into the Great Rift using a series of one-parsec jumps. The clan are tight-lipped about where they intend to go in this vessel or what they hope to find.

# YORILAO FARMING SUBMARINE

TL	9
SKILL	SEAFARER (SUBMARINE)
AGILITY	-3
SPEED (CRUISE)	SLOW (VERY SLOW)
RANGE (CRUISE)	6000 (9000)
CREW	20
PASSENGERS	-
CARGO	41 TONS
HULL	2250
SHIPPING	375 TONS
COST	MCR231

## ARMOUR

FRONT	3
REAR	3
SIDES	3



## EQUIPMENT AND WEAPONS

Airlock x 2, Autopilot (enhanced), Communications System (improved), Control System (improved), Digger Blade, Fusion Plant (basic), Harvesting Equipment, Holding Tank (200 spaces), Manipulator Arms (enhanced) x 4, Navigation System (improved), Sensor System (improved, underwater), Staterooms x 12

None

Autopilot (skill level)	2	None
Communications (range)	500 km	
Navigation (Navigation DM)	+2	
Sensors (Electronics (sensors) DM)	+1	
Camouflage (Recon DM)	-	
Stealth (Electronics (sensors) DM)	-	

150

HULL POINTS

## TRAITS

## DESCRIPTION

The design of the harvest submarines of Yorilao vary considerably, many being one-off projects created to meet a current or expected need. This example is designed to cruise close to the seabed and harvest both plants and the top layer of soil, which is processed and redistributed back onto the seabed after additional nutrients, necessary chemicals and seeds have been mixed in. Plant matter is squeezed into bales and dropped onto the seabed for pickup by other craft. In short, the process combines ploughing, planting, fertilising and harvesting all in one pass.

# FARMING SUBMARINE

CONVERSION

TL13

TONS

COST (MCr)

Hull	375 tons, Streamlined	-	22.5
M-Drive	Thrust 1	3.75	7.5
J-Drive	Jump 1	14.375	21.5625
Power Plant	Fusion, Power 200	20	40
Fuel Tanks	4x Jump-1, 40 weeks of operation	170	-
Bridge		20	1.875
Computer	Computer/10	-	0.16
Sensors	Civilian	1	3
Weapons	Triple Turret (pulse laser) Small Missile Bay	1 50	4 12
Staterooms	Standard x 3 Crew Working Space	12 40	1.5 -
Software	Manoeuvre/O Jump Control/1	- -	- 0.1
Common Areas		20	0.2
Cargo		19	-

TOTAL: MCr 114.3975

Converting a submarine into a starship is not an easy process, nor is it efficient. The original vessel used in this example displaced around

2,000 tons of water or 375 tons of liquid hydrogen. Its harvesting equipment and large holding tank were removed but many internal fittings remain. Thus, the final vessel is still very much a submarine capable of hovering on gravitic lifters or venturing into interstellar space.

It can also still submerge and propel itself in water, although diving depth is reduced to less than a kilometre due to structural changes.

The bridge is in the conning tower, replacing the original control room. It retains its top hatch, permitting a vacc-suited crewmember to stand on the tower whilst moving through space. There is no reason to do this other than to get a truly amazing view of the heavens or perhaps just to look dashing.

The vessel's missile armament was created by converting a torpedo chamber from an attack submarine, whilst the laser turret was shoehorned into a remote mount outside the pressure hull. The result is a rather strange looking craft but one capable of four one-parsec jumps. There has been no shortage of volunteers to man her on her maiden voyage into the Great Rift.

CREW

PILOT, PILOT, ENGINEER,  
GUNNERS X 2

RUNNING COSTS

MAINTENANCE COST  
Cr9533/month



PURCHASE COST  
MCr 114.3975

POWER REQUIREMENTS

38

MANOEUVRE  
DRIVE

75

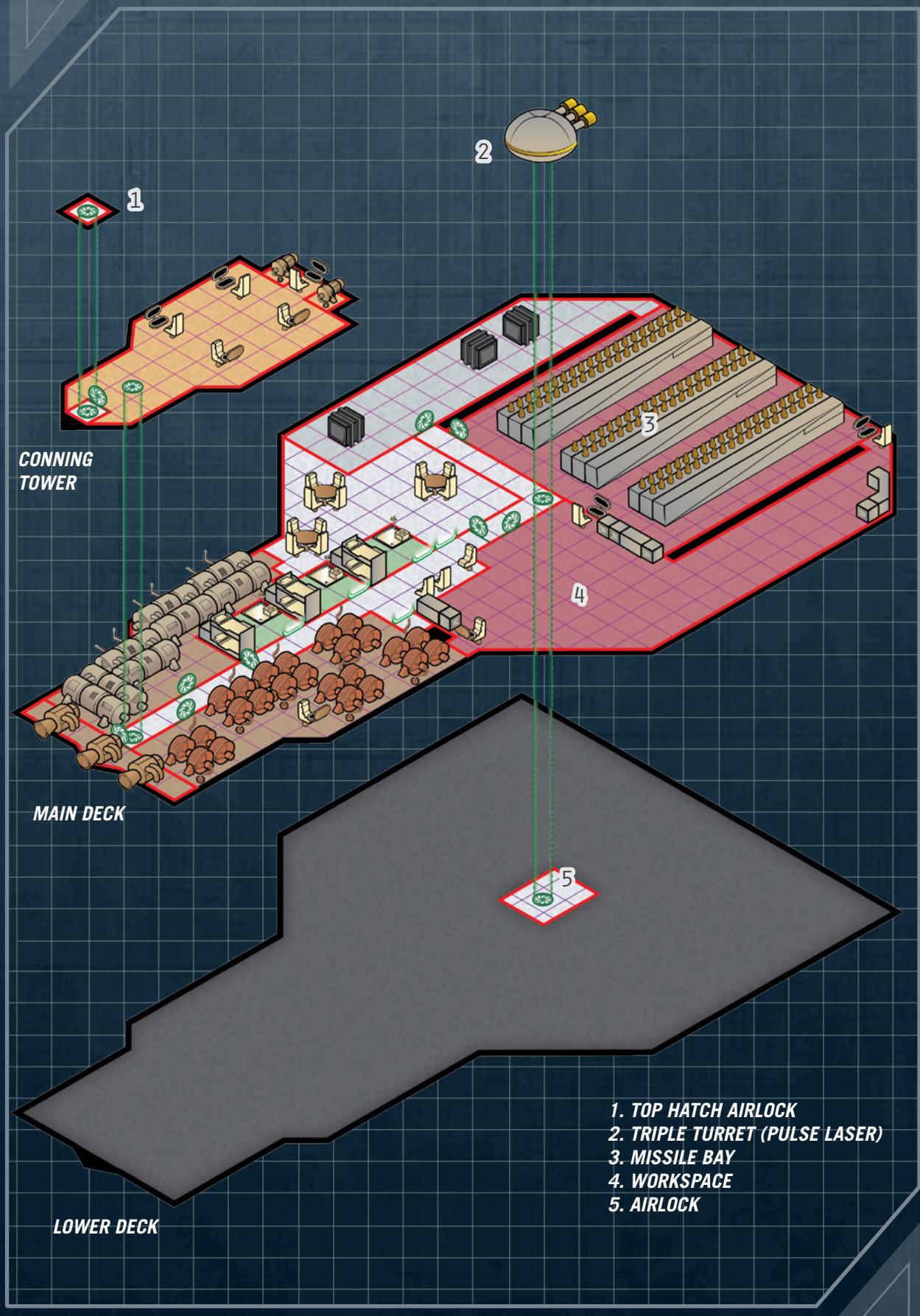
BASIC SHIP  
SYSTEMS

38

JUMP DRIVE

1

SENSORS





# HWIWUIYO

## SUBSECTOR

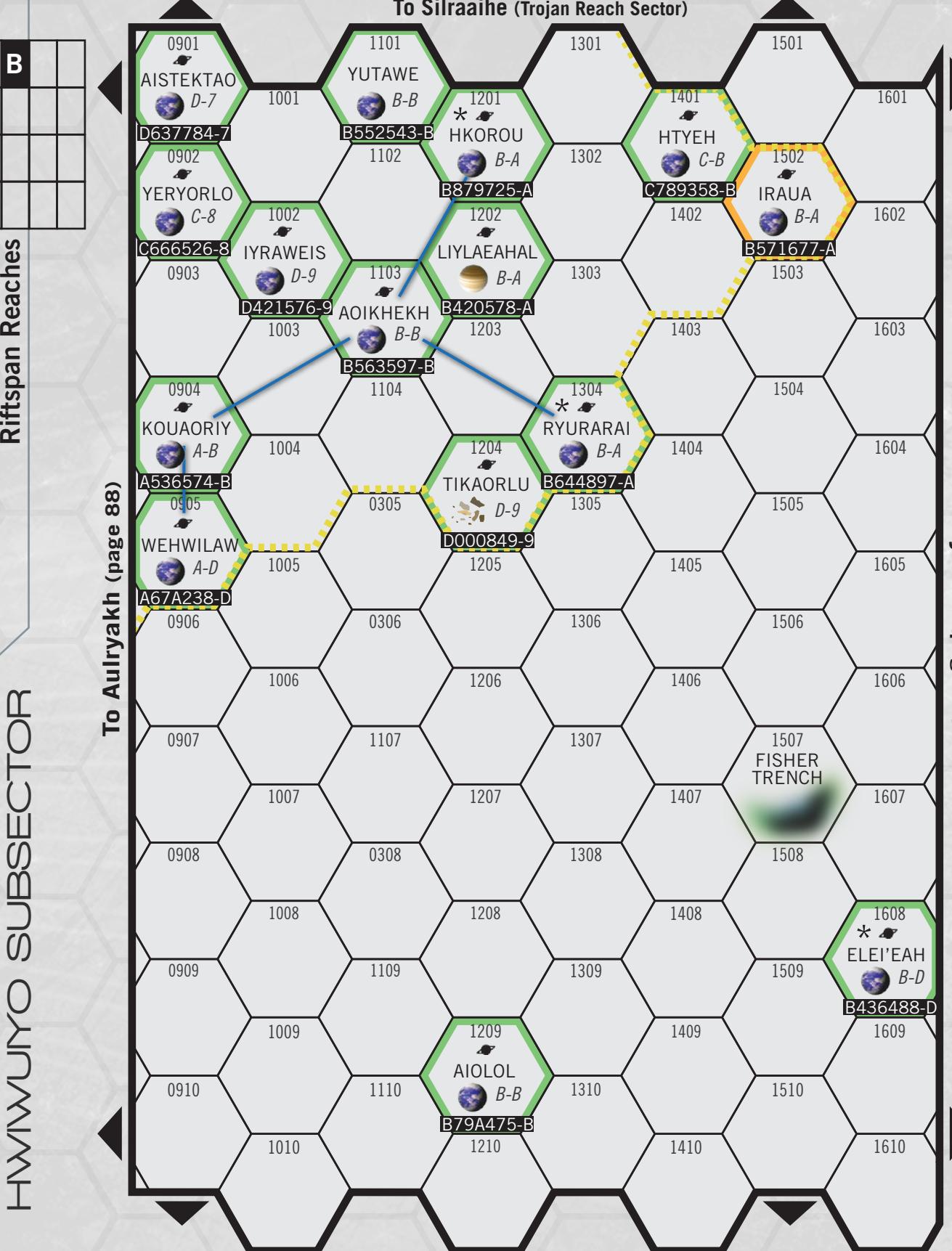
Name	Location	Bases	Statistics	Trade Codes	Travel Code	Allegiance	Gas Giants
Aiolol	1209		B79A475-B	Ni Wa		Hierate	G
Aistektao	0901		D637784-7			Hierate	G
Aoikhekh	1103		B563597-B	Ni		Hierate	G
Elei'each	1608	ACS	B436488-D	Ni		Hierate	G
Hkorou	1201	ACS	B879725-A			Hierate	G
Htyeh	1401		C789358-B	Lo		Hierate	G
Iraua	1502		B571677-A	Ni	A	Hierate	G
Iyraweis	1002		D421576-9	Ni Po		Hierate	G
Kouaoriy	0904		A536574-B	Ni		Hierate	G
Liylaeahal	1202		B420578-A	De Ni Po		Hierate	G
Ryurarai	1304	ACS	B644897-A			Hierate	G
Tikaorlu	1204		D000849-9	As Na Va		Hierate	G
Wehwilaw	0905		A67A238-D	Lo Wa		Hierate	G
Yeryorlo	0902		C666526-8	Ag Ni Ga		Hierate	G
Yutawe	1101		B552543-B	Ni Po		Hierate	

Hwiwuiyo is a relative backwater, although it does have some important worlds. Early Aslan expansion across the Great Rift moved coreward up the region's mains and towards regions of greater stellar density where useful territory was more likely to be found. The worlds along the rift's edge were given lesser importance and in many cases, were claimed but not developed until the original rush of expansion had died away. What might be termed 'backfill' then occurred, with a second and much slower wave of expansion back towards the Great Rift and its fringes.

The subsector has never faced any significant threat from outside the Hierate but the usual inter-clan scuffling results in a high proportion of small warships being fielded, even by those who cannot really afford them. Ground forces are also strong, creating a situation where the economies of some worlds are strained by over-militarisation.

## HWWUWYOO SUBSECTOR

Riftspan Reaches



Gas Giant

B-6 Starport Class & Tech Level

\* Clan Base

- Planet (dry)
- Planet (water present)
- Asteroids
- Trade Route

To Aokiylair (page 102)

## ELEI'EAH

Lying six parsecs out in the rift, Elei'eah is a token possession rather than a productive world. It is controlled by an alliance of prominent clans in the *Tlaukuh*, who jointly operate a base with around fifty thousand personnel and their dependents living in a permanent settlement on-planet.

Elei'eah is a harsh world with a very thin atmosphere. Lying at the outer edge of the system's habitable zone, it has a low surface temperature in daytime, which plunges rapidly at night. Exploration of the planetary surface is still ongoing, although this is carried out with no great sense of urgency. Likewise, the rest of the system is being charted and surveyed at a steady but hardly intensive pace.

Most Aslan vessels in the system are sublight craft deployed, or in some cases assembled, from components shipped into the starport. This, and the quality of the port constructed by the *Tlaukuh*, suggests the Aslan came to Elei'eah with a long-term aim in mind. It is not clear what they intend but there are rumours that heavy defences are being set up.

All the system's five gas giants are routinely patrolled, with orbital installations around each to support system defence vessels operating nearby or atmospheric dives. Several minelayers are active around the gas giants, laying patterns of missile-armed drones, which make skimming fuel extremely hazardous for any intruder. The starport itself is a fortress, with its own weaponry backed up by squadrons of fighters and system defence boats.

These defences would be impressive for a major world; for an outpost in the middle of nowhere they redefine extravagance. Observers have suggested that the Aslan might be constructing a bolt-hole in case of utter disaster or perhaps a repository for something very important. Certainly, Elei'eah would be very difficult to successfully attack and, if sufficiently well prepared ahead of time, it would be effectively invulnerable.

The expected threat does not seem to come from anything in the Great Rift; the system's complement includes deep-space capable vessels which search for comets and rogue bodies in nearby space, but this seems to relate to locating (and possibly booby-trapping) deep space refuelling points than exploration.

## HTYEH

A rift-shore system with little usable land and an uncomfortably dense atmosphere, Htyeh is occupied by a token population of around seven thousand Aslan. Their single settlement is subdivided along clan lines, further decreasing the world's significance through inefficiency and technology is maintained by offworld support, since it is in the owning clans' interest to keep their enclaves viable. Worlds of this sort are still counted among a clan's possessions; several undeveloped landgrabs can boost a clan's status but prove a drain on its resources over time. In the case of Htyeh, the population is too small to exert any real control over the world beyond the island where the starport is located and it is thought that small groups of *ihae* from other clans may be building their strength elsewhere on the planet. A clash would not necessarily drag in the parent clans; there is a limit to how much effort any would be willing to make to retain a near-worthless world.





# TYEHLAI

## SUBSECTOR

Name	Location	Bases	Statistics	Trade Codes	Travel Code	Allegiance	Gas Giants
Aoukeiwar	2306		A000113-C	As Lo Va			
Iktaitlow	0801		E566787-6	Ag Ri		Hierate	G

The Tyehlai subsector contains only two systems, of which Iktaitlow is accessible by jump-3 vessel and has regular contact with the rest of the Aslan-held systems of the region. Aoukeiwar, on the other hand, lies far out in the Great Rift and is very isolated.

## AOUKEIWAR

Aoukeiwar is owned and governed by an Aslan organisation named *Sae lyfauhohua Ohloftao Kauleaoikhaihaiiy* (SIOK), which translates roughly as 'honourable company of searchers on the shore'. SIOK is not a clan organisation but an independent corporate-style body.

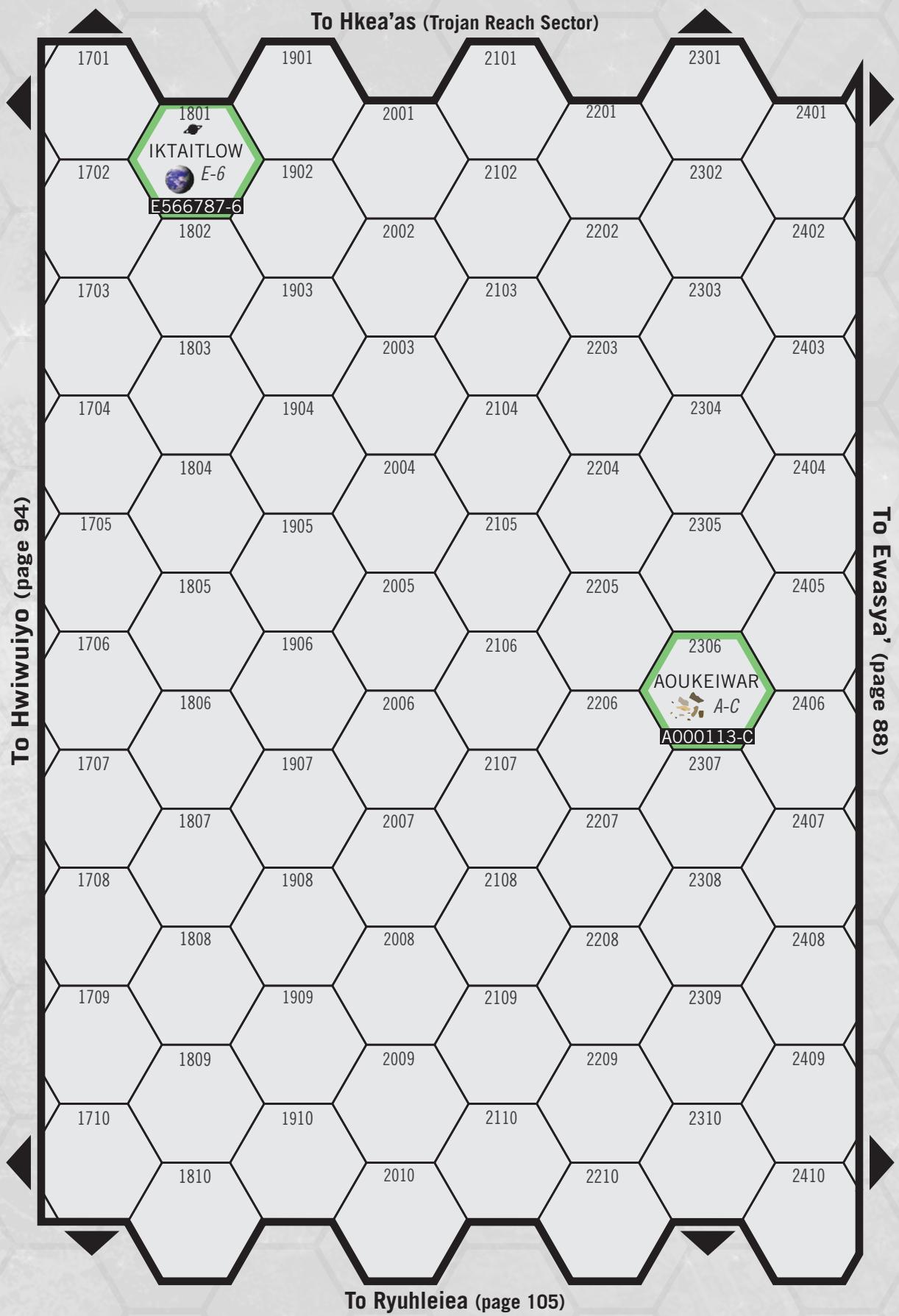
The official population of Aoukeiwar is listed as 80 persons, which can be misleading. In fact, there are technically only 80 or so permanent residents in the system; these are the corporation's owning family and their senior staff. A much larger number of workers and support staff are present but are not citizens.

SIOK has been operating at Aoukeiwar for many decades and has undergone cultural shifts that would not be tolerated in the Hierate. Its senior staff are mostly female, with males having impressive titles but

acting mainly as liaisons with more traditional Aslan. This has caused problems with recruitment since many Aslan males resent working for what is essentially a matriarchal organisation. The solution was to hire a mostly female workforce, which in turn made service more attractive to young males.

Although the set-up at Aoukeiwar is regarded with suspicion, and even contempt elsewhere, it works. The tiny elite of citizens run an effective business specialising in mining rare materials from planetoids in the system's two belts. They also build jump-capable planetoid warships, which are laboriously transferred to the shores of the rift by a system of repeated deep-space refuellings.

The world of Elei'eah – close in proximity, by the standards of the Great Rift – has commissioned the construction of a similar vessel, not as a dedicated warship but a platform for deep-space exploration. Perhaps the planetoid ship is to be a final escape capsule if the heavy defences of Elei'eah somehow fail to protect it or it may be that the vessel is intended to convey some very important person or object to the deep-rift fortress.





# EWASYA'

## SUBSECTOR

Ewasya' subsector has no inhabited star systems and is of little interest to the Aslan Hierate. Its primary astrographical feature is the Anellet Cloud, a region of dense interstellar dust around three parsecs across. The

cloud is thought to be a potential star system that failed to form but has not been investigated in any detail. It is drifting in a generally rimward direction and will enter the lyhaseakh subsector in a few thousand years.

### SUBSECTOR: NO INTERSTELLAR OBJECTS



# TRAWO



## SUBSECTOR

Name	Location	Bases	Statistics	Trade Codes	Travel Code	Allegiance	Gas Giants
Eao	0711		C94A475-B	Ni Wa		Hierate	G

The Trawo subsector contains a single inhabited star system, Eao. Eao is significant as a link on the jump-5 route but of little economic importance.

### EAO

Eao is a disputed world in a disputed star system. Several Aslan clans have holdings on the mainworld, although long-standing treaties limit the number of personnel each can have. Most clans have found inventive ways to bend these rules, leading to the occasional challenge and skirmishing. Eao is too important for these local conflicts to be allowed to get out of hand and it suits the purposes of the great clans of the *Tlaukuhu* to allow ownership of Eao to remain divided among several more or less equally matched factions. If any clan were to gain clear control over this important link on the jump-5 route, its status and bargaining power would be greatly increased.

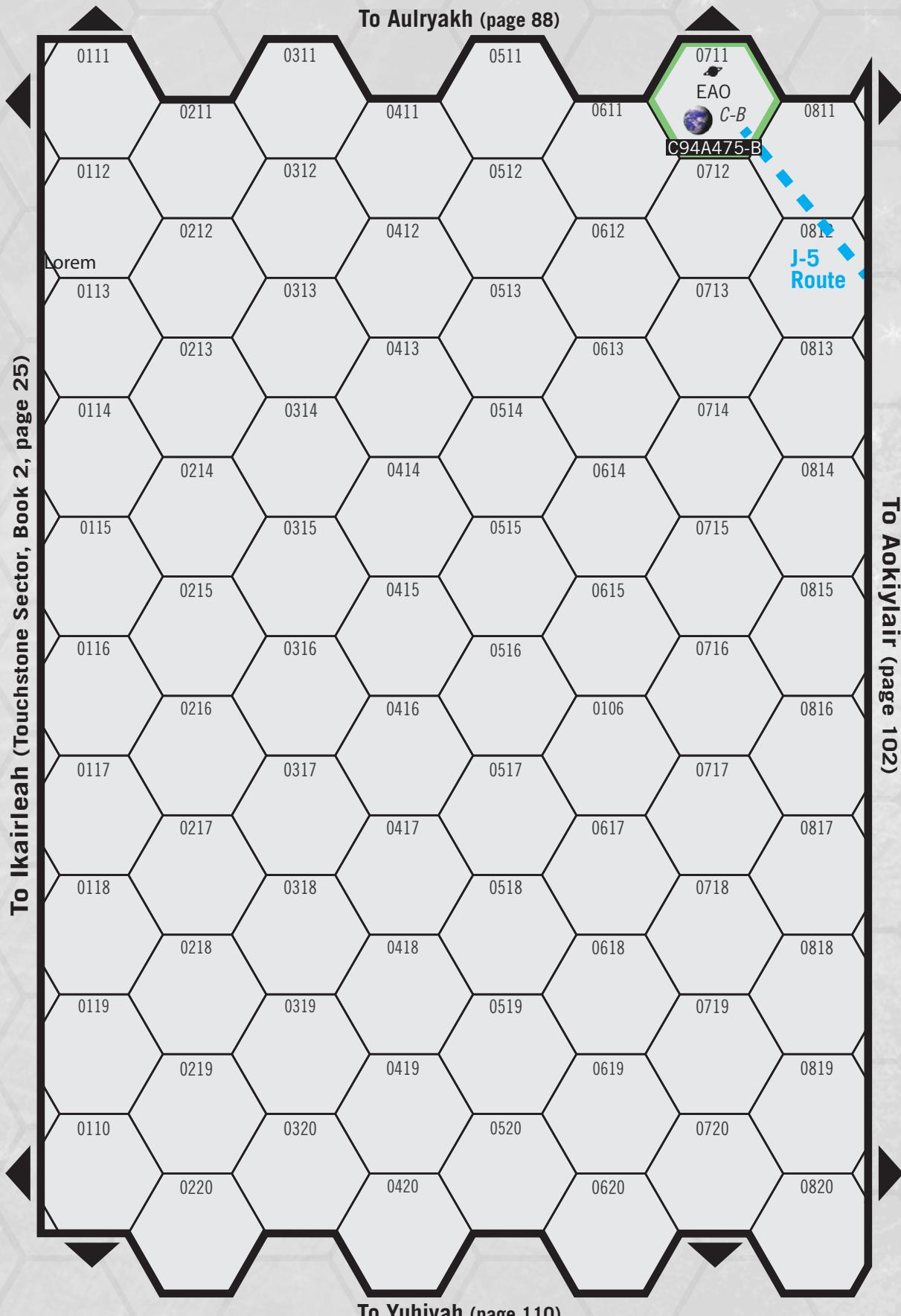
The remainder of the system is equally divided. Refuelling stations orbit all four of the system's gas giants and two of the outsystem worlds also have small installations that service the vessels of clans who have no friends on the mainworld. Which installations are open to the ships of any given clan varies over time, making Eao a hotbed of inter-clan politics and the possible flashpoint for larger conflicts.

Vessels that do not belong to a clan or organisation with refuelling and support agreements in place are forced to negotiate a deal with whomever is willing to accommodate them. Some ship operators do well out of this, playing the system's factions off against one another, but others end up paying through the nose for fuel and essential supplies. Vessels have been known to be delayed for weeks in the system, although those with political or economic power usually find a way to cut through the complex local politics or take sufficient vengeance on those who impede them that the offence is not repeated.



# TRAWO SUBSECTOR

Riftspan Reaches





# AOKIYLAIR

## SUBSECTOR

Name	Location	Bases	Statistics	Trade Codes	Travel Code	Allegiance	Gas Giants
Arleaya	1615		C7977CA-8	Ag	A	Hierate	G
Auih	1315		B57A557-D	Ni Wa		Hierate	
Ehyeyaw	1516		D53898A-8	Hi		Hierate	
Hfarauo	1314		B561269-B	Lo		Hierate	G
Hkurlei	1517		A5409DB-C	De Hi In Po	A	Hierate	G
Hyarlih	1415		B7C6166-C	Fl Lo		Hierate	G
Oisewarla	1614		C400687-A	Na Ni Va		Hierate	G
Seisytaftao	1515		B544387-B	Lo		Hierate	G
Souyehkeahte	1115		B5657B8-A	Ag Ri		Hierate	G
Tleae'ah	0913		C756887-8	Ga		Hierate	G
Toawi	1316	ACS	B40075A-D	Na Va		Hierate	
Trahoheair	1118		B663A76-C	Hi		Hierate	G
Uasiwea	1017		B8A7268-C	Fl Lo		Hierate	G
Waikhta	1420		C639267-B	Lo		Hierate	G
Wou'iwyar	1113		B9AA389-A	Fl Lo		Hierate	G

Aokylair subsector is one of two containing the Central Riftspan Cluster and thus is of great significance to the Aslan Hierate. Most of its worlds lie within the cluster or are reachable by a jump-2 ship, creating a significant volume of internal trade. Hkurlei is a major economy in the cluster; its shipyards build most of the local trade and patrol vessels, which in turn contribute to its wealth.

Although the trans-rift route does not go through Hkurlei, the world still benefits greatly from it. This is not least due to being one of only two Class A starports in the cluster and thus the primary source of starship spares and components. Vessels requiring serious maintenance or repairs during a transit typically visit one of these two ports and goods from other passing vessels are funnelled into Hkurlei's economy by its large fleet of commercial starships.

## WAIKHTA

Waikhta is a colony claimed by Hkurlei, a claim vigorously and violently contested at times. The world is remote, making a direct challenge difficult, so most attempts to gain control have been indirect. Economic or political pressure is common but sometimes a clan will engineer a dispute and attempt to inflict a defeat. Possessions and colonies can then be demanded as part of the settlement process.

This situation is not uncommon for worlds like Waikhta. Often a colony will change ownership due to events far away and nobody living there will find out about it until the new owners come to take possession. Sometimes the colonists move out, other times they must be ousted. In some cases, the former population are

Riftspan Reaches

AOKMLAIR SUBSECTOR



To Hwiwuiyo (page 94)

To Ryuhrleia (page 105)

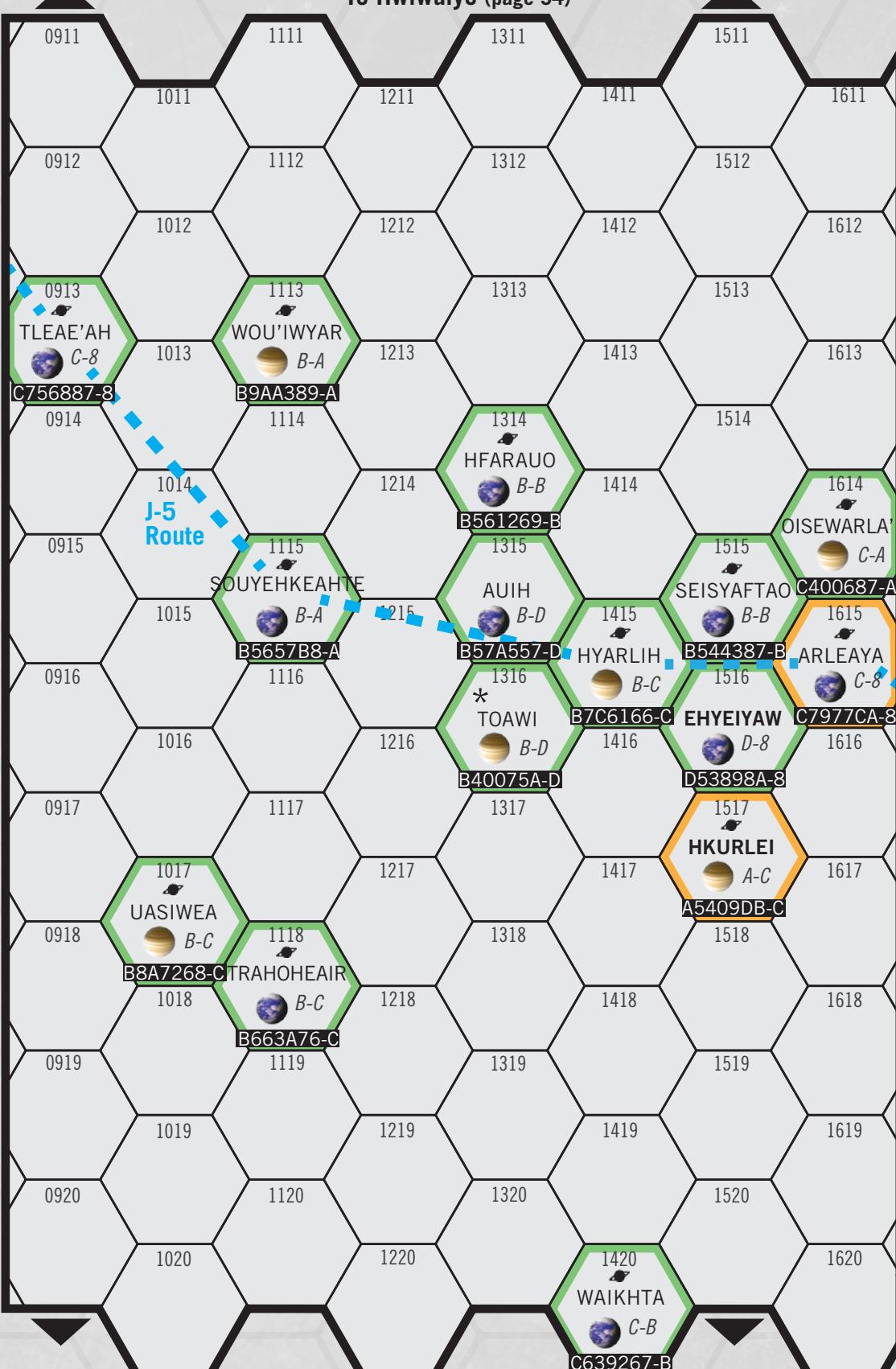
To Jikhyrleirla (page 112)

To Trawo (page 100)

Gas Giant  
B-6 Starport Class & Tech Level  
\* Clan Base

Secure System  
Amber Zone

Planet (dry)  
Planet (water present)



retained as a form of hostages, although connotations of this word are different in the Hierate. Hostages must be well treated and will often live better than their captors' own people. They will of course be denied self-determination and the ability to better themselves, a situation considered degrading by many Aslan. Indeed, most Aslan would consider it more honourable to be used as a forced labour or simply imprisoned than to be held in a gilded cage.

The population of Waikhta includes a small contingent of Aslan in this position. They are members of a failed attempt to take over the colony and have been held – in luxury and treated with the utmost respect – ever since. At some point the matter will be settled between the clans involved but until it does the hostages remain. This is awkward for the current owners of Waikhta, as they do not have the resources to support a non-productive population and, since the hostages include the heir of a clanlord, an attempt at violent rescue is as likely as a treaty rescinding the counter-claim to ownership of Waikhta.

## WOU'IWYAR

Wou'iwyar lies just outside the Central Riftspan Cluster, close enough to be reached by local jump-2 shipping. There are few reasons to visit, however, and Wou'iwyar was for many years nothing more than a landgrab colony with a few hundred Aslan dwelling in a single settlement. In recent years, the population has expanded due to an influx of scientific parties studying the world's highly unusual ecosphere. Wou'iwyar's atmosphere is largely comprised of methane, resulting in a unique aquatic ecosphere. Humans who subscribe to the usual stereotypes about Aslan tend to assume that studying the world's life means 'finding new things to kill in the seas' but in fact there is serious research ongoing. Given the dangers of operating in deep oceans filled with strange creatures, many male Aslan are proud to be part of research projects, seeing themselves as daredevil submariners or divers who protect the female scientists. At present, Wou'iwyar seems to be attracting more of this sort of male than it can use, leading to a strange situation where males will fight over the privilege of operating the latest research submarine or accompanying the most successful of scientists. Although they are not, for the most part, battling the creatures of Wou'iwyar, the Aslan of the world have nevertheless turned science into a competition.





# RYUHLEIEA

## SUBSECTOR

Name	Location	Bases	Statistics	Trade Codes	Travel Code	Allegiance	Gas Giants
Ahfatre	2219		B541499-B	Ni Po		Hierate	G
Aoki	1816	N	B888413-B	Ni		Hierate	G
Aufusyah	1716		B68326B-B	Lo		Hierate	G
Iukheaw	1715		D200575-7	Ni Va		Hierate	G
Iyakhoryeh	2419		B639675-C	Ni		Hierate	G
Ruhkei	1815		C586374-7	Lo		Hierate	
Wiyeare	1714		A576685-C	Ag Ni		Hierate	G
Youiar	1914		B5A7274-9	Fl Lo		Hierate	G

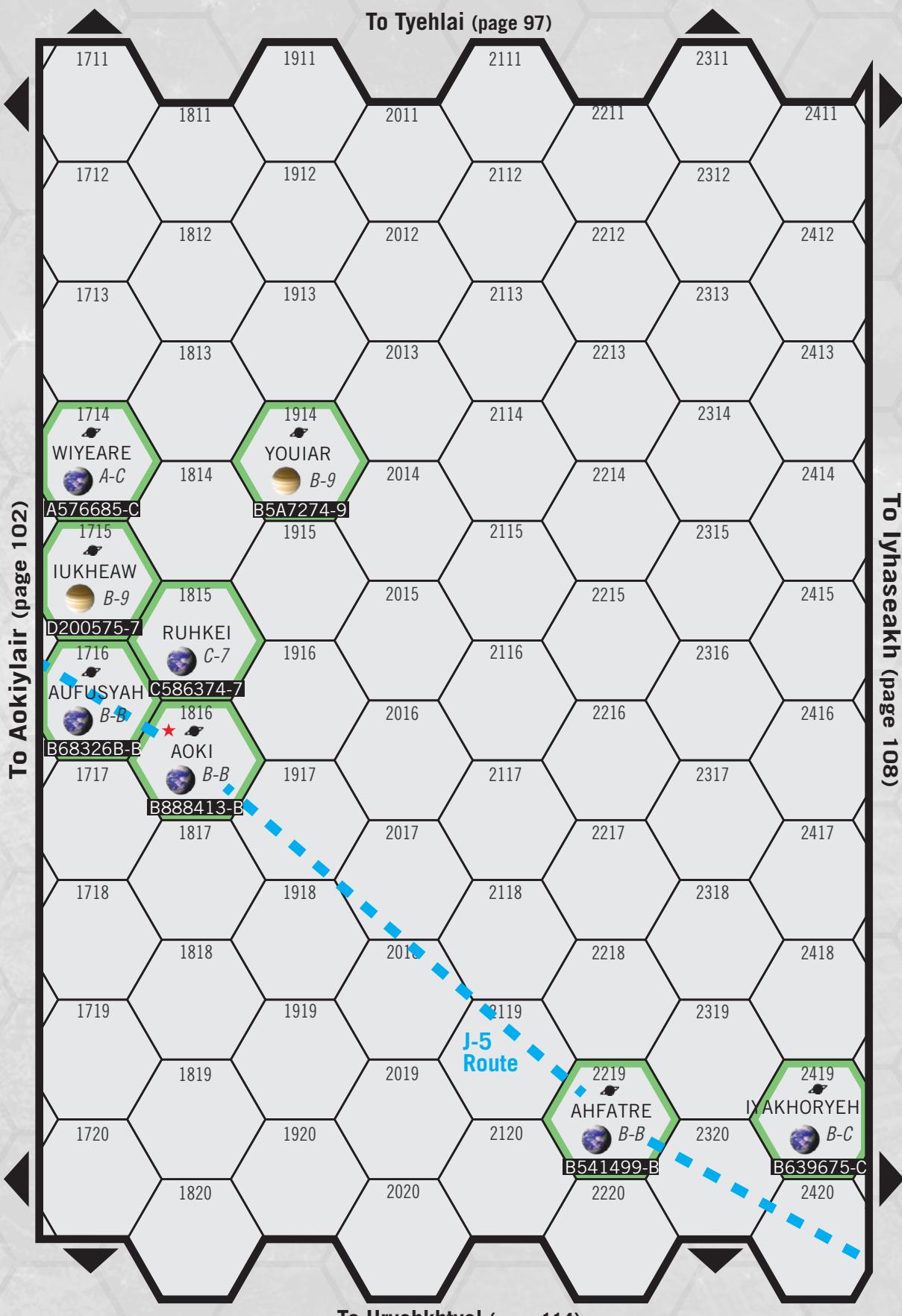
Ryuuhleia subsector contains eight Aslan-controlled star systems, six of which are part of the Central Riftspan Cluster or within a jump-2 transit of it. As the entry point to the cluster of the trans-rift route, Aoki is of special importance. Its ownership has changed hands several times either because of warfare and conquest or the shifting favour of the *Tlaukuh*'s dominant factions. Upon occasion, control of Aoki has been gifted to a clan that has then been forced to fight for possession against the current occupants. To be found 'too weak to take Aoki' is a slur on a clan's reputation or a truthful assessment, depending on the circumstances.

The *Tlaukuh* maintains a naval base on Aoki, which is nominally independent of the world's ruling clan. A joint fleet is stationed there, formed of vessels provided by various clans. At times, this fleet and its home installation works harmoniously in concert with Aoki's current ruling clan, whilst on other occasions the fleet is wracked with internal politics or on the point of hostilities with Aoki itself. There have been occasions where Aoki and its naval base have effectively besieged one another, making life difficult for passing vessels.

## YAKHORYAH

Lying just off the jump-5 trans-rift route, Iyakhoryah is less isolated than many rift systems. Parts of the mainworld have been annexed by various clans, most of them small and relatively powerless. Iyakhoryah itself is an iceball world, largely covered in frozen oceans, with a very thin atmosphere. Its resources are unspectacular but sufficient to allow industrial activity.

Iyakhoryah was unremarkable in most ways until 1089; inter-clan scuffling was commonplace but the sudden escalation of what appeared to be a minor dispute attracted widespread attention. The local Ahlaowyarl clan launched a surprise attack on the outsystem holdings of the Eirakhtya, seizing their outpost in Eyeliys, a moon of the outermost gas giant. Although this was a minor action, it resulted in a *khireahiryo* – a war of assassins. After serious casualties among the upper echelons of both clans, the war finally ended in 1092 when the commander of the Ahlaowyarl was assassinated.



Gas Giant  
Starport Class & Tech Level

Secure System  
Other Naval/Tlauku Base

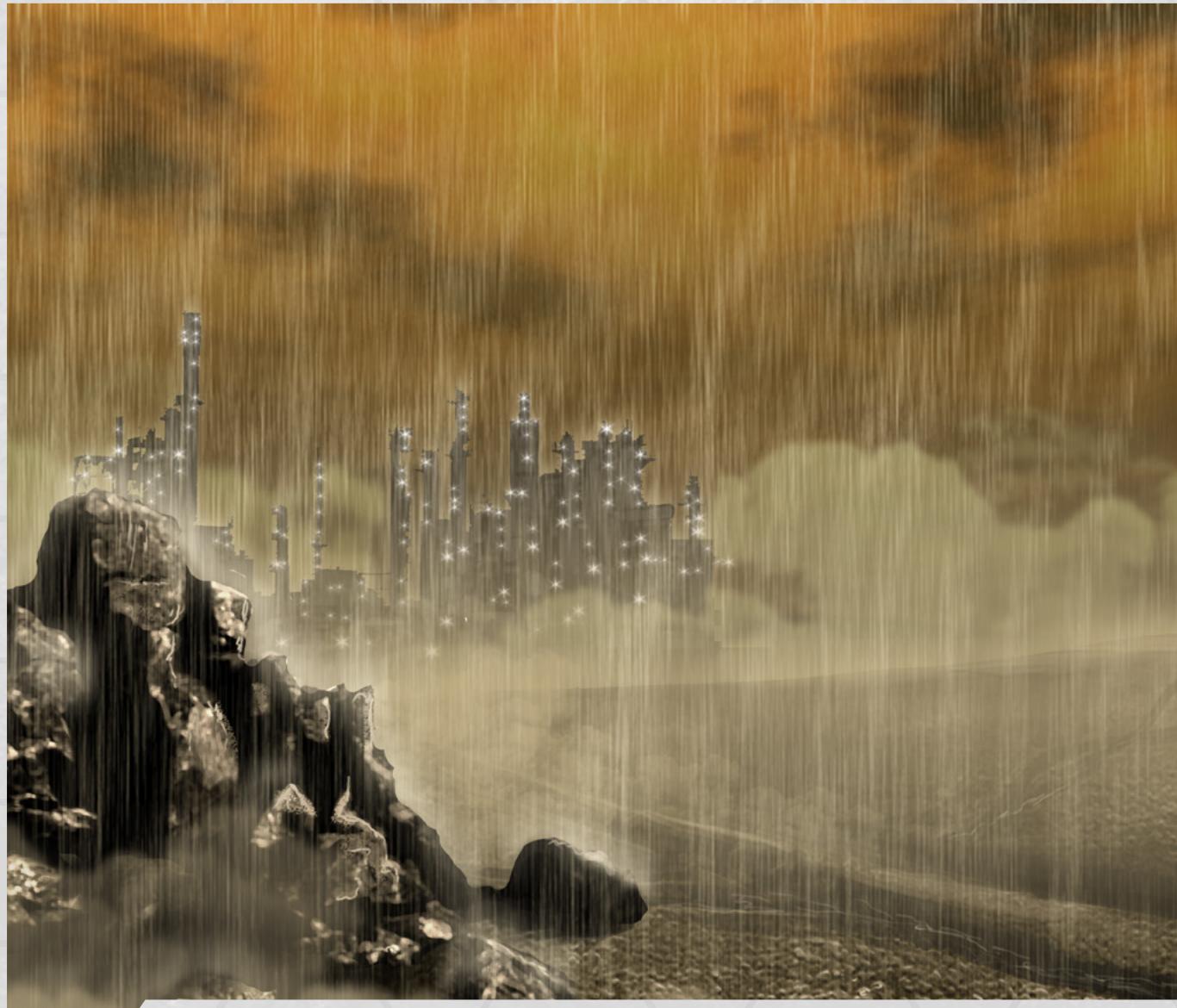
Planet (dry)  
Planet (water present)

Defeated, the Ahlaowyarl were forced to return Eyeliys to its former owners. It remains unclear why the Eirakhtya would choose to instigate a *khireahiryo* over such an unimportant outpost; casualties among clan leaders would inevitably result, so such a decision could not have been taken lightly. It is notable that since retaking Eyeliys, the Eirakhtya clan have invested heavily in its development and now maintain a sizeable settlement with strong defences.

Speculation is rife as to what was so special about this moon. The usual theories about Ancients artefacts have been trotted out but there is no indication of Ancients activity in the region. Derelict spacecraft or unusual mineral deposits have been suggested as the prize but the Eirakhtya do not seem to have grown in wealth since undertaking development of Eyeliys. If there is something valuable there, it is apparently not of a conventional wealth-generating sort.

## YOUIAR

Youiar is a toxic world with an exotic atmosphere, populated only by a small specialist population. Although it produces no industrial goods, Youiar is important to the economy of the Central Riftspan Cluster as a source of chemicals and exotic materials. Most of the extraction work is done by robotic vehicles sent down from the orbital processing and purification facility – which also serves as a starport. The planetside population are semi-permanent, consisting of specialist workers and officials sent to oversee them. Most spend a few years on-planet then move on but a few choose to settle. Apart from troubleshooting the chemical extraction process, some are engaged in a surveying operation to map the world's seabeds. The reason for interest is probably connected in to the loss of a large colony vessel in Youiar's oceans many years ago, although confirmation is unavailable.



# IYHASEAKH



SUBSECTOR

Name	Location	Bases	Statistics	Trade Codes	Travel Code	Allegiance	Gas Giants
Ahoahea	3219		A540654-A	De Ni Po			G

The Iyhaseakh subsector contains only a single inhabited star system. Lying well to Trailing of the jump-5 route, the world of Ahoahea is largely forgotten in Aslan politics. It is more closely associated with a scattering of stars in Verge sector, commonly referred to as the Dark Chasm Hook for the way they lie in a curve around the Dark Chasm subsector. The worlds of the Hook are of interest for the Third Imperium and can be transited by a jump-4 starship. Ahoahea, and Oiyiy in the Aohelroiao subsector, can be reached in this manner but are far more difficult to get to from the Aslan side. Ahoahea is thus one of the most physically and culturally isolated of all Aslan-dominated worlds.

## AHOAHEA

Ahoahea is a desert world whose thin atmosphere is tainted by radioactive dust particles. Levels of radioactivity are not high enough to pose a threat, unless ingested or inhaled, but protective equipment must be used by anyone who goes outside and decontamination procedures are second-nature to the inhabitants.

The population of around two million is composed of around 1,300,000 Aslan and 700,000 humans, who dwell together in a surprisingly well integrated society. Indeed, the human inhabitants are considered to be full members of their clans and can rise to a very high rank. This would be extremely unusual within the Hierate but the Aslan of Ahoahea are more cosmopolitan in outlook, despite (or because of) being far more isolated. Aslan from the Hierate are suspicious of the society on Ahoahea and many consider people from this world to be tainted by the 'wrong kind of thinking'.

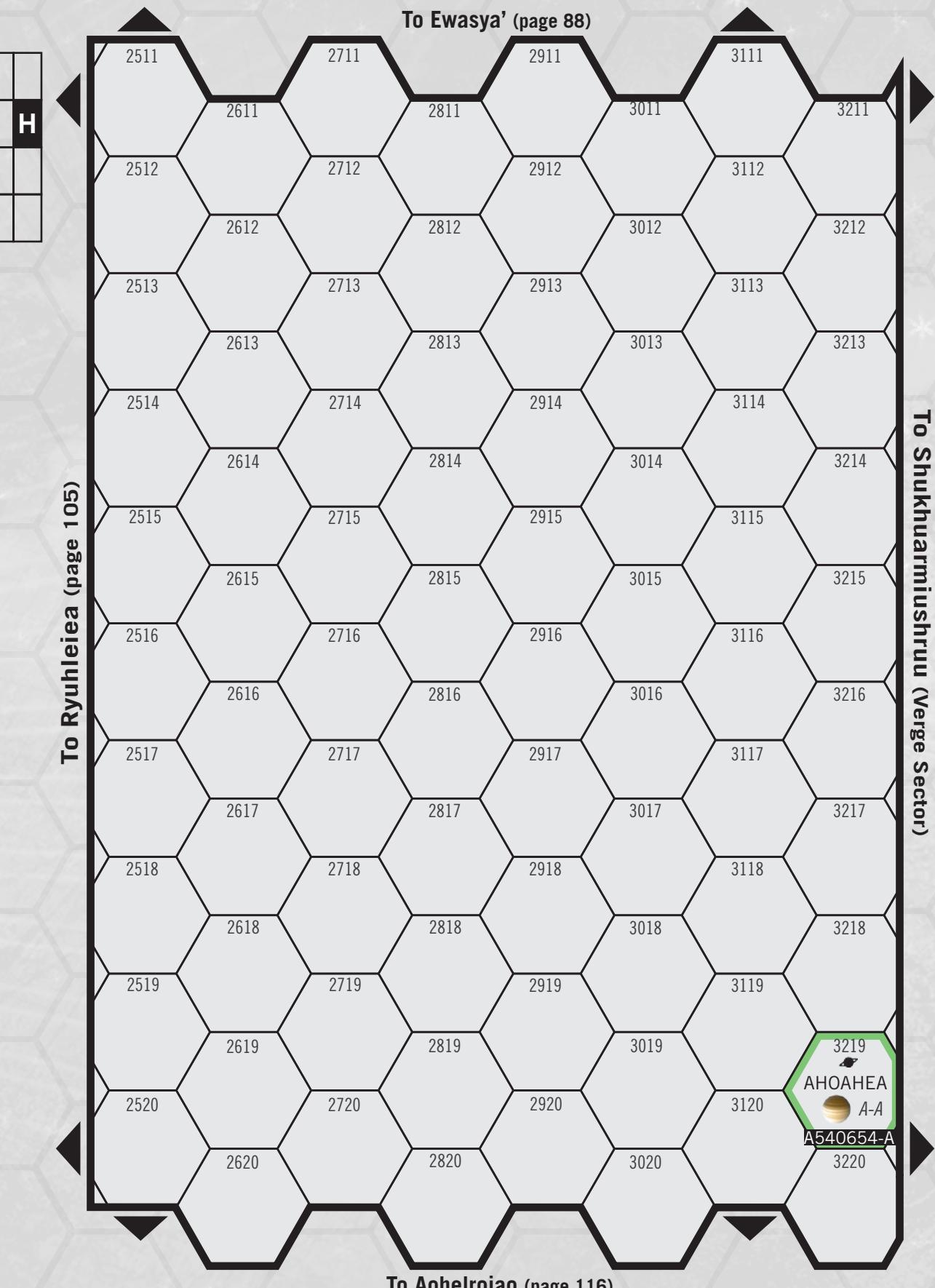
As a result, Ahoahea could be said to be drifting towards the Imperium, culturally speaking. It receives far more ships from that direction – not that this is a lot of vessels – than the Hierate. Many are standard jump-2 designs converted to carry a second jump's worth of fuel. Cargo capacities are necessarily low aboard such vessels, making Imperial goods very expensive on Ahoahea but pricey goods are better than no goods at all.

Ahoahea is the usual turnaround point for vessels making the Dark Chasm Transit, as the two-jump-2 route to and from the Imperium is well known. There are no destinations within the Dark Chasm subsector on this route but the name is evocative and has been in use for decades. The ships that make this run tend to become well-known on the worlds they visit; a new vessel is an oddity and will attract attention as do major changes to crews.

The Dark Chasm Transit is one of the few routes where the port staff at every world know the names of each crewmember who has ever made the run. In some cases, former crewmembers have settled on one of the transit worlds and raised a family whose members eventually joined another ship working the Hook. There is a real sense of almost-family on Ahoahea towards some of the ships that come through and the local population are protective towards friends who make the hazardous run.

## MHASEAKH SUBSECTOR

Riftspan Reaches



# YUHIYAH



SUBSECTOR

Name	Location	Bases	Statistics	Trade Codes	Travel Code	Allegiance	Gas Giants
Khtyeai	0124		A6455A6-B	Ag Ni		Hierate	G
Teirikh	0722	N	A54787C-C			Hierate	G
Uistihwoa	0630		A767259-E	Lo Ga		Hierate	

Yuhiyah lies at the outer edge of Aslan interests in the Great Rift. Some of the ‘behind the claw’ colonies are farther to spinward but the world of Khtyeai represents the outermost major settlement in the rift. Both this world and Teirikh have very good starports and, in addition, Teirikh supports a large naval base. The Hierate does not comment on the reason for such a heavy military presence in what is mostly a region of empty space and Imperial observers have suggested this is a very secure development facility, or perhaps a staging point for deep-space exploration.

## KHTYEAI

Khtyeai is a reasonable prospect for colonisation. With a thin, tainted atmosphere and reasonable amount of surface water, it is not the most desirable of worlds but sufficient to support an economically productive society. However, its location deep in the Great Rift meant that, for several centuries, Khtyeai was ignored in favour of more favourably positioned worlds. Eventually, colonists arrived and created a modest settlement that has grown to around a hundred thousand people.

Popular wisdom has it that ‘the Aslan got to Khtyeai but went no further’ but this is incorrect. Expeditions did push out to spinward, some of them very early in the history of Aslan trans-rift operations. Several exploration ships were lost but old tales claim explorers found new worlds and tried to settle them. Some of the stories about what they encountered are extremely far-fetched and have become the stuff of children’s rhymes rather than serious history.

In recent years, interest has been rekindled in exploration, with a handful of small-scale expeditions heading out from Khtyeai. These do not remotely justify the expense poured into expanding the world’s starport into a major installation capable of building starships,

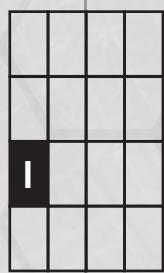
which suggests the *Tlaukhu* intend to launch a much larger-scale expedition at some point.

It may be that the recent small operations are being undertaken to gain experience of operations in the rift or to locate suitable deep space refuelling points. However, this would represent a very cautious and methodical approach, which is at odds with the daring leap-into-the-unknown style of exploration more normally associated with Aslan. Either the mission is too important to take any risks or there is something else going on at Khtyeai.



# YUHYYAH SUBSECTOR

Riftspan Reaches



To Oheaaaye'eal (Touchstone Sector, Book 2, page 34)

To jikhyreirla (page 112)

To Trawo (page 100)

To Ftyoaual (page 119)

Gas Giant  
B-6 Starport Class & Tech Level

Secure System  
Other Naval/Tlauku Base

Planet (water)

KHTYEAI  
A-B  
A6455A6-B

TEIRIKH  
A-C  
A54787C-C

UISTIHWOA  
A-E  
A767259-E



# JIKHYRLEIRLA

## SUBSECTOR

Name	Location	Bases	Statistics	Trade Codes	Travel Code	Allegiance	Gas Giants
Ouohlolr	1624		C89A576-8	Ni Wa		Hierate	G
Uikhyrleirla	1629		B400A75-C	Hi In Na Va		Hierate	G

The worlds of the Jikhyrleirla subsector can be reached by a high-jump starship by way of Hryehkhtyel subsector, although the transit is not an easy one and contact is tenuous. The spinward side of the subsector is devoid of star systems and has a lower density of rogue bodies than the rest of the rift. The reason for this is not known, although astronomers have suggested that whilst statistically unlikely, such an ultra-low object density is entirely possible and need not be considered an anomaly. Nevertheless, the region is marked on starmaps with its Aslan name: *Uiuiryehka Ftosoei* or 'the place where there has never been anything to hunt'.

### OUOHLOLR

An isolated water world, Ouohlolr was settled in a patchwork manner by several clans, all of whom failed to achieve dominance. The result was a balkanised world with enclaves claiming possession of different island groups or regions of shallow water where undersea cities could be built. The various enclaves have different characters; some have regressed to a low-mid-tech level and live in harmony with their environment whilst others have a highly technologically-dependent society, particularly the seabed cities. Ouohlolr is unusual in that its officially designated downport is underwater. It lies at a depth of about 50m, easily within the capabilities of most starships,

but visiting is an unusual experience for those not accustomed to setting down a starship on an apparently unremarkable stretch of water. Once on the seabed, operations are not so different to landing at a vacuum-world's port but in stormy weather, wave action can move ships about on the landing pad.

### UIKHYRLEIRLA

With a population of sixty billion, Uikhyrleirla is far beyond its capability to support its population and its location makes offworld assistance virtually impossible. Most of the world's tremendously overcrowded cities are built atop natural aquifers, which are now running dry. Water recycling has been in force for centuries but the needs of agriculture and industry mean there is simply not enough to go around even with every drop in constant circulation. The water crisis is sufficiently severe that wars have been fought over access to newly discovered resources and pipelines must be heavily guarded. The only factor preventing Uikhyrleirla from erupting into all-out war is the certainty of mass casualties from dehydration if critical infrastructure is damaged. No clan has reached a level of desperation where they would be willing to risk annihilation over water but that day is fast approaching. Projects to reduce the world's overpopulation or increase water availability by capturing ice asteroids have achieved very little.

# JIKHYRLEIRLA SUBSECTOR

Riftspan Reaches

J

To Yuhiiyah (page 110)

To Aokiylair (page 102)

To Hryehkhyel (page 114)

To Iohlehwia (page 122)

Gas Giant  
B-6 Starport Class & Tech Level

Secure System  
Other Naval/Tlauku Base

Planet (dry)  
Planet (water present)

OUOHLORL  
C-8  
C89A576-8

UIKHYRLEIRLA  
B-C  
B400A75-C



# HRYEHKHTYEL

## SUBSECTOR

Name	Location	Bases	Statistics	Trade Codes	Travel Code	Allegiance	Gas Giants
Atlyai	1927		E512000-0	Ba Ic		Hierate	G
Eaiyr	2427		E420216-8	De Lo Po			G
Ta'ali	2226		B43015A-9	De Lo Po			G
Uihwayu	2423		B43427A-8	Lo		Hierate	G

Hryehkhtyel subsector contains four inhabited star systems, one of which lies on the trans-rift route. The others are accessible by high-jump starship and see occasional through traffic headed spinward. The region is, not surprisingly, undeveloped. Atlyai is listed as having a Class E starport but this is not actually a port at all, being nothing more than a beacon atop a rocky crag, adjacent to a flat area of bedrock. Fuel is obtainable from ice but there is nothing that could properly be termed a port on this uninhabited rockball of a world. Many ships bypass Atlyai entirely, refuelling at the system's gas giants and moving on without visiting the mainworld.

## ATLYAI

Atlyai is a distinctly marginal world, with a trace atmosphere and little water locked up as ice caps. It is notable primarily as the site of a notorious five-way battle between clan forces during early expansion across the Great Rift and for the occasional sighting of a lone Alo'hei. It is rare to encounter these mysterious creatures but they usually congregate in small groups. This lone creature is much larger than usual and is thought to be an ancient member of its species that is looking to die. The life span of Alo'hei is not known, so this process might be measured in centuries or millennia. Another theory holds that this is a rogue male that may someday return to a group to seek a mate. Of course, it could simply be lost. Rumours claim this Alo'hei is prone to violence and has attacked starships in the past. However, these tales are generally spread by those expressing an interest in hunting it, so there may be an element of exaggerating the prey (as if it needed that!) before an expedition.

## EAIYR

Eaiyr officially has a population of around 200, although this is essentially a best guess as to how many Aslan are on-planet at any given time. The world is claimed

by various clans and several have sent parties to explore it or create a community to form the basis of a stronger territorial claim. The situation remains nebulous, and de facto ownership of the entire world can change overnight with the arrival of a dozen reinforcements.

Eaiyr is a desert planet whose atmosphere is too thin to breathe unaided but, despite the harshness of conditions, the world has some primitive life. This is mainly single-celled organisms found in small amounts of water underground. Water-bearing rocks are the key to successful settlement, so most exploration parties are engaged in painstaking searches beneath the dust of the surface. This is not glamorous work and poorly suited to the mindset of the typical young male Aslan. Duty to the clan and an understanding that there is a world to be claimed will only go so far; the Aslan on Eaiyr are bored, restless and frustrated.

The result is that exploration parties are even more prone to internal fallings-out, and clashes with other groups, than usual. It is common for Aslan males assigned to explore Eaiyr to grossly exaggerate the value of the world to make it worth fighting over, just so they will have an excuse to ambush another equally frustrated survey party. Arising from these justifications are increasingly inventive tales of major resource sites, large artesian basins full of water to support a major settlement and even stories of Ancients relics and exotic finds.

It is possible that some tales are taken a little too seriously elsewhere. Additional personnel have begun arriving on-planet and these tend to be well-armed warriors rather than explorers and surveyors. An arms race is in progress, resulting in alliances forming among those who cannot afford to send more troops but do not wish to be strong-armed by those who can. Amidst this martial activity, exploration work has all but ceased, leaving Eaiyr as marginally useful as before.

K

Riftspan Reaches

HRYEEL-KHYTEL SUBSECTOR

To Ryuhtleia (page 105)

To Aohelroiao (page 116)

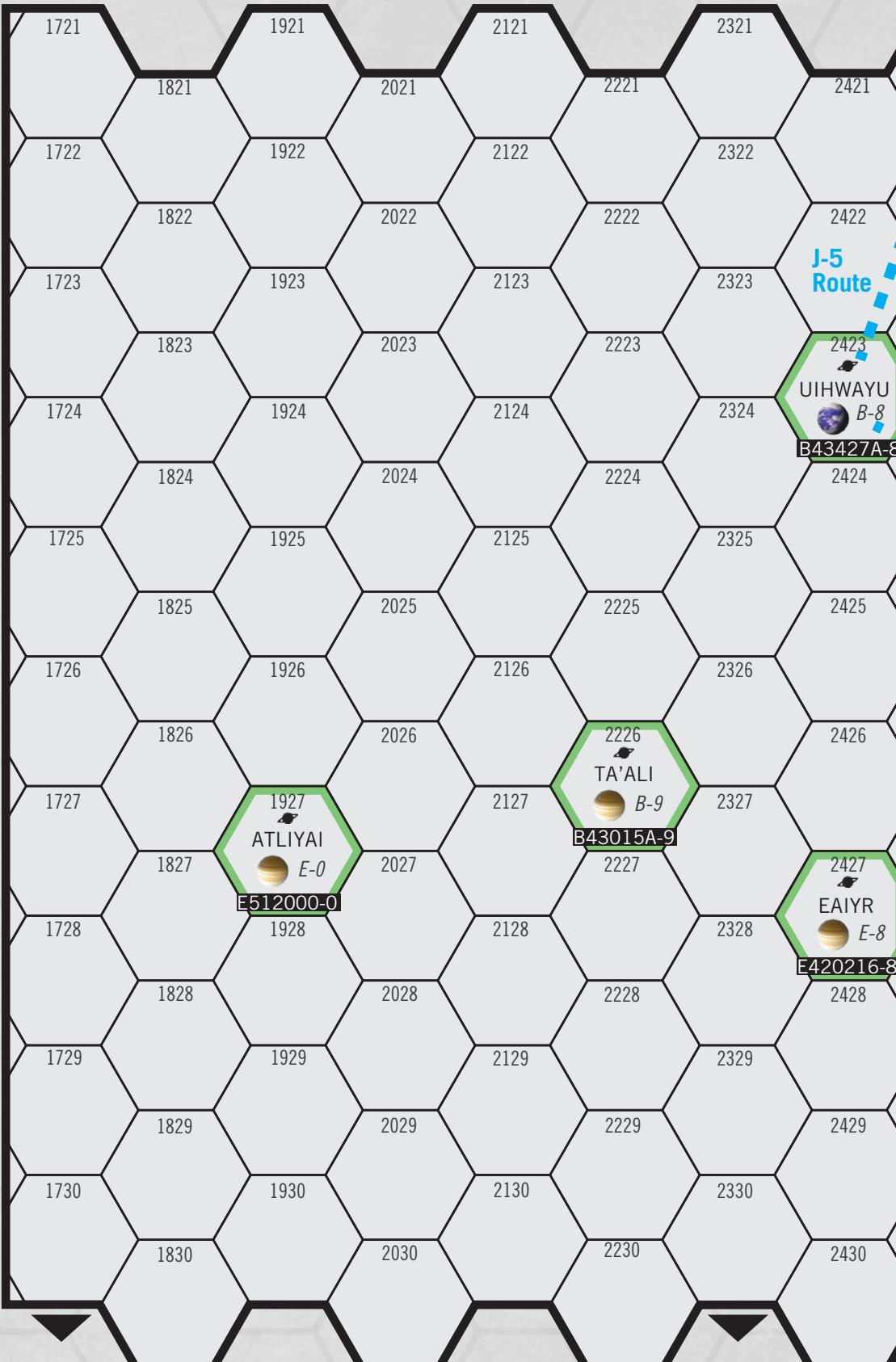
To Jikhyleirla (page 112)

To Tuistao (page 124)

Gas Giant  
B-6 Starport Class & Tech Level

Secure System

Planet (dry)  
Planet (water present)



# AOHELROIAO



SUBSECTOR

Name	Location	Bases	Statistics	Trade Codes	Travel Code	Allegiance	Gas Giants
Esui	2729		B200456-E	Ni Va		Hierate	G
Hluarelai	3030		B561387-9	Lo			G
Oyoiy	3121		B69855A-A	Ag Ni			
Stairearlehfa	2521		C422A79-9	Hi In Na Po			G
Uiryoyahoh	2726		B420697-C	De Na Ni Po			G

Despite containing very few star systems, the Aohelroiao subsector is of great significance as the first segment of the jump-5 route across the Great Rift. Whilst trans-rift traffic is not as vital to the economic well-being of the Hierate as Corridor is to the Imperium, a break in the route could have long-term consequences. The politics of these worlds and the inter-clan disputes that affect them are thus of concern to many clans, making holdings in this subsector something of a mixed blessing.

The exception is the world of Oyoiy, located far to coreward-trailing of the trans-rift route. Oyoiy is more accessible from human-controlled star systems than the Hierate and is unimportant in Aslan affairs. Indeed, most of its trade is with Attus and Tremfara, both human systems in Verge sector. The trade route is by way of three jump-2 transits to well-established refuelling points. One of these is a small installation on a rogue planetoid; the other custom built out of components hauled out from Oyoiy. Some human ships use the route, with permission, but most of the deep-void traders making the run are Aslan.

The scattering of Imperial worlds to trailing in Verge sector is considered as a route for possible threat when tensions increase with the Imperium, although prevailing opinion is that it would simply be too difficult for the Imperium to support large-scale naval operations in this way, while any smaller operation, such as a raid on the trans-rift traffic, would be easy to counter with the much greater forces available from the Hierate heartlands. Nevertheless, a wary

eye is kept out to trailing, with specialist vessels scanning deep space for signs that a refuelling depot might be under construction. Every now and then, a dominant faction in the Tlaukuhi decides this is unnecessary paranoia and the ships are re-tasked but after a few months or years they return to their lonely duty.

## HLUARELAI

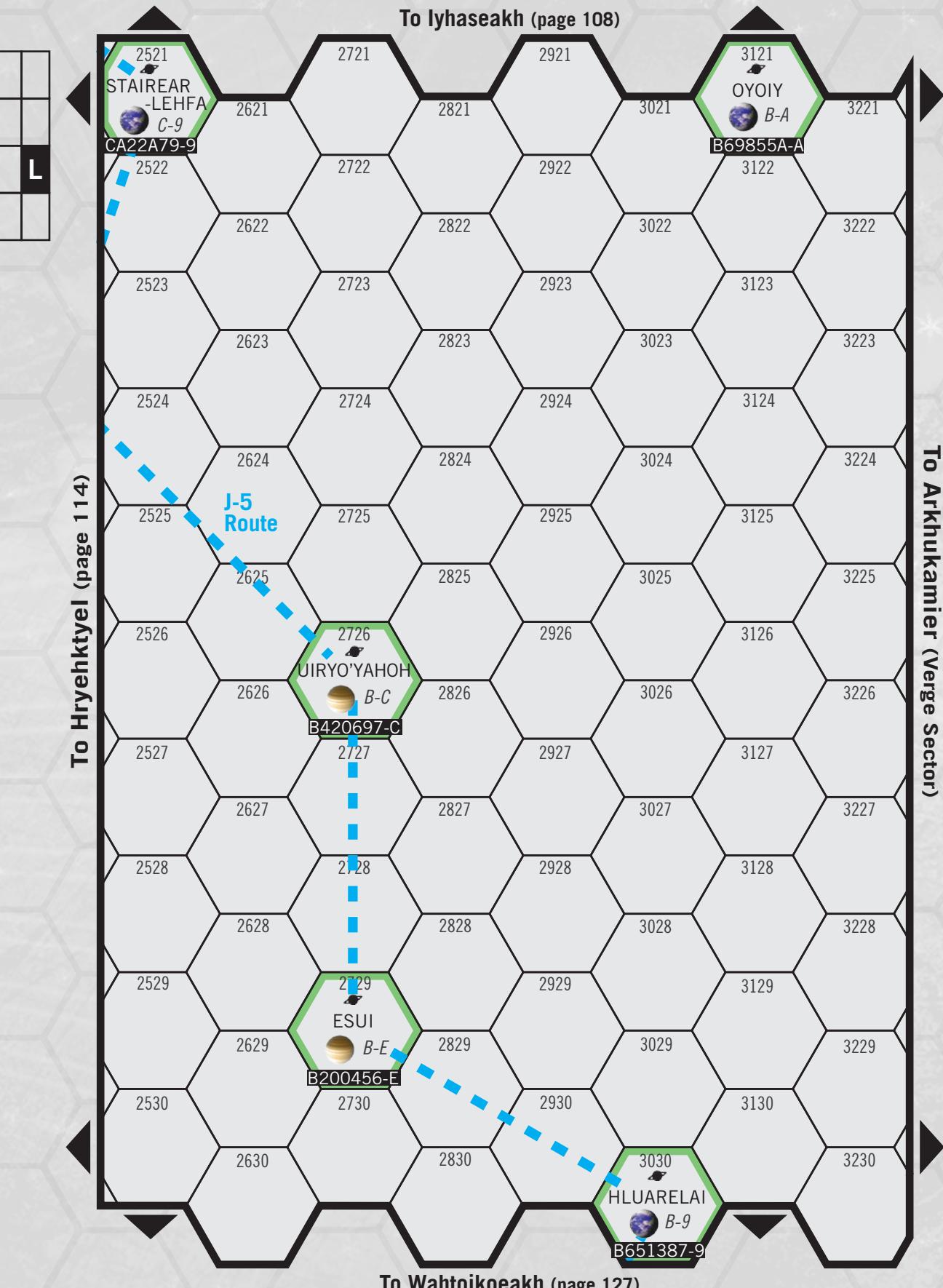
Hluarelai is a dry but habitable world that has never been extensively colonised despite being an important link on the trans-Rift route. The main reason for this is that the system itself was settled, rather than the mainworld. The extensive starport orbits Hluarelai itself, whose modest population mainly work in food production and related industries. There are several large cities on gas giant moons and other worlds in the system, many of which outnumber the mainworld population. Most manufacturing is close to its primary source of raw materials, with the port acting as hub and governmental centre, so the significance of the mainworld is limited – Hluarelai is very much a system economy rather than a heavily populated planet with minor outposts.

## OYOY

As with nearby Ahoahea, Oyoiy is isolated from the Aslan Hierate by more than mere distance. It is inaccessible from Aslan space without great effort, whilst human ships can reach the system from the Imperial side. As a result,

## AOHIELROIAO SUBSECTOR

Riftspan Reaches



the population is a mix of Aslan and humans, which has produced a hybrid culture not dissimilar to that of Ahoahea. Erosion of the traditional gender-based division of tasks is viewed with great suspicion in the Hierate, especially when combined with non-Aslans holding high rank, and a ship from the Hierate encountering a system defence vessel commanded by a human female but crewed by Aslan might be tempted to simply turn around and head for home.

Integration of humans and Aslan has created rifts within the society of Oyoiy, although not necessarily along racial lines. Both human and Aslan mindsets have been adopted by the population, with some humans pressing for a more traditional-Aslan culture and some Aslan eagerly adopting the customs of the Third Imperium. Most friction is minor but disagreements have boiled over into violence and there are the beginnings of hardcore cultural movements appearing in some settlements.

There is a voracious appetite for luxury items on Oyoiy, notably items connected with Imperial or Hierate culture. Exactly what is popular is not always predictable – occasionally someone gets hold of an old vid entertainment series and decides they need to adopt the look of the characters, or a traditional Aslan sculpture will suddenly become immensely desirable for obscure reasons. If appropriate items cannot be bought from a passing ship, which is usually the case, local copies begin to appear. These are typically not well made but still avidly sought by those caught up in the cultural mania.

As a result, sometimes a ship arrives to find everyone – human and Aslan alike – dressed in Imperial fashions 30 years out of date or offered a large quantity of ‘traditional style cultural artefacts’ of very low quality, which have come to the end of their popularity. Unwary outsiders may also be convinced to adjudicate whose replica of a Vanix 220 ground car is the most authentic and then escape the resulting brawl.





# FTYOUIAL

SUBSECTOR

Name	Location	Bases	Statistics	Trade Codes	Travel Code	Allegiance	Gas Giants
Aletoli	0339	N	B984487-9	Ni		Hirate	
Aouakh	0133		E000349-7	As Lo Va		Hirate	
Uaka	0236		E673795-6			Hirate	G

The Ftyoauial subsector contains only a handful of worlds, collectively known as '*Uiylroi'eaei yaae yesterl hkyowoheahihail fi oih*' or 'False Trail in the Dark Wilderness'. Early explorers attempting to forge a path across the Great Rift pushed through these systems, at great cost according to the ancient tales of their exploits, only to find the path onward was too difficult.

Tales exist of a 'great bridge of ships' built outward from Aouakh, enabling the Aslan to reach a world that seemed promising as a mid-rift stopover but that turned out to be a subtle and enticing deathtrap. There are no reliable records of what happened to these explorers, nor whether their demise resulted from accident, natural difficulties or enemy action. What is known is that movement spinward-coreward from Ftyoauial was forbidden by most clans. Those who tried were impeded or even prevented by force.

## AOUAKH

A sparse system containing only two small rockball planets in addition to its asteroid belt 'mainworld', Aouakh is notable as being the Aslan-controlled system closest to Phobetor. Officially, Aouakh is controlled by a single-world clan but in practice this 'clan' is an administrative concept only. Most of the system's population are exiles either sent to Aouakh or granted sanctuary there. Some are serving a set period of exile before being permitted to return to their clan, whilst others are true outcasts. There is significant friction between various factions that have emerged among

the population, with a small contingent of personnel at the starport charged with keeping order on behalf of the *Tlaukuh*. Fights and even murders are generally ignored so long as they take place among the exile population; the main role of the security contingent is to ensure those exiled to Aouakh remain there and do not sneak aboard one of the few starships that visit. Not coincidentally, weapons and technology capable of being used as a stepping-stone to interstellar flight are both forbidden to exiles, although a few in-system vessels are used for mining necessary materials.

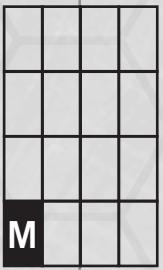
## UAKA

Uaka could not be described as a garden world but is habitable enough despite a tainted atmosphere and relative dryness. It is owned by the Ehaaiwyairl clan, which was awarded the world for its loyalty and ferocity in service to the clans of the *Tlaukuh* – at least according to the Ehaaiwyairl themselves. Other versions of the story suggest the Ehaaiwyairl were sent to Uaka as a punishment for failure or disloyalty, or because they were expendable. It is not wise to repeat these tales on Uaka, nor to ask about the truth.

The reality is that the Aslan reached the Phobetor system, far to spinward of Aouakh, and what they found there frightened them greatly. The naval base at Aletoli is maintained largely to control traffic headed spinward-coreward and – according to some, at least – defend against some threat that might one day come from that direction.

## Riftspan Reaches

## FTYOAUJAL SUBSECTOR

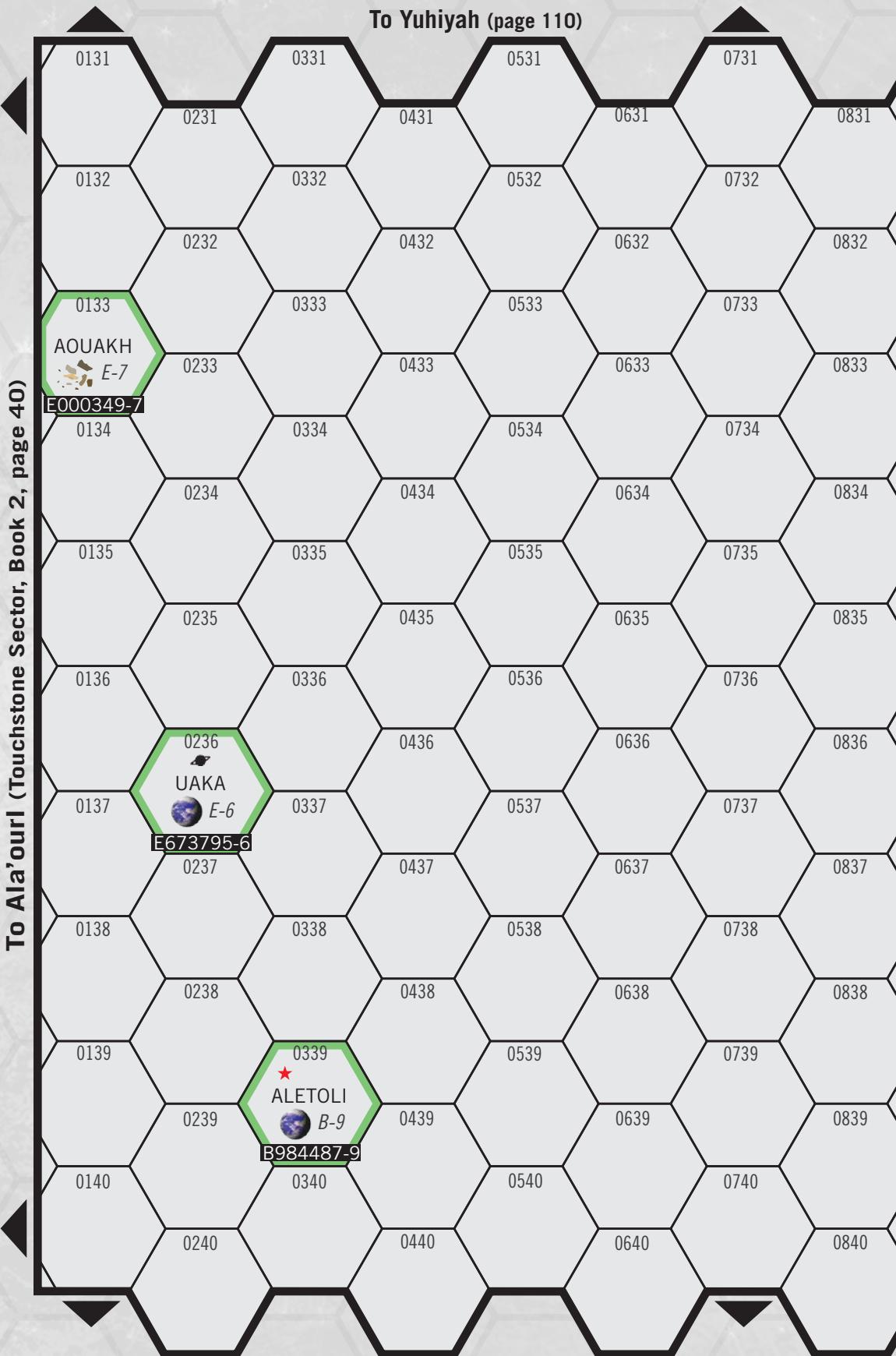


To Ioihlehwa (page 122)

To Al'aourl (Touchstone Sector, Book 2, page 40)

To Yuhiyah (page 110)

To Oheerl (Hlakhoi Sector)



Gas Giant

B-6 Starport Class & Tech Level

Other Naval/Tlauku Base

Secure System

Asteroids

Planet (dry)

Planet (water present)

Aouakh and Uaka were declared off-limits by the *Tlaukuh* but Aslan being what they are it was inevitable they would be settled sooner or later. The answer was to settle clans on these worlds with the task of holding them and preventing others from making a landgrab. As a secondary function, these worlds could act as a tripwire in case a threat arose from Phobetor.

It is an open secret within the Hierate that the Ehaaiwyairl were settled on Uaka because they were expendable and too powerless to oppose orders to move there. Since arriving, the clan has grown enormously in numbers but has stagnated economically and could not maintain its technology without outside assistance. After years of decline, society has stabilised as a mature mid-tech culture. With no spacefaring capability, the Ehaaiwyairl are reliant on ships from Aletoli.

Life is not bad for the clan's members. About half the population dwell in a belt of small cities, with the remainder scattered around the globe in much smaller settlements. The inhabitants of these towns and villages have access to wide expanses of land and can push outwards to seize new areas as desired. Uaka has a lot of land for a population of ninety million and if most of it is harsh semi-desert that will kill the weak or unwary, so much the better!

The Ehaaiwyairl clan has reverted to a very traditional lifestyle, much like that of the Aslan before becoming a starfaring power. They are, for the most part, content to spread over their challenging world and tell tales of how they were granted this paradise for their service to the *Tlaukuh*. Events in the rest of the Hierate, or the outside universe in general, do not greatly trouble them.





# IOIHLEAWA

## SUBSECTOR

Name	Location	Bases	Statistics	Trade Codes	Travel Code	Allegiance	Gas Giants
Ftuaktaol	1037		D597488-7	Ni		Hierate	G
Ityerleira	1638	ACS	BAF7756-C			Hierate	G

Lying just to coreward of the Hierate border, the Ioihleawa subsector contains one world within the Hierate and one in the Great Rift. Ftuaktaol is an isolated ‘landgrab’ world with a small population, settled mainly for the purposes of maintaining a territorial claim.

### FTUAKTAOL

Despite its tainted atmosphere, Ftuaktaol is a habitable world. Its remote location makes large-scale colonisation problematic but the population continues to grow naturally. Settlements are scattered; in many cases an extended family group will claim hundreds of square kilometres of territory and face few challenges from other Aslan. Many Aslan males follow the traditional practice of judging their status by how much land they control – regardless of its economic value – and by this standard the Aslan of Ftuaktaol are fabulously wealthy. Theirs is not an easy existence, however. The world has numerous aggressive predators and a range of environmental hazards, notably extremely destructive hurricanes that sweep in from the extensive seas. There are rumours that somewhere on Ftuaktaol lie ruins dating from the Ancients or even before and some evidence of a previous civilisation has been presented at offworld universities. The local population discourage attempts to investigate, as might be expected. The last thing they want is their wilderness paradise spoiled by an influx of Ancients-seekers.

### ITYERLEIRA

Ityerleira is an ‘outlier’ world, located on the very fringe of the Great Rift, two parsecs from the nearest star system. It is a large, dense world with abundant natural resources, including enormous quantities of iron and copper, as well as gold, silver and platinum. The result is that Ityerleira has an unusually high surface gravity, even for a large world, and its rapid rotation has produced pronounced bulges at the equator.

The atmosphere is very dense, sufficiently so that it is unbreathable at sea level, even at the equator. Most of the population dwells in pressure-sealed cities in the lowlands but the elite live high in the equatorial mountains. Numbers are strictly limited in these settlements, ensuring plenty of space for the upper echelons of society to enjoy the outdoors.

Conditions in the lowland cities are nothing like so comfortable. They are essentially oversized mining camps and industrial facilities, overcrowded and functional to the exclusion of all else. Despite this, the population are generally content with their lot. Promising young Aslan are given the chance to join the elite as guards, functionaries or even junior leaders, and those who work hard are sometimes permitted to retire into high-altitude settlements.

Ityerleira is an industrial powerhouse, feeding vast quantities of vehicles, tools, weapons and other heavy-industry produce into the local economy. Most of the wealth generated goes off-planet, to the owning clans, but there is sufficient left over to allow the elite to live as princes and the masses to dream of joining them.

# IOHLEAWA SUBSECTOR

Riftspan Reaches

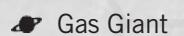
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To Ftyoauial (page 119)

To Jikhyrleirla (page 112)

To Tuistao (page 124)

To Sehea (Hlakhoi Sector)

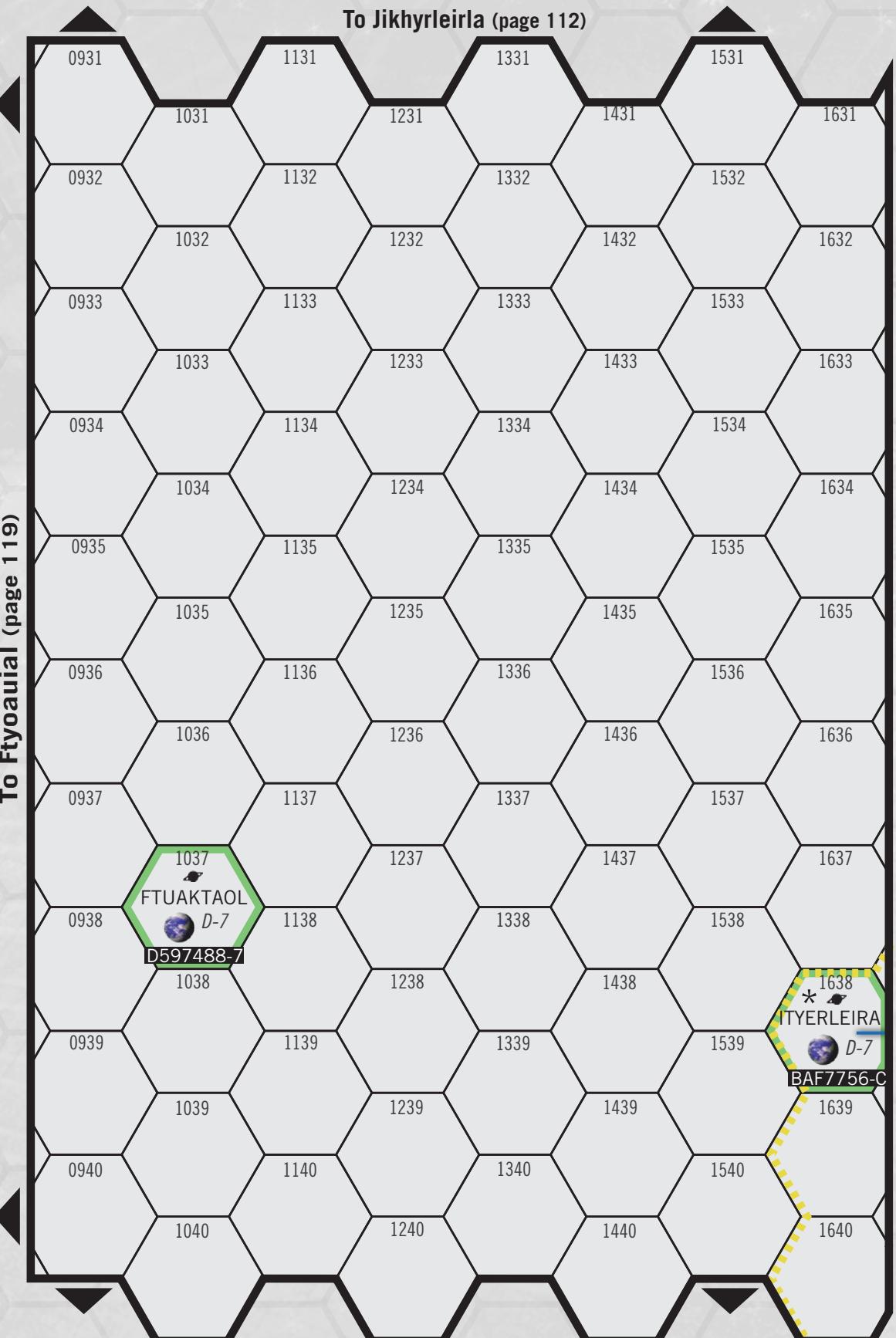


B-6 Starport Class & Tech Level  
\* Clan Base



Planet (water present)  
Trade Route

Secure System  
Aslan Hierate Border



# TUISTAO



SUBSECTOR

Name	Location	Bases	Statistics	Trade Codes	Travel Code	Allegiance	Gas Giants
Earawalr	1840		B43047A-9	De Ni Po		Hierate	G
Feoael	2440		A9A8453-E	Fl Ni		Hierate	G
Hfeae'yo	1937		B549833-B			Hierate	G
Htoisofea	2137		D565656-7	Ag Ni Ri		Hierate	G
Khoiriyl	1837		E615559-7	Ic Ni		Hierate	G
Ktelrahe	1731		A649268-E	Lo		Hierate	G
Oiharael	2439		C544646-8	Ag Ni		Hierate	G
Oououua	1839		D87498A-7	Hi In		Hierate	G
Resoi	2239		C5899CA-A	Hi	A	Hierate	G
Staoiya	2437		A796438-B	Ni	A	Hierate	
Stiyseakhih	2139	ACS	B67697C-B	Hi In		Hierate	
Stiyteatiru	2238		C9A5977-B	Fl Hi In		Hierate	G
Tarealao	1838		B564944-B	Hi		Hierate	G

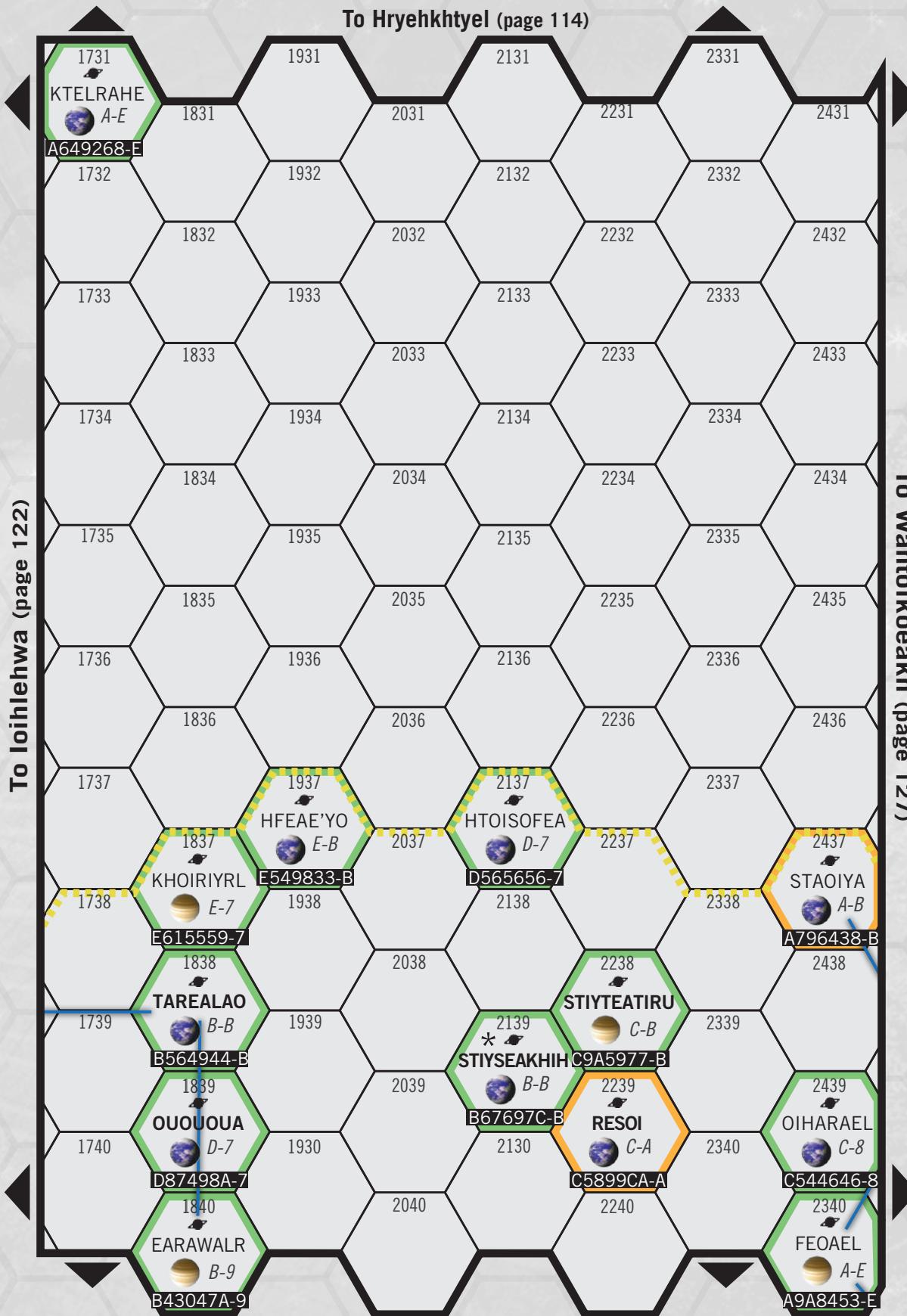
The Tuistao subsector contains only one ‘rift world’, as its other star systems are within the borders of the Aslan Hierate and easily accessible from it. Ktelrahe can most easily be accessed by way of Esui on the jump-5 route, followed by a long reach through several rift systems; it is extremely isolated as a result. Ktelrahe has an excellent starport – at least according to the official starcharts – but virtually no planetary population. This is largely a result of joint ownership by several clans based on Uikhylreirla. As is the way of multi-clan endeavours, initial progress was good but cooperation soon disintegrated, leaving the development project in shambles.

The starport at Ktelrahe is not quite as impressive as its official listing claims. Most of the key components of a Class A installation are present but the orbital station itself is little more than a framework connecting them. Access between some parts of the port requires a shuttle transit, making movement of personnel and equipment a slow process, holding up construction even further and causing frustrations to boil over into a near-collapse of the joint project. The main barrier to colonisation of Ktelrahe is the fact that whichever clan lands settlers first is likely to be attacked by all the others involved in the project. Meanwhile, the handful of personnel on-planet are forced to make do with inadequate equipment and supplies whilst they wait for the situation to resolve itself.

## TUISTAO SUBSECTOR

Riftspan Reaches

O



Gas Giant

B-6 Starport Class & Tech Level

\* Clan Base

Secure System

Amber Zone

Aslan Hierate Border

Planet (dry)

Planet (water present)

Trade Route

## RESOI

Resoi is a small and dense world, with a great abundance of heavy elements that makes it a valuable source of raw materials, although extracting them is something of a problem since a little over 90% of the world's surface is covered in very deep oceans. Even on land, air pressure increases rapidly in deep mines, requiring specialist equipment. The world's ruling clan was appointed to ownership by the *Tlaukuh* but has since fallen into disfavour and risks losing control of the world. To demonstrate the clan's value, extraction has moved to very large open-cast mines, which produce large quantities of minerals at the price of being extremely dangerous in a high-pressure environment. For now, the ability to rip materials out of the ground to feed hungry industries on nearby worlds has secured the clan's possession of Resoi, yet it would not take much to cause a disaster.

## STAOIYA

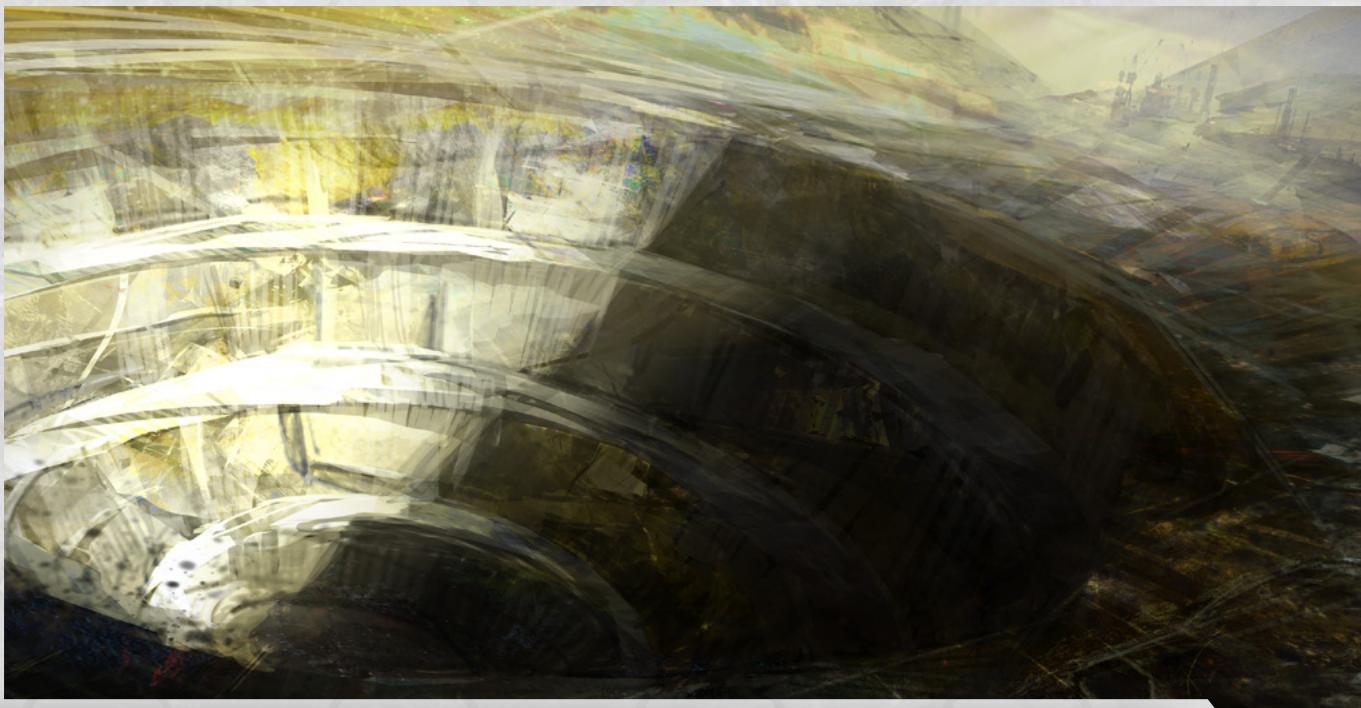
Staoiya is a disputed system that has recently changed hands several times, usually after bitter ground fighting, and there are remnants of several clans' forces fighting a guerrilla campaign against the current occupiers and each other. Staoiya is a hazardous place to visit, although the orbital port is safe enough for outsiders so long as they are not suspected of supporting any of the warring clans.

By mutual agreement, the highport is off-limits for military action, although assassins may still be employed. Those uninvolved in the conflict can go about their business – and spend their money, which is

what the agreement is all about – without fear of being dragged into a gunfight. That is the theory; the reality is that all new arrivals are observed – openly and more subtly – by the clans. Anyone who seems willing and able to assist is approached. Those who look likely to help a rival are discouraged. This is usually a warning in words or deeds but sometimes an assassination attempt is launched immediately to pre-empt an alliance being established.

Although it has a tainted atmosphere, Staoiya is a potential breadbasket for surrounding worlds and several clans are keen to gain control of its resources. It also has potential as a hunting and leisure preserve, with a diverse ecosystem including several species of worthy prey for hunters. Even amid the present chaos, expeditions continue to land from time-to-time, typically launched by those powerful enough to be immune to attack – or who wish to portray themselves as true hunters. Some are acts of bravado by young males, keen to demonstrate their worth by going hunting in the middle of a war zone.

It can be hard to tell hunters from warriors in this environment and mistakes have been made. Of course, not all mistakes were genuine; an apparently accidental clash between a band of guerrillas and a hunting party provides an opportunity to eliminate a powerful Aslan leader or his heir. Similarly, not all hunting parties are uninvolved in the conflict. If a safari just happens to collide with forces of a rival clan who treacherously open fire on obvious non-combatants... the outcome is unfortunate but hardly the fault of the noble who was on-planet just hunting for trophies.





# WAHTOIKOEAKH

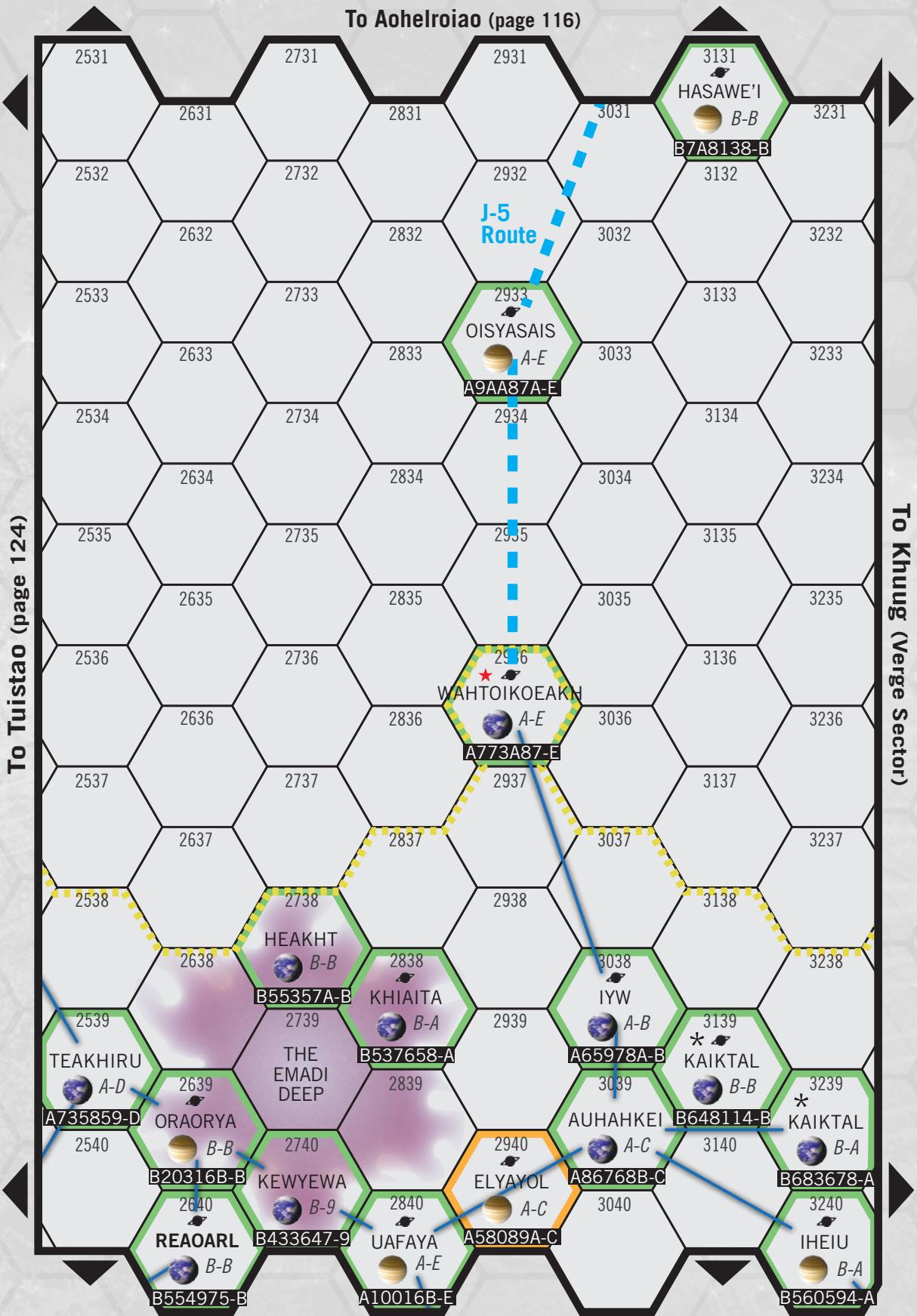
SUBSECTOR

Name	Location	Bases	Statistics	Trade Codes	Travel Code	Allegiance	Gas Giants
Auhahkei	3039		A86768B-C	Ag Ga Ni Ri		Hierate	G
Elyayol	2940		A58089A-C	De Ri	A	Hierate	G
Hasawe'i	3131		B7A8138-B	Fl Lo		Hierate	G
Heakht	2738		B55357A-B	Ni Po		Hierate	
Iheiu	3240		B560594-A	De Ni		Hierate	G
Ihlahyohao	3239	ACS	B683678-A	Ni Ri		Hierate	
Iyw	3038		A65978A-B			Hierate	G
Kaiktal	3139	ACS	B648114-B	Lo		Hierate	G
Kewyewa	2740		B433647-9	Na Ni Po		Hierate	
Khiaita	2836		B537658-A	Ni		Hierate	G
Oisyasais	2932		A9AA87A-E	Fl		Hierate	G
Oraorya	2639		B20316B-B	Ic Lo Va		Hierate	G
Reaoarl	2640		B554975-B	Hi		Hierate	
Teakhiru	2539		A735859-D			Hierate	
Uafaya	2840		A10016B-E	Lo Va		Hierate	G
Wahtoikoeakh	2935	N	A773A87-E	Hi In		Hierate	G

As the entry point to the trans-rift route, Wahtoikoeakh is of great strategic importance to the Aslan Hierate. The worlds at the rimward end of the subsector are well-developed and have good trade connections to the rest of the Hierate, with all vessels heading coreward into the Great Rift going through Wahtoikoeakh. A naval base is maintained there, more for enforcement than defensive purposes.

Vessels making the trans-rift run are inspected before they leave and upon arrival, ostensibly for reasons of safety but in truth more to control the flow of contraband and people across the rift. Wahtoikoeakh is a common destination for exiles seeking to escape

the Hierate, who the *Tlaukuh* may or may not wish to stop. Much depends upon the individual and the nature of his crime – some exiles are permitted to leave, others brought back to face retribution. Similarly, the attitude to contraband goods can vary considerably depending upon which clans are in favour with the *Tlaukuh*. Sometimes the entire trans-rift route is closed to specific clans, usually on an invented pretext. This can prevent the flow of information and derail long-term plans but is a risky strategy if taken too far. Thus, the port at Wahtoikoeakh is a pawn in the endless game of Aslan politics, whose value depends upon other, often unpredictable, factors.



Gas Giant

B-6 Starport Class & Tech Level

\* Clan Base

★ Other Naval/Tlauku Base

To Eakhteulei (Hlakhoi Sector)

Secure System

Amber Zone

Aslan Hierate Border

Planet (dry)

Planet (water present)

Trade Route

## HASWE'I

Haswe'i has little value as a world and its tiny population is nothing more than a scientific outpost maintained for the purposes of a territorial claim. Its starport, on the other hand, is far more significant, a large installation with well-equipped construction yards. These turn out a mix of military and non-military spacecraft, including system defence boats and in-system transports, most of which are taken to other worlds for sale to a variety of end clients or put into service by the clan. A significant amount of tonnage is added each year to the in-system asteroid mining fleet that provides most of the yards' raw materials and the flotillas that defend it.

The ostensible reason for all this activity is the availability of heavy metals and other important resources in the system's planetoid belts, although the location of the system makes this somewhat implausible. There are other places a spacecraft construction facility and its associated mining and industrial supports could have been built, all of them more convenient for the end market and thus economically more viable. The contention that remoteness makes the site very secure only holds so much water.

In truth, the port at Haswe'i was set up as a competitor for Hluarelai and a proportion of vessels making the trans-rift crossing now use Haswe'i rather

than the traditional route. For some this is a political decision, for others the choice is based on simple economic competition. Like all other decisions in the Hierate, the choice to create a competing port was a controversial one that caused inter-clan friction. There have been attempts to disrupt shipping through both ports, each in the hope of driving vessel operators to the other. Thus far, the effect has been minimal but the situation is escalating.

## OISYASAIS

Oisyasais is vitally important as the first (or last) link on the trans-rift route and is famous in Aslan history as the jumping-off point for the early crossings. As such, this otherwise unremarkable water world has a mystique that makes it a desired possession for all clans in the Hierate. Currently, the mainworld is divided into the territory of several clans, each with its own downport. The rest of the system is home to numerous outposts, settlements, and a few large cities built on planetoids, gas giant moons and rocky planets. Most belong to clans who could not get a foothold on the mainworld but wanted a piece of the famous Oisyasais system. With so many clans represented in one system, a certain amount of friction is only to be expected but the *Tlaukhu* will not tolerate disruption of the trans-rift link. All clans know this and restrict their activities to antagonism and the occasional assassination.

