

# TRAVELLER

MERCENARY BOOK 2: RUNNING A MERCENARY FORCE



SCIENCE FICTION ADVENTURE IN THE FAR FUTURE

# TRAVELLER

BOOK 2: RUNNING A MERCENARY FORCE

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# INTRODUCTION

The mercenary trade is a business field like any other. Detractors claim that the mercenary's stock-in-trade is violence but the mercenaries themselves would more likely say they provide solutions. Again, this is just the same as any other field of business. A client who wants goods moving might charter space aboard a freighter; one that needs a facility might hire a construction firm. The latter is not hired 'to provide some building work' as this is not intrinsically of value to the client. What the client wants and will pay for is a solution to the problem of needing an installation at that place.

Similarly, the mercenary provides solutions to a wide range of problems. These can range from removal of a threat to restoring stability to a region; mercenaries might also solve the problem of how to create a long-term security presence by training locals to a suitable standard. Violence, when it occurs, is a means to an end just like landing a freighter at a starport or laying the foundations of a building. If it does not provide the outcome the client wants, the violence is pointless and probably counterproductive.

Good mercenary commanders are aware of this and will balance the ability to provide the client with what they want against the need to keep the unit and its members intact. A unit's reputation determines more than the sort of jobs it is offered – although this is critically important. Reputation can help protect against legal investigations, obtain good equipment and recruits, and all manner of other situations.

Some mercenaries operate in an entirely unregulated manner. This can have its advantages but the presence of oversight bodies helps ensure that clients pay the fee and the mercenaries do the job within acceptable parameters. It is common to have multiple mercenary factors in an area. Some will be planetary governments, some corporate bodies that work with mercenaries either as their primary field of business or alongside other concerns. The occasional full-service specialist corporation is encountered, which procures or produces weaponry, trains personnel and arranges hiring of mercenary forces. Such firms wield enormous political power by means of whom they will hire to and often

have teams of advisors who guide local governments in procurement and policy decisions. If the firm has an agenda, these personnel will quietly push it whilst providing a good service to the client.

A professional mercenary unit will usually be affiliated with one or more of these mercenary factors, who have standards of conduct and performance that can vary from one to another. A unit's affiliations – and lack of them – can be an indicator of its likely capabilities and tendency to cause collateral damage. It is not uncommon for a mercenary factor to inspect or investigate a unit, although often the only penalty is a refusal to deal with the force in future. This is a serious matter as it reduces the quality and volume of employment likely to be offered to the unit. As a result, mercenary formations tend to have some sort of internal discipline system, which conforms to the requirements of the factors it is affiliated with. The same cannot be said with certainty of unregulated or unregistered mercenaries. Some are good and honourable but any band of trigger-happy yahoos can offer its services to those willing to pay for them. The results are... variable.

## RESOURCES

This book shows you how a mercenary force is raised, maintained, expanded and subdivided, if necessary. Four key resources are necessary to this process: Personnel, Credits, Materiel and Influence.

## Personnel

Personnel are mostly trained soldiers, though some civilian specialists may be required or found to be useful. All units experience at least a low level of personnel turnover from casualties, retirements or members who have decided to take a job elsewhere. High turnover is usually a sign the unit is an unpleasant place to serve or takes unnecessarily high casualties. 'Casualties' in this context can include much more than combat injuries; a unit can suffer casualties through training accidents, non-combat incidents on deployment such as a collision between vehicles or sickness contracted whilst serving in an unpleasant environment. Well-run units keep all such casualties to a minimum.

## Warriors, Heroes and Soldiers

The personnel who make up a mercenary unit ultimately define its character. A unit that accepts recruits who cannot accept military discipline will end up becoming an example of the stereotypical cash-for-violence rabble that springs to mind when most people hear the word 'mercenary'. A force that is desperate for recruits might take psychologically fragile individuals, or those so lacking in common sense, which can become a liability but most recruiting processes are designed to weed out the obviously unsuitable candidates. An ideal mercenary soldier is willing to deal out violence without hesitation or undue reflection but is professional enough to only do it when really necessary.

'Warriors' can be useful to a unit that can grant them some autonomy, and manage their actions to keep them beneficial, but a typical mercenary commander would prefer someone with less individual fighting ability who is more able to function as part of a team. Likewise, 'heroes' are not liked by other mercenaries for two reasons. They tend to get themselves and often others killed doing something that a more professional soldier would leave alone or retreat from and they create a false impression in the minds of clients that all mercenaries should be that gung-ho. The fact is that a professional mercenary is a soldier, willing to fight for whatever it is the client wants but mindful of the fact that dying for a cause is bad enough – dying for someone else's cause is just stupid.

Despite this filtering process, the personnel in a unit are unlikely to be perfect. Mercenaries have an adage, borrowed from fighter-pilots of a previous era, that:

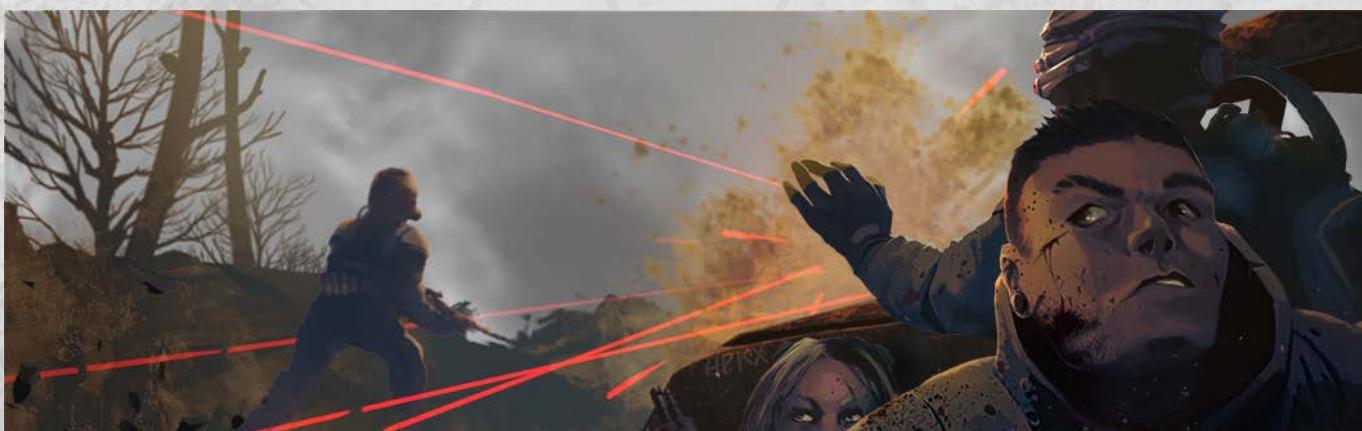
In a properly trained unit there are about 5–10% really talented people who stand above everyone else. About half of the others are competent and reliable, and the remainder are body-bag fillers. Who is which is not always readily apparent until the unit gets into action.

It is also wisely said that:

Warriors fight fiercely, heroes gamble... and soldiers stack the deck.

Although rather harsh, this adage has proven true over and over again. In some units there is a tradition of not learning someone's name until after their first firefight. Most such units have an insulting term for the new guy and 'earning your name' is a rite of passage for many mercenaries.

The fact is that anyone can be unlucky but fortune favours the professional whose head is in the game and has solid battlefield skills. Reckless or incompetent comrades are a liability and might force a choice between taking a horrendous risk to save their sorry ass or leaving them to their fate. Weak unit members might shape up if they live long enough and experts can become body-bag fillers if they lose their edge. A mercenary unit and everyone in it plays the odds and the successful ones tend to be those who know an ace when they see one.





Attitudes vary towards those who leave a unit for another mercenary force. In some cases this can be a source of pride, such as when a mid-level officer is headhunted to lead a 'lesser' force. Indeed, some mercenary units act as an on-the-job advanced training facility and routinely supply officers or groups of enlisted personnel to other formations. Some even raise additional sub-units and break them off when they are ready. On the other hand, mercenaries tend to be loyal to their own and may resent someone who leaves the unit. Much depends on the culture of the force.

As an asset, Personnel are rated either as Recruits or Replacements. A Recruit is someone who has had minimal or no training but could be shoved into a role of absolutely necessary. A Replacement is someone who has received enough training – or arrived with sufficient experience – that they can join a unit and function well within it more or less straight away. A unit's personnel pool should record these values separately.

## Credits

Credits are simply money, although this may be in the form of cash, bullion, electronic balances at a bank or a line of credit. Mercenary units sometimes include a salvage and reclamation group dedicated to reducing operational losses and perhaps gaining extra cash from battlefield salvage. A unit might even raise credit with a loan secured against its own heavy equipment, although this is a sign things are not going well. Whatever the situation, mercenary units' money should be tracked as Credits – representing liquid assets or instantly available spending power – and Assets that represent collateral that can be used to get money in a variety of ways.

## Materiel

Materiel represents hardware that can be used to put combat forces together, one way or another. A stockpile of rations and supplies would be considered Materiel, as would a tank or the components of one. Materiel is a way of abstracting the ability of a unit to fix equipment or get a necessary piece of kit into the field without having to order one from a supplier several parsecs away. Materiel does not have to be specified when recorded, although some specific items may be noted if they are in ready-to-use working order. For example, if a mercenary unit scavenges the wreckage of an enemy artillery battery and gets a load of artillery and transport components, plus a single gun that can be easily returned to working order, it has the choice of recording the gun as a specific item or just entering its Materiel value into the records.

## Influence

Influence is a nebulous quantity, representing the ability of the unit to get someone to do what it wants. Many transactions do not need Influence to make them happen – a registered mercenary formation can order a million rounds of ammunition from its supplier with no more difficulty than buying a box of doughnuts from an online store. However, when a unit wants to circumvent regulations or obtain something unusual, Influence comes to the fore.

Influence is tracked like any other characteristic and is rated 0–15. It generates a DM as normal, which is used whenever the unit attempts to negotiate an under-the-table deal or tries to get something it is not supposed to have. This includes attempting to suborn enemy

personnel in order to gain information or persuade port officials not to look in those crates. Up-front and honest dealings use Reputation instead.

In addition, Influence can be spent for one-off benefits. For example, no matter how desperately the unit needs a nuclear warhead it is unlikely to be able to buy one. Most *Traveller* universes place strict limits on the sale and use of such weaponry and just finding someone who has them and is willing to sell can be a challenge. By spending a point of Influence, and permanently losing it, the unit gains the ability to make one attempt to locate a vendor. This does not guarantee success and will more than likely generate an adventure. The Travellers will need to present a plan for how they intend to find a weapon for sale (or in a place it can be stolen from), spend a point of Influence then play out the resulting situation. The Referee should not take spending a point of Influence as a guarantee of success.

Influence 0 is a special case. A unit with Influence 0 has become ‘untouchable’ in the sense that nobody will deal with its members. One way to achieve this is to make use of the nuke obtained through the use of Influence against an innocent civilian target or some similar atrocity. Influence can drop to zero due to tremendously bad actions on the part of the mercenaries or possibly the effects of hostile propaganda. It represents a disaster for the force, which must be remedied as soon as possible.

## Reputation

Reputation is described in *Book 1*. It provides a DM to overt and legal dealings in the same way Influence does with less public matters. Reputation can be spent to allow an attempt at something unusual, such as persuading an important officer the Travellers are trying to recruit to at least look at the deal on offer.

If an arrangement would be considered disloyal or illicit, Influence is used. If it is purely about perception of the unit, Reputation provides the DM and the opportunity.

Like Influence, Reputation can drop to 0. Both can be zeroed by atrocities but it is possible one or the other will retain its value. For example, a unit that has disgraced itself but still has leverage on some officials retains its Influence; one that has burned its bridges regarding under-the-table suppliers or clients might still have a good public Reputation.

Reputation for mercenary units begins at a value of CEI –1D but can be modified when the unit is formed (see page 11). CEI is based on the unit’s training level, as discussed on page 16.

## THE CAMPAIGN ENVIRONMENT

Depending on how the campaign is to be run, the Referee might want to create a few other entities in the mercenary field. Some of these may be rival mercenary groups, some may be personalities or governments. The Referee may also wish to create contacts for the Travellers to cultivate. This is not always necessary, especially in an episodic campaign where the Travellers move from ticket-to-ticket without much interaction in between. In such cases a merchant factor or rival mercenary unit can simply be added when they are encountered but doing preparation will allow the Travellers to create their own adventures in some cases and results in a more realistic campaign environment.

Mercenary units and government forces can be rated using the system on page 13 of *Book 1*, with a paragraph or two of related information. These forces might be encountered repeatedly or used as templates for hostiles equipped similarly.

Mercenary factors and arms brokers are an important part of the mercenary trade and it may be necessary to win their trust or establish a reputation for professionalism before they will deal with the Travellers’ unit. After all, nobody wants the authorities asking why they sold bombardment missiles to a bunch of incompetent mooks.

Each broker or source of equipment has their own requirements and capabilities. The Referee should decide what equipment each can provide, at what Tech Level, and how scrupulous they are about legalities. This is recorded as a difficulty associated with Persuade checks to get around the rules.

*For example, Benny the Gunrunner is notorious for selling anything to anyone and has a difficulty level of Easy (6+). It is not hard to persuade him (using Persuade skill and the unit’s Influence) to sell weapons to the Travellers. Benny can only get small arms most of the time, although occasionally he has larger hardware available. He also has known connections with some of the nastier insurgent movements in the region. Benny is an easy source of routine resupplies up to TL8 but his sinister connections could lead to complications if the Referee so chooses. But, ‘if nobody else will deal with you, buy from Benny!’.*

# FORMING A UNIT

A mercenary force can start out in all manner of ways. It might be a unit that has gone rogue or been orphaned by the destruction of its parent state. It might be a part of a world's regular armed forces offered for hire when not required at home or a corporate body specialising in military operations. Most units, however, are specifically raised to be mercenary forces. Those that are not need to pass through a transition period where they adjust to the new environment. Mercenary units of any size need to be more self-contained and self-reliant than regular army units and for this reason it is common to find even small mercenary units with a degree of combined-arms capability. A regular infantry battalion can call upon artillery support from the rest of the army it belongs to; mercenaries may not have this luxury.

## STRUCTURE OF THE UNIT

Very small units do not need much in the way of organisation. In a squad or section sized formation everyone has a primary job but wears other hats when necessary and command structures can be very simple. Once a force grows beyond about a dozen members such a loose organisational structure becomes a liability. This is particularly true when sub-units in different places or with differing specialities have to work together. An effective force needs a clear command structure, communications protocols and standardised ways of doing things. Without this, it is possible to bodge along on a moment-by-moment basis but the force can dissolve into chaos under pressure. A formal and well-understood structure does not eliminate this possibility but does improve resilience.

Formations are built up of sub-units, which are in turn built from smaller units. The structure and size of these tends to be roughly equivalent, although names can vary considerably. When a mercenary unit is formed, it and its sub-units are effectively placeholders that are filled out with personnel and equipment. The time and effort required to put together a force of any given level is abstracted using Personnel, Credits and Materiel.

On the Unit Structure table, the cost listed creates a formation as a placeholder or cadre, with just enough personnel to run its administrative and command functions. Such a cadre formation can then be filled out with personnel and equipment to whatever specification the Travellers may have. Vehicles and equipment must be bought and assigned a sufficient crew. Materiel costs include uniforms, personal communications equipment and other standard field kit but no weapons.

Costs given are for the command and key personnel in a formation of each size, plus some additional personnel to carry out simple tasks. These ideally will have learned basic skills and be considered Replacements but a placeholder formation can be put together from mostly raw recruits if necessary. Note that costs given are for the unit itself but not sub-units; a battalion cadre has no companies or platoons to command. These must be raised separately but can make use of personnel available from the next unit above in many situations. It is entirely acceptable to create provisional sub-units, bring them up to size, then break them down to create a full set of specialist sub-units.



## Unit Structure

Unit Type	Requirements (Cadre)	Notes
Squad or Equivalent	Replacements: 1 Materiel: 1 Credits: Cr10000	Minimal unit composing a single fire team, group of specialists or a single vehicle or artillery piece and crew. Squads and Sections are interchangeable as sub-units of a platoon.
Section/Lance	Replacements: 2 Materiel: 2 Credits: Cr25000	Small tactical formation typically comprising 2–3 squads or 2 minor vehicles or pieces of equipment, or a single major vehicle or piece of equipment, plus crew.
Platoon	Replacements: 4 Replacements or Recruits: 4 Materiel: 5 Credits: Cr100000	Small tactical formation typically comprising 3–5 section-equivalents.
Company	Replacements: 4 Replacements or Recruits: 8 Materiel: 75 Credits: Cr500000	Tactical formation typically comprising 3–5 platoon-equivalents.
Battalion	Replacements: 8 Replacements or Recruits: 24 Materiel: 400 Credits: MCr2	Tactical formation typically comprising 3–5 company-equivalents.
Brigade	Replacements: 12 Replacements or Recruits: 72 Materiel: 2000 Credits: MCr10	The largest mercenary formation likely to be encountered, a brigade will normally contain 3–5 battalion-equivalents.

## Example

If a band of Travellers want to form a platoon-sized unit they will need four people with at least basic military training to be the command team and key personnel of the unit and four more to run around doing tasks an untrained person can manage. They also need to scrape together Materiel 5 and Cr100000 to outfit the force with uniforms, camp gear and the like. They might also want to find some weaponry.

Having done this, the Travellers will have the framework of a platoon and can fill it out with personnel. A typical platoon has four section-equivalents and, in the case of infantry, a nominal staffing level of around 32–35 people. The Travellers could just find enough recruits to bring the force up to this level without creating sub-units but this will make the force inefficient and prone to serious errors. They decide to make use of what they have available and to institute formal sub-units even if some of them are just placeholders for now.

The Travellers and their immediate associates number 13 trained military, naval and paramilitary-service personnel, with a fair amount of cash on hand and access to a stockpile of Materiel. They also have a militarised air/raft and a wheeled light artillery vehicle they picked up by means better left undisclosed.

The Travellers decide to build themselves an all-arms force with what they have and shake it out into a more conventional format in the course of their careers.

## Command Section

The Travellers form a section-sized unit containing three of the Travellers as commander, executive officer and electronic warfare expert. The commander takes the rank of captain, which might be a bit high for a platoon-sized unit but is unlikely to attract adverse comment and the executive officer is appointed lieutenant. If the unit expands, the commanders might move to a platoon-command detachment and appoint a sergeant to lead First Section.

The electronic warfare technician was a corporal in the army and remains one in the new unit, although suddenly he is in charge of a whole unit's – albeit limited – capabilities rather than jump-performing tasks as ordered. With the command team this uses up three of the four Replacement personnel required for the platoon, which is acceptable since the leaders of the Command Section are also leaders of the unit as a whole. It is more than enough to satisfy the need for 2 Replacements in this Section. A cost of 2 Materiel and Cr25000 must also be paid.

The Command Section is assigned the air/raft as a reconnaissance and liaison platform and will be fitted with a pintle mounted weapon as soon as one is available. The Command Section has an intended strength of 8 personnel so still needs 5. Ideally these will be trained Replacements but untrained Recruits could be used at need.

## First Section

First Section is intended to be a ‘rifle’ section, with eight infantry personnel in two squads of four. These squads do not need to be formed as separate units as the section structure is sufficient to cover such a small unit. First Section needs 2 Replacements, 2 Materiel and Cr25000. The money and basic equipment is not a problem and the available replacements include a friend of the Travellers who left the army with the rank of captain. She is appointed leader of First Section with a rank of sergeant and is assisted by an experienced rifleman who is given the rank of corporal to lead the other half of the section. If the unit grows big enough, this captain-turned-sergeant will likely be given a rapid promotion but for now the platoon only rates two officers.

## Second Section

Second Section is intended to be a ‘rifle’ section but for now is going to act as a placeholder until more personnel are recruited. It is formed as a unit, costing 2 Materiel and Cr25000, but is assigned only 2 personnel. One is an excellent marksman with no leadership skills; the other is an infantry soldier who will accompany the marksman as a security element. This ‘section’ uses up two more Replacements but will not be filled out until someone can be recruited to lead it and sufficient personnel can be found. In the meantime Second Section will be used as a reconnaissance and support asset under the control of the Command Section.

## Support Section

The Support Section is built around the artillery weapon. This is carried in a light armoured vehicle that requires a crew of three. Two of the replacements assigned to the Section have experience of military vehicles or artillery; the third was actually a police officer but has leadership potential so is appointed vehicle and section commander. Creating the Support Section uses up 3 Replacements, Cr25000 and 2 Materiel.

## Further Assignments

So far the Travellers have created a platoon-sized formation with four section-sized sub-units. They have used up 10 of their 13 Replacement-level personnel and spent Cr200000 plus 13 Materiel to do so. Assigning

the three remaining Replacements to First Section brings it up to five out of a nominal strength of eight. The Travellers are now in command of an extremely weak 13-person ‘platoon’ with a light artillery weapon that can be used for direct fire support or even as a light tank against lower-tech opponents.

The Travellers set themselves the task of recruiting personnel to fill out their unit. First, they want First Section up to strength, which will require just three competent people. They wish to recruit someone suitable as sergeants in charge of Second Section and bring this section up to its ‘paper’ strength of eight. This is six personnel of whom at least one is an above-average Replacement.

The next goal is to move the artillery piece to the Command Section, leaving its current leader in place and adding seven more personnel to create a third rifle section. When this is complete the platoon will have a command/support section containing an artillery piece plus three rifle sections of eight personnel each and will be able to call itself a combined-arms platoon. All this will take is finding 16 more people with at least basic infantry skills and of course, arming them. As the Travellers soon find, weapons are not usually the biggest cost associated with a mercenary formation.

## STANDARD UNITS

For ease of book-keeping, units that are close to the standard model of 4-element sub-units can be assumed to have standardised costs. The table opposite includes the cost of all sub-units and assumes key personnel requirements overlap considerably. The result is a skeleton formation with minimal fighting power but capable of receiving drafts of personnel to bring it up to strength. It is always more efficient to create higher-level formations than multiple lower-level ones and also more skill-intensive to create many small formations. This is because many jobs can be done by people with just one or two skills in a large formation but a small unit needs multiskilled people to cover the many requirements created by lacking a parent formation.

## BRINGING IN ASSETS

Travellers who intend to be mercenaries, rather than typical adventurers, can convert some of their mustering-out benefits into equipment and Materiel. It is assumed that the potential mercenaries either began planning to create a mercenary force during their career or used their contacts to gather whatever resources they could. Whilst anyone can try to get a mercenary force together, most lack the contacts or the credibility to do so.

## Unit Structure

Unit Type	Requirements (Cadre)	Notes
Squad or Equivalent	Replacements: 1 Materiel: 1 Credits: Cr10000	Squads do not have to be formed as sub-units of a section. Costs only need be paid when the unit is formed as a sub-unit of a platoon or as a unit in its own right.
Section/Lance	Replacements: 2 Materiel: 2 Credits: Cr25000	The smallest mercenary combat unit likely to be encountered.
Platoon	Replacements: 6 Replacements or Recruits: 4 Materiel: 13 Credits: Cr200000	Platoon key personnel and equipment, plus four section-equivalents.
Company	Replacements: 8 Replacements or Recruits: 16 Materiel: 75 Credits: Cr500000	Company-level key personnel plus four platoon-equivalents.
Battalion	Replacements: 16 Replacements or Recruits: 48 Materiel: 400 Credits: MCr2	Battalion-level key personnel plus four company-equivalents.
Brigade	Replacements: 24 Replacements or Recruits: 96 Materiel: 2000 Credits: MCr10	Brigade-level key personnel plus four battalion-equivalents.

Upon mustering out, some or all of a Traveller's Benefit rolls may be taken on the Mercenary Assets table and the resources of all involved Travellers can be combined. It is not necessary to use all the available items at once; for example, a Traveller who has some personnel available can hold on to this Benefit until the unit requires some additional infantry soldiers or whatever other niche needs filling.

**Former Military** (Army and Marines) Travellers may swap any or all of their Benefit rolls one-for-one for rolls on the Mercenary Assets table and the Traveller's final rank may be used as a DM. A former sergeant-major might well bring more to the table than a lieutenant, although the officer is likely to have better connections.

**Former Naval and Paramilitary** Travellers may swap any or all of their Benefit rolls two-for-one for rolls on the Mercenary Assets table. The Traveller's final rank may be used as a DM. Paramilitary careers in this context include law enforcement, security, scouts and the like.

**All other** Travellers may swap any or all of their Benefit rolls three-for-one for rolls on the Mercenary Assets table and may not use their final rank as a DM on any column but General Assets. A senior merchant or corporate official might have some very useful contacts or influence but they are unlikely to be in possession of a tank.

If a Traveller has served in different careers, the Referee may allow them to make their Mercenary Assets rolls as if they had served their entire career in the 'highest' category of careers they qualify for. Note that a certain kind of Traveller might try to exploit this system, perhaps by obtaining large amounts of military equipment, then selling it and starting a normal adventuring career. These rules were developed to allow Travellers who want to play a mercenary campaign to do so. The Referee should not allow those who do not use them as a get-rich-quick scam.

The Mercenary Assets table indicates what each Traveller brought when the unit was formed and is used as standard mustering out. A Traveller who takes no cash benefits has no money of their own but can draw living expenses and/or a salary from the assets of the nascent mercenary force. All credit and equipment belongs to the unit as a whole once committed. Ownership of the unit can be agreed among the Travellers in any proportion they see fit. One way to determine a precise percentage of ownership is to total assets in each category and assign ownership based on how much of each item the Traveller contributed.

## Mercenary Assets

1D	General Assets	Recruiting and Equipping	Hardware
1	Credit: Cr50000	Materiel: 2D	Hardware Budget: Cr2Dx10000
2	Influence +1	Personnel: 1D Replacements	Personnel: D3 Replacements and D3 Recruits plus Materiel: 1D
3	Personnel: 1D Recruits	Materiel: 4D	Hardware Budget: Cr2Dx25000
4	Credit: Cr200000	Personnel: 2D Replacements	Personnel: 1D Replacements and 1D Recruits plus Materiel: 2D
5	Personnel: 1D Replacements	Materiel: 6D	Hardware Budget: Cr2Dx50000
6	Influence +2	Personnel: 3D Replacements	Personnel: 1D Replacements and 1D Recruits plus Materiel: 3D
7	Credit: Cr500000	Materiel: 8D	Hardware Budget: Cr2Dx100000
8	Personnel: 1D Replacements and 2D Recruits	Personnel: 4D Replacements	Personnel: 2D Replacements and 2D Recruits plus Materiel: 4D
9	Influence +3	Materiel: 10D	Hardware Budget: Cr2Dx250000
10	Credit: MCr1	Personnel: 5D Replacements	Personnel: 3D Replacements and 3D Recruits plus Materiel: 6D
11	Personnel: 2D Replacements and 4D Recruits	Materiel: 12D	Hardware Budget: Cr2Dx500000
12	Influence +4	Personnel: 6D Replacements	Hardware Budget: MCr2Dx1 plus Influence +1

**Credit** represents working capital in some form. This might be cash in the bank or a line of credit secured on something valuable. Credit can be used for any of a unit's purchases or expenses but cannot simply be taken as cash and spent in the nearest bar.

**Personnel** represents a number of people – either trained Replacements or untrained Recruits – who are available to join the unit whenever the Travellers want them. They can be held in reserve at no cost, probably working whatever jobs they can get while they wait for an opening in the unit, but once part of the unit they must be paid and equipped. This includes personnel in training.

**Influence** represents the individual Traveller's contacts and leverage over them. It will be used to calculate the unit's starting Influence.

**Hardware Budget** represents the weaponry, vehicles and heavy equipment the Travellers can bring to the unit. It is not necessarily cash; this is just a convenient measure of value. Hardware Budget includes that broken-down grav tank the Traveller has finally finished fixing up, stashes of arms and equipment concealed during active service and any other hardware the Travellers have acquired. It does not have to be allocated all at once but can be put towards any hardware purchase the unit makes. It cannot be converted to cash.

## UNIT INFLUENCE

The Influence wielded by a unit makes it possible to obtain equipment others cannot get. When the unit is formed its starting Influence is equal to the final rank its commander held before mustering out, plus the Influence of the most influential Traveller in the unit. In this case, enlisted final rank is considered important but inferior to commissioned rank. If the commander is a former non-commissioned officer, their final rank is halved (rounding down) when making this calculation.

The resulting value is Unit Influence, which provides a DM to carry out actions like persuading a broker to sell weaponry to the Travellers or investigators to delay their work a day or two so that evidence can be concealed. Once determined, Unit Influence is tracked and can increase or decrease as a result of the Travellers' actions. The Influence wielded by individual Travellers is important to the unit even if they were not the most influential at the formation of the force.

## Using Influence

Whenever the Travellers want to influence someone on behalf of their unit, they can use its Unit Influence DM to do so. This includes completely legitimate transactions such as asking for a discount on a bulk shipment of replacement boots and belt buckles. In

such a situation one of the Travellers would use their Persuade skill, with the unit's Influence DM as an additional modifier. The discount might be 5% per point of Effect. This is a routine use of Influence and can be done at any time Influence is relevant.

If the Travellers want to ask for something dangerous or illegal, they will have to create the opportunity. This requires permanently expending a point of Influence, which is not recovered. A unit that runs its Unit Influence down in this manner will eventually struggle to persuade anyone of anything but Unit Influence can be increased in some circumstances. In the interim, each of the Travellers who has Influence can spend these points before using up the Unit Influence. This includes the most influential Traveller; once Unit Influence is established it is an independent characteristic.

Spending Influence does not allow the Travellers to do the impossible and some actions will not even be considered. For example, a merchant might be persuaded to allow the Travellers to buy restricted weapons without the correct licenses but the merchant is unlikely to let them have nuclear weapons even if they could be obtained. If the Travellers want something so illegal, they will have to do some work to get it. They might use Influence to obtain information on a badly secured storage facility guided by miserable conscripts who have not been paid for months, then work on persuading a corrupt quartermaster to provide access and look the other way. This will require creativity and effort on the part of the Travellers, and ultimately an adventure, with spending Influence points as an enabler.

Once the unit has no Influence left it has used up all its favours and has no useful dirt on anyone. The Referee can of course create situations in which the Travellers can get more Influence or they might even come up with their own methods. Smart and proactive Travellers might have their intelligence people looking out for the right contacts to cultivate or opportunities to carry out their own missions in order to get leverage over someone useful.

## Forming a Unit

These rules are intended to allow Travellers to put together a small mercenary force. It will typically be section, platoon or company sized, and may have to be formed understrength then worked up over the course of a campaign. It will be possible for a typical band of Travellers to put together a unit that is small and well equipped, or a larger one that needs to find better equipment. This is part of the campaign and the Referee should not be too generous in allowing the Travellers to get whatever they want. A 'hungry' unit has to take difficult jobs and take risks, which leads to adventure.

The process of forming a unit begins with an assessment of the Materiel, credits and personnel available and progresses to the formation of the unit as a placeholder. The Tech Level of the unit is determined at this point, as the TL of the primary source of equipment and weaponry. The unit now contains as many people as the Travellers have assigned, equipped with uniforms, boots, tents, communicators and the odd shovel, but no weapons.

Once the structure and staffing level of the unit are established, the Travellers can go about training and arming their force. Weapons, vehicles and support equipment are purchased with Credits or from the Hardware Budget. Once this process is complete the CBAS characteristics of the force will be indicated by its equipment level, CEI can be determined from training level and Morale is based on CEI. The unit's Reputation is determined, based on CEI and the actions taken by the Travellers; and at this point the force is ready for action.



# RECRUITING AND TRAINING

No matter how high-tech a force might be, its personnel are its most important asset. The majority of mercenary forces simply do not have time to train personnel from scratch, so tend to recruit from those who have left a regular force. These are not always army personnel. Former starship crewmembers can be made effective ground fighters with some guidance from experienced colleagues but someone who has not had at least basic military training will lack the 'military mindset' and have no framework from which to hang new skills on.

A prospective recruit needs a certain skillset that can only be instilled by proper basic training. This does include weapons handling but combat skills are only a small part of what recruiters are looking for. A useable recruit knows how to live as a soldier whether in barracks or the field. They can take care of themselves and their equipment and can comprehend the jargon or verbal shorthand used to convey orders and information. Close-order drill is unlikely to be much use unless the unit hires out to clients who prefer parades to firefights, however the prospective recruit must be comfortable taking orders and functioning within the confines of a military force.

Only the largest units have their own training facilities, although some have close relationships with a particular trainer or get a lot of personnel from one planetary army. In these cases there tends to be a steady flow of personnel but for most units there is always competition over who can snap up the most promising recruits and who gets whatever is left. A lot of this work is done by the recruiting factors, so for smaller units a good relationship with the factors is more important than actual skill at recruiting.

If the Travellers want to do their own recruiting they can go about it any way they please. Sometimes the outcome of an adventure or ticket will put the Travellers in a position to make an offer of employment but mostly they will need to have someone in the right place at the right time. That place is typically somewhere recently-soldiers will pass through, although passive advertising

may also produce reasonable results. Advertising is less likely to produce the best applicants and sometimes results in multiple no-hoppers attempting to join the unit.

A basic set of adverts in the relevant journals and datanet sites can be produced for negligible cost. It provides no DM to find recruits, nor to determine their quality. Going through a mercenary factor requires paying a fee to sign up their services and an additional amount per recruit. Factors do a little checking into people they recommend to a unit and can weed out the obvious no-hoppers, although occasionally somebody slips through. A factor will provide a brief outline of the potential recruit's career so far, which is typically little more than known service, date and status of discharge and so forth. Factors do not hold try-outs or make strenuous attempts to verify claims made in the recruit's resume but do try to ensure the people they put forward are suitable.

Recruiting factors typically charge Cr100000 as a registry fee and will put forward recruits as they appear or when the Travellers request them. Specialists or those with impressive skills will command a large finding-fee. The typical mercenary recruit will be young, probably the product of a large planetary army. The recruit may have failed to adjust to civilian life or to find a suitable job after leaving the military, or may want some excitement and a decent salary for a few years before they settle down. Some may come from the navy or even non-military services such as law enforcement, especially if a unit needs specialist skills. Not surprisingly, mercenary units tend to maintain a recruiting presence in the sort of places military personnel pass through at the end of their service. This includes garrison towns and major interstellar transport hubs, especially in the wake of a war. Recruiters often descend on worlds that are downsizing their military, scooping up the best recruits before they disperse across the spaceways.

A significant proportion of mercenary recruiting is done through third-party factors, some of whom operate mercenary training facilities. These are geared to producing mercenaries, rather than soldiers of a

particular state, but instil the same basic skillset with a few variations and omissions. Recruits coming from these mercenary schools tend not to know much about drill and pageantry but can fit into most mercenary forces without difficulty.

## QUALITY OF PERSONNEL

The quality of personnel depends on their prior service and training. Under most circumstances the Travellers will be able to simply pay for a factor to find them the type of recruits they want, although top-end specialists are rarely found this way. A group of recruits is rated as if it were a detachment of the Travellers' unit and has a Detachment Efficiency Index (DEI) associated with it. The Personnel Quality table indicates the DEI of typical types of recruit and the costs associated with getting a factor to find them.



### Personnel Quality

DEI	Example	Primary/Secondary Skills	Cost
0	Some people are completely unsuited to mercenary work. This will usually be obvious.	0/0	Cr50, if these are all the recruiter can find. The Travellers should expect problems.
1	Raw recruit, willing but with no training.	1/0	Cr100
2	Someone who has received orientation training but little more than that.	1/0	Cr250
3	Someone who has received part of a standard basic training package or who has come from a paramilitary career such as law enforcement or the scouts.	1+0/1+0	Cr400
4	Someone who has completed an abbreviated basic training or who has come from a space combat career such as the navy or a pirate band.	1+0/1+0	Cr750
5	A qualified but inexperienced soldier. This is the minimum level to be considered a Replacement rather than a Recruit.	1+0/1+0	Cr1000
6	A trained soldier with little operational experience.	2+1/1+1	Cr1500
7	A typical 1-term soldier.	2+1/1+1	Cr2500
8	A typical 2-term soldier.	2+1/1+1	Cr5000
9	A typical 3-term soldier.	3+1/1+1	Cr10000
10	A highly qualified specialist or expert.	3+1/1+1	Cr50000
11	The best personnel likely to be found on the recruiting circuit.	3+1/1+1	Cr250000
12	DEI 12+ will only be found in a few rare instances. Personnel of this calibre must be sought out individually.	3+1/2+1	Negotiated on a case-by-case basis.

Recruiter costs increase rapidly at the upper end. Most mercenary units expect to average Cr5000 per recruit, getting a mix of DEI 5–10 personnel in a batch. This fee does not go to the prospective mercenary; it is taken by the factor. Travellers who do their own recruiting do not need to pay this fee.

## Integrating Recruits and Replacements

A force can absorb a few replacements without being unduly disrupted. If very poor personnel are added to a unit, disruption may occur. The process described below is used when the unit is being brought back up to strength. If it is being expanded, the process used is described on Page 67 of *Book 1*, under Weakening or Expanding Forces.

When a draft of new personnel arrives the unit must make an Average (8+) CEI check. If this is passed, CEI remains unchanged. If it is failed the Effect is applied as a reduction to the unit's CEI. This check is subject to the following DMs:

The receiving unit's CEI modifier and the modifier resulting from the average DEI of the new arrivals.  
 If less than 10% of the unit's strength are being replaced:  
 No DM  
 If 11–20% of the unit's strength are being replaced:  
 DM-2  
 If 21–30% of the unit's strength are being replaced:  
 DM-4  
 If more than 30% of the unit's strength are being replaced: DM-6

## Assigning Skills

In general, it is not necessary to assign skills to specific individuals. If the Travellers are fielding a battalion sized force they do not have time to keep track of whether Corporal Jownes has Gun Combat 1 or 2; what they care about is whether the platoon can reach and capture its objective. In such situations all that matters is the DEI of the new recruits and how it affects the CEI of the force as a whole.

## Individual Skills

Primary (Infantry)	Primary (Vehicle)	Primary (Artillery)	Primary (Support)	Secondary
Athletics	Drive	Electronics	Admin	Admin
Gun Combat	Flyer	Gun Combat	Drive	Advocate
Heavy Weapons	Gun Combat	Heavy Weapons	Electronics	Athletics
Melee	Heavy Weapons	Navigation	Explosives	Diplomat
Recon	Mechanic	Tactics	Investigate	Drive
Stealth	Navigation		Mechanic	Electronics
Tactics	Tactics		Navigation	Explosives
Vacc Suit			Steward	Flyer
			Tactics	Gun Combat
				Heavy Weapons
				Investigate
				Leadership
				Mechanic
				Melee
				Navigation
				Perception
				Recon
				Stealth
				Survival
				Tactics
				Vacc Suit

Where a unit member's specific skills are important, they can be assigned using the Individual Skills table. An individual might have additional skills; those presented here are military or mercenary-life related only. Primary skills are connected with the individual's main function whilst Secondary skills refer to supporting capabilities such as Stealth or Recon for combat troops. Specialist personnel will usually have a non-combat Primary skill such as Medic, Mechanic, Electronics or Admin, with their Secondary skill indicating combat competence.

Where more than one skill is listed, such as 3+1, this indicates additional skills from the same general category. For example, a Trained infantry soldier is listed as 2+1 Primary and 1+1 Secondary. A typical member of the unit might be assumed to have Gun Combat 2 plus Heavy Weapons 1 as Primary skills and Recon 1 plus Stealth 1 as Secondary skills. The soldier will have additional skills but this is an indicator of their primary combat-related capabilities.

## Conducting Recruitment

A Traveller can conduct recruitment on their own or get a factor to do it for them. A factor provides a flat DM+2, whereas a Traveller may be able to obtain a higher DM – and in addition the finding-fee does not need to be paid. Either way, a recruiting attempt can be targeted or general. Each recruiting attempt takes roughly a month. The Travellers can recruit in multiple places in the same month so long as they have the contacts.

A targeted recruiting effort aims to get the best personnel available. It will produce a single candidate if successful. The recruiter must decide what DEI they are looking for and apply this as a negative DM on an Average (8+) Leadership or Admin check. Additional positive DMs can be obtained by spending large amounts of money on locating someone suitable or

taking longer about the search. Each additional month allows DM+1, up to a maximum of +6. Every Cr25000 spent on searching for the right recruits also grants DM+1, up to a maximum of +4. This cost is in addition to a factor's standard finding fee if one is used.

General recruiting produces a lot more personnel, but they tend to be of low capability. The Traveller in charge of recruiting must roll on the Recruitment Results table, applying their Admin and Leadership skills – both can be used – or the factor's DM+2.

The result obtained on this table is a number of DEI levels obtained, which can be divided up as the Travellers please so long as the maximum DEI level is not exceeded. This will allow the Travellers to find lots of poor recruits or a few good ones. If the Travellers found 66 DEI levels, to a maximum DEI 8, they could assign this as eight good prospects with a DEI of 8 each and two no-hoppers or they could find 22 poorly trained but enthusiastic beginners with a DEI of 3. The Travellers do not have to take all these recruits but must pay the finding-fee to the factor – if they use one – for each recruit they take on.

## Recruitment Results

2D+DMs	Total DEI Levels Located	Max. Individual DEI
0–	0	0
1–2	1D	1
3–4	2D	3
5–6	4D	5
7–8	6D	7
9–10	8D	8
11–12	10D	9
13–14	12D	10
15+	16D	11



# TRAINING

If the Travellers have the facilities or know someone who does, they can train their own raw recruits up from scratch. Varying levels of training can be provided, with ever-increasing costs. Each member of the unit assigned to provide training can train ten recruits per level of Leadership providing they have at least one assistant for every ten trainees. The assistants do not need Leadership but must have the basic skills of the unit being trained and be from a formation with a CEI equal to or higher than the people being trained. For example, an experienced sergeant with Leadership 3 could train 30 recruits but would need three assistants. These could be from the previous intake, and be only a little farther down the road than the current trainees, but they do need to be competent enough to spot mistakes and put them right.

**Orientation:** Orientation takes place whenever someone joins a new unit. It is an introduction to the force's practices and personalities, and ensures the new arrivals know who they are answerable to. For experienced personnel it can be a short barrage of information that instils no new skills. Mercenary units taking on completely untrained personnel, which often happens in cadre tickets, must teach them firearms safety and how to use basic equipment like their communicators. This process can be accomplished in one week, granting the batch of recruits DEI 2 if it was previously lower than that.

**Basic, Minimal:** Basic training normally takes many weeks and is delivered in a structured manner. A minimal version can be delivered in four weeks, creating personnel with some idea of how to conduct fire and manoeuvre and think like soldiers. Minimal training produces personnel with DEI 3.

**Basic, Abbreviated:** Abbreviated basic training covers the same ground as the minimal version but gives the recruits more time to absorb the lessons. It can be delivered in eight weeks and produces personnel with DEI 4.

**Basic:** A full basic training programme can be delivered in 16 weeks and produces personnel with a reasonable set of infantry skills plus some familiarity with equipment used by other specialisations. A graduate of a full programme of basic training will have DEI 5 and can be considered a Replacement rather than a recruit. These individuals can fit into a unit reasonably well but their inexperience will be very obvious.

**Basic and Advanced:** A full training programme takes 24 weeks and produces personnel with DEI 6. The latter part of training is spent on specialist skills, which for infantry are more of the same thing they have been

doing all along. A full training programme for other specialists will produce artillery and vehicle crews, electronic warfare technicians and the like.

## Ongoing

Once a sub-unit has completed training and is combat-ready it may gain a higher DEI level through experience or ongoing training. Training is normally delivered in four-week blocks and cannot be combined with other duties. Some on-the-job training will always be ongoing but this is about skill retention rather than improvement. Delivering a course of ongoing training is subject to the same limits as basic – one level of Leadership and one assistant per 10 trainees. Multiple trainers can be assigned to a subject group.

A trainer can increase the DEI of the subjects up to a level one lower than their own, or up to three times the level of the trainer in a relevant skill. For example, a trainer with Gun Combat 3 can train an infantry unit up to DEI 9. A course increases the DEI of the subject group by +1 if an Easy (4+) Leadership check is made by the most skilled of the trainers. This check is subject to a negative DM equal to the current DEI of the trainees. Thus a trainer from a unit with CEI 9 can train others up to DEI 8. If the subject group is just out of a basic and advanced training programme their DEI 6 is applied as a negative DM on this check. A trainer with a Leadership 2 would need 4+ on 2D with a total DM-4. If the check is failed the subjects do not gain DEI but can repeat the course later.

If training is outsourced, the cost is equal to a month's salaries for everyone involved, in addition to their actual pay. In-house training provided by the Travellers themselves costs the same amount of supplies as if the sub-units involved were on combat operations.

## Determining Initial CEI

The initial CEI of a unit is based on the training level of its sub-units or the unit as a whole. When creating a new unit it is simplest to consider the entire force as a detachment of recruits and provide training to the requisite level. The DEI of the recruits is now the CEI of the unit as a whole. It is possible to create a skeleton unit in this manner and expand the sub-units later, although this might affect the CEI of the sub-units.

If the force is being put together gradually or is built up of amalgamated smaller units, its overall CEI is determined by the average of its top-level sub-units. If the Travellers really like detail they can determine the DEI of every section in a platoon, which gives the DEI of the platoon. Working out the DEI of all platoons in a company and averaging them gives the DEI of the company, which can be averaged with the DEI of

the other companies to indicate the CEI of the parent battalion. This is a lot of work, however, and it is generally desirable to simply rate the top-level sub-units.

## Example

The Travellers are raising a company-sized force that will consist of four platoons. They could raise the unit and its sub-units as a single item, provide whatever level of training they can afford and assign the unit's CEI based on this. However, the Travellers have all brought different assets to the table and want to rate their own platoons. For purposes of determining overall CEI, each platoon is given equal weight; the Referee should stomp on attempts to exploit this by creating a four soldier platoon skeleton and training it to a hair in order to artificially pull the overall unit's CEI up.

One Traveller has enough resources to field a platoon of armoured cars and provides basic and advanced training, worth DEI 5. Another has a platoon of infantry, almost up to strength, which has been trained to an equivalent level and has a little field experience, granting DEI 7. A third Traveller has over-enthusiastically recruited a mob of noobs who have received only a patchy orientation and have DEI 2. The fourth 'platoon' is actually a single artillery piece and crew, with a few additional personnel as technicians and security. This proto-platoon has DEI 9 due to its professional experience and is considered to have equal weight to the others when determining the unit's CEI.

After a few days of simple exercises to form a cohesive unit, the Travellers begin to see how the force is shaping up. There are four sub-units, with a total DEI of  $5+7+2+9=23$ . Dividing by 4 this gives 5.75, which the Referee rounds up to 6. The new force would benefit from some training but can function efficiently enough providing tasks are kept simple. Detaching the second infantry platoon would be a bad idea, however, since it relies heavily on support from the more experienced sub-units.

Once CEI is established, the Referee may decide that all sub-units now have the overall CEI of the force. This represents some swapping around of personnel, shared experience and the creation of a more cohesive force. For simplicity, if the force as a whole receives a training package between tickets, this homogenisation of the CEI can be assumed to have occurred.

If the Travellers prefer to rate their sub-units separately they may do so. Training one of the sub-units up may require overall CEI to be modified. An increase in overall unit CEI in this case equates to an equal increase in the DEI of each sub-unit.

Once CEI is determined for a new unit, its Reputation can now be established. This is normally equal to CEI-1D but in the case of a unit run by Travellers they can try to improve it. The commander of the unit or a designated representative may make an Average (8+) Leadership check with their final rank as an additional DM. The unit's starting reputation is equal to its CEI plus the Effect of this check, minus 1D.

## SALARIES

Mercenary forces can pay their troops whatever they think they can get away with but obviously a force that grossly underpays people for risking their lives will have trouble filling its ranks. The Travellers may find that salaries make up a large proportion of their operating budget and will need to pay the troops monthly or face a rapid drop in morale. Interstellar law varies from place-to-place but it is generally understood that a force in the field may have difficulty getting money to the troops and that a brief disruption is not a breach of contract. However, there are guidelines governing the payment of mercenary forces, which allow personnel to decline active duty or even leave the unit without penalty if their pay is in arrears.

Failure to get pay fully up to date at the end of a ticket is considered a breach of contract on the part of the unit and personnel are automatically freed from their contracts to the force. In some cases a cash-strapped unit will negotiate with its members, typically on the basis that 'one more ticket' will resolve the situation. This sometimes leads to a commander, heavily in debt to their own people, taking on a job they would not normally even consider. Each month's pay arrears imposes a one point reduction in MOR along with DM-1 on all attempts to recruit or train personnel.

The levels given in the Guideline Salaries table are suggestions only. A unit paying less suffers DM-1 to all attempts to recruit personnel for every 10% or part thereof its salaries that are below the standard. Paying more allows DM+1 for up to 25% extra and DM+2 for up to 50% extra. A force offering more than 150% of standard salaries gets no additional bonus since potential members are likely to wonder why the commanders are so desperate to get people into the unit.

Salaries must be paid whatever the unit is doing, even when waiting for a ticket to come along. Personnel are due a 25% increment for the 'active' part of the ticket. Exactly how personnel qualify for this 'combat pay' is up to the force operator but it is usual to grant the extra pay in blocks of several days, for any occasions where contact with hostiles is likely even if it does not occur.

Some force operators try to get around the salary problem by dismissing most of their personnel at the end of a ticket and recruiting more when it is time to deploy again. Hire-and-fire techniques like this tend to alienate personnel and certainly do not allow a sense of unity to develop. If the Travellers choose to go down this route they will suffer at least DM-1 to recruit personnel and morale may also be decreased.

Salaries are typically much the same for people in the same role, even if different terms are used for their rank. Guideline salaries do not include combat pay or bonuses.

## Guideline Salaries

Role	Monthly Pay
Infantry Soldier (Private)	Cr1000
Squad Leader (Corporal)	Cr1200
Expert Soldier (Technician-Corporal)	Cr1300
Section Leader (Lance-Sergeant)	Cr1500
Platoon NCO (Sergeant)	Cr2000
Company NCO (Staff Sergeant)	Cr2500
Junior Platoon-Level Officer (Second-Lieutenant)	Cr2500
Senior Platoon-Level Officer (Lieutenant)	Cr3000
Battalion NCO (Sergeant-Major)	Cr3500
Junior Company-Level Officer (Captain)	Cr4000
Senior Company-Level Officer (Major)	Cr5000
Junior Battalion-Level Officer (Major)	Cr6000
Senior Battalion-Level Officer (Lieutenant-Colonel)	Cr8000
Brigade Level Officer (Colonel/Brigadier)	Cr10000

It is common to offer bonuses to skilled personnel. Typically a skill level of 2 or better is required to be considered ‘skilled’ and a bonus of 10% is payable for every skill level the soldier has in their specialist area. Units may also award higher pay to those with essential skills and may run a bonus system. This can be configured in various ways but typically the senior officers and key personnel receive a number of ‘bonus shares’ and some are awarded among the unit’s members after each ticket. A proportion of the unit’s fee is divided among those qualifying for bonuses at the end of the ticket.

The Travellers may wish to calculate the exact salary requirements for their unit or may use the Standard Salaries table for a typical force. These figures do not include combat pay but assume a competent force with some personnel qualifying for skills bonuses. Artillery and vehicle units have a lower salary requirement but maintenance costs must be paid on equipment.

## Standard Salaries

Force	Monthly Salary Total
Single Artillery or Vehicle Crew	Cr6000
Infantry Section	Cr9000
Specialist Section	Cr12000
Infantry Platoon	Cr40000
Artillery Battery or Vehicle Platoon	Cr28000
Infantry Company	Cr200000
Artillery or Vehicle Company	Cr150000
Composite or Combined-Arms Company	Cr175000
Infantry Battalion	MCr1
Artillery or Vehicle Battalion	Cr600000
Combined-Arms Battalion	Cr800000

## MAINTENANCE

Maintenance of individual equipment is assumed to be part of the unit’s supply requirements. Artillery weapons, vehicles and similar heavy equipment require Materiel to maintain them. This can be bought, requisitioned from a client or scavenged; it must be obtained somehow but the means do not really matter to the maintenance team.

The maintenance cost of heavy equipment is based on its shipping tonnage, modified by the propulsion system in use. Tracked vehicles cost more than wheeled ones to maintain and grav vehicles cost even more. Similarly, the maintenance requirement for artillery weapons is based on their own tonnage if on an independent mount such as a trailer. If the weapon is carried in a vehicle, the vehicle’s tonnage is what matters.

## Maintenance Requirements

Factor	Effect
Static or Towed Mount	x1
Wheeled Vehicle	x2
Watercraft	x2.5
Tracked Vehicle	x5
Aircraft	x8
Grav Vehicle	x10

Base maintenance requirement for heavy equipment is 5% of the vehicle or piece of equipment’s shipping tonnage, per month. This is modified by the item’s propulsion type. For example, TL7 support mortar on an unpowered mount has a shipping tonnage of 0.25, so a battery of four of them equals one ton of heavy equipment. Since the weapons are not aboard a self-propelled vehicle, the battery costs 0.05 Materiel per month to maintain. On the other hand, a 15-ton g-carrier requires 0.75 Materiel, multiplied by 10 to 7.5 because grav vehicles require a lot more effort to keep flying.

# EQUIPPING THE UNIT

A military unit of any sort requires a great deal of mundane items like messkits, rain ponchos and stylish berets. This equipment is abstracted as Materiel required to set up the formation. The Travellers are assumed to be obtaining replacements for this equipment as part of their supply budget for a force and do not need to keep track of it. They will, however, need to buy and maintain weaponry and vehicles. Larger items are often bought singly but mercenary units tend to buy small arms and the like in discounted high-volume shipments.

Supplies and Materiel can also be bought, again in discounted packages. Outfitters typically have ready-to-go standard packages containing a full set of equipment for one soldier, or 10, or 50, with add-on packs for those who want the more expensive extras. The availability of these packages, which reduce costs by standardisation, mean that smaller mercenary units often have a very similar look to one another. Larger units typically request packages to their own specification and may vary more in appearance.

Materiel is typically bought in shipments of 10, 100 or 1,000 units. This represents uniforms, common electronic spares, vehicle components and all other non-combat requirements. It is not specified when the Travellers buy it and can be left as a resource pool until they need it.

Supplies are also bought in shipments of 10, 100, or 1,000 units. It represents food, ammunition, fuel, lubricants and similar expendable resources. Supplies are not specified when the Travellers buy them – there is no need to define that the shipment contains X rations and Y rounds of ammunition – and can be left as a resource pool for when the Travellers draw upon it.

The Supplies and Material table indicates the typical cash cost of a shipment, which includes a bulk discount and the tonnage required to store or ship it. Tonnage is in terms of starship displacement. Packaging becomes greatly more efficient in larger quantities for supplies but to a lesser extent for Materiel.

## Supplies and Materiel

Item	Cost	Tonnage
Supplies (1)	Cr100	0.05
Supplies (10)	Cr900	0.2
Supplies (100)	Cr80000	1
Supplies (1,000)	Cr75000	5
Materiel (1)	Cr10000	0.1
Materiel (10)	Cr90000	1
Materiel (100)	Cr750000	10
Materiel (1,000)	Cr6000000	75

## WORKING WITH AN ARMS DEALER

The process of establishing a relationship with an arms dealer is sometimes very simple. Most are legitimate businesspeople, although some will bend the rules when it suits them. An apparently legitimate dealer must keep up appearances, which means requiring a unit to have licenses and present credentials. Some have a minimum level of Reputation and will not deal with a unit that does not meet its standards. Others grant more leeway and can be persuaded (using Persuade and Unit Influence) to establish a relationship with a mercenary unit. There is usually a fee associated, which typically ranges from Cr25000 to Cr100000. A few dealers – legitimate and otherwise – demand a million or more Credits just to establish a relationship.

Once a relationship is established, the dealer will sell whatever they have at a negotiated price. The Referee will need to decide exactly what the dealer can get and in what sort of quantities. Special requests can be attempted, although at a higher than usual price. For example, Legitimate Arms Incorporated is willing to deal with slightly dubious mercenary units but requires Reputation 5+. It will discontinue dealings until a unit repairs its professional reputation. If these conditions are met, LAI can obtain infantry and artillery weapons up to TL10 and aerospace defence equipment up to TL12. It rarely deals in combat vehicles such as tanks but can easily get converted grav trucks to mount weaponry on. If the Travellers want these items

they can just order them once a relationship has been established. If they want a shipment of grav tanks, LAI can try to get them but there are no guarantees and the cost will be inflated.

The willingness of dealers to work with the Travellers can be a major plot point in a campaign, with the mercenaries working hard to get on the client list for a full-service, high-tech provider whilst having to make do with TL9 equipment obtained by a mostly-legal broker. Some of this equipment might have a history or might not be available after all, causing the Travellers to revise their plans or deal with the fallout of their attempts to buy stolen missile launchers.

If the Referee does not wish to create multiple sources of arms and equipment and allow the Travellers free rein in developing relationships, they should instead define the Travellers' starting source of weaponry and materiel, and provide one or more potential sources of higher TL equipment. Creating a relationship with these can be a campaign goal, allowing the Travellers to improve the sophistication of their equipment. If this is to be abstracted, a system based upon Influence and Reputation is used.

## Creating Dealers and Sources

A potential source of Materiel and equipment can be generated randomly or values can be assigned by the Referee. If random determination is preferred, roll 2D on each column of the Arms Dealers table. The unit's Reputation provides a blanket DM across all columns. Influence can be applied as a DM on any one column of the Travellers' choice. If it is negative, it must still be applied but the Travellers can choose which column.

Most dealers will have one or more categories of equipment available – infantry weapons, artillery, aerospace, combat vehicles and support or specialist systems such as electronic warfare equipment and advanced sensors. A dealer who has none of these can supply only minimal equipment – mismatched small arms, crudely converted civilian vehicles, Supplies and Materiel.

Equipment is categorised as None, Basic and Quality. None is self-explanatory – the dealer does not work in that sector. Basic and Quality equipment categories are discussed under Combat Assets on the following page.



## Arms Dealers

2D+DMs	Max. TL	Infantry	Artillery	Combat Vehicles	Aerospace	Support and Specialist
0 or less	6	None	None	None	None	None
1	7	None	None	None	None	None
2–3	8	Basic	None	None	None	None
4–5	9	Basic	None	Basic	None	None
6–7	10	Basic	Basic	Basic	Basic	Basic
8–9	11	Basic	Basic	Basic	Basic	Basic
10–11	12	Quality	Basic	Basic	Basic	Basic
12–13	13	Quality	Quality	Basic	Basic	Quality
14–15	14	Quality	Quality	Quality	Quality	Quality
16 or more	15	Quality	Quality	Quality	Quality	Quality

### Example

The Free Grenadiers are seeking a new supplier for weaponry. They give the job to one of their officers between tickets. The unit has Reputation 2 and a rather weak Influence –1. The former applies on all columns whilst the latter has to be applied on a column of the Travellers' choice. Rolling for Tech Level, the dice come up a 7, modified to 9. A dealer has been found who can supply up to TL11 equipment. The unit rolls an 8 for infantry weapons, modified to 10 – Quality weaponry is available. Since artillery is a low priority the Influence DM is applied there, resulting in a net 5 – no artillery weapons are available from this dealer. Further rolls determine that Basic combat vehicles are available, Quality aerospace weapons and Quality support and specialist systems. This is a good result, enabling the unit to get hold of some of the best equipment available at TL 11.

The Referee should note that this system is for random determination of dealers and it is always possible to dictate the capabilities of any given dealer. Someone who can supply only the most minimal small arms and hardware but Quality armoured vehicles up to TL15, is entirely a possibility. However, the top-end dealers will have restrictions on who they will work with or may impose conditions that lead to new adventures.

## COMBAT ASSETS

Rather than purchase a gun, grenades, sighting aids and spare magazines for every single soldier in the unit, mercenary formations will usually order shipments of equipment from an outfitter. Individual personnel might have their own weapons, particularly in the case of specialists and experts, but most members of a unit will draw their weapons from the unit's armoury. The Travellers are welcome to specify exactly what weaponry

each individual is carrying but it is sufficient to state the TL and equipment level of a force and assume that soldiers are outfitted suitably for the task at hand.

The Tech Level of a force – and therefore its TL DM – is determined by its general equipment and the weaponry issued in connection with the unit's primary function. Thus an artillery formation is distinguished by the TL of its howitzers, rocket batteries or other bombardment systems rather than the small arms carried by its security element. The Travellers should not be permitted to exploit this, however. The Referee is free to disregard support equipment provided in too small a quantity or to assign an averaged TL to a unit that is deliberately exploiting the Tech Level assessment guidelines.

General equipment is a factor in determining the TL of a force and is provided as Materiel when the unit and its sub-units are raised. The TL assigned to the unit is the TL of the Materiel used. If this is sourced locally, for example by scavenging a battlefield on a TL7 world to equip a newly raised reinforcement platoon, the local TL is used. If Materiel can be bought in from a supplier it can be of any TL. These rules are about running a mercenary

### Basic Equipment and Body Armour

The basic equipment provided to a mercenary force includes personal protection as appropriate to the role of the individual. This is factored into the combat calculations and need not be tracked separately. Personal protection in this case includes flak jackets, helmets, limb plates and similar equipment but not combat armour or battle dress. Full-suit armour is detailed in the Specialists book.

campaign rather than determining exactly what supplies and equipment are available in any given location, so it is up to the Referee to say what is available. In any given setting there will be a few full-service sources of military equipment and if the Travellers have a good relationship with one they can buy equipment there. If not, they will have to find a supplier.

This is a part of running a mercenary unit that most outsiders never consider but a commander needs to create and maintain relationships with anyone who can supply arms and ammunition. There are adventures to be had in doing so; perhaps a prospective client will be able to provide equipment in return for a task. The Travellers will at the very least need to get in touch with prospective suppliers and see what is available.

Combat Assets are bought as blocks of equipment, rated as Basic or Quality, and in quantities that determine the equipping level of the unit. Quality equipment is required to achieve an equipping level of Generous or above and imposes an additional DM+1 on checks to resolve combat using it and DM+2 where the quality of a unit's equipment may be a factor outside combat. For example, if a unit has Quality artillery systems and is caught in a fierce sandstorm that might disrupt the function of its weapons, it receives DM+2 on checks to see if the guns can still function.

The amount and quality of equipment purchased for a formation determines its equipping level, rated from Minimal to Excessive as noted on page 60 in *Book 1*. A force will typically only equip itself to one level lower than its primary area of expertise in other areas. An artillery formation with Standard weapons would normally be restricted to Basic infantry weapons. However, the Travellers are free to equip their force how they like so long as they are prepared to pay the costs.

## COMBAT ASSETS: INFANTRY

Infantry combat assets are required for any unit to be able to function as a ground combat force. A force's Combat characteristic is based on the Tech Level of its primary small arms and support weapons. A force that has no infantry combat equipment has Combat 0. If some form of equipment has been provided, Combat starts at of the unit's Tech Level, rounded down, unless it is an infantry type unit whose primary purpose is to engage the enemy. In this case, Combat starts at 1/2 the unit's Tech Level, rounded down.

Costs to equip a unit assumes a discount for buying in quantity. Weapons can usually be scavenged or bought more cheaply on the surplus market but are unlikely to be of high quality. If a force larger than a company is being equipped all at once, multiple companies' worth of equipment can be bought at a 5% discount per additional company, down to a minimum of 60% of the standard price. Note that these prices are to equip an infantry formation. Armoured, Artillery, Aerospace and Support formations need less equipment and thus may halve the cost.

**Small Arms, Minimal:** Minimal small arms represents civilian type weapons or a mismatched collection of scavenged guns with few or no automatic weapons and no support weapons. Minimal small arms increases Combat to 1 if it is currently 0 but otherwise has no effect.

**Small Arms, Sparse:** A Sparse level of equipment is equivalent to what is typically available to the average security or law enforcement patrol. It may include a small amount of obsolescent or mismatched military weapons but no support weapons. Sparse small arms increase a unit's Combat by +1.

**Small Arms, Basic:** Basic small arms are the minimum for effective infantry formations. Most soldiers will have a rifle or equivalent weapon, with grenades and a minimum of support weapons. Basic weaponry is typical of what is issued to non-infantry formations for self-defence. In this case it includes carbine versions of the standard rifle, fully-automatic but low-capacity personal defence weapons and the like. Basic small arms increase the unit's Combat by +2.

**Small Arms, Standard:** Standard small arms are what the typical military force might carry. Most personnel have a rifle or equivalent weapon, with a reasonable level of support weapons throughout the force. This typically includes squad-level light automatic weapons such as machineguns or support versions of the standard rifle, grenade launchers and some personnel equipped with 'marksman' rifles. Standard small arms provides a minimal capability against light armoured vehicles, in the form of rifle or launcher grenades, disposable rockets or rocket propelled grenades and so forth. Standard weaponry increases the Combat by +3.

**Small Arms, Generous:** A generous or better allocation of small arms requires Quality weaponry. Personnel are equipped much as in a Standard loadout but their gear is sufficiently better to give an advantage. This might be in supporting areas like personal sensors and sights rather than better weaponry but also includes improved

grenades and rockets, additional tactical systems such as stun grenades and advanced ammunition that makes typical small arms more effective. Generous small arms increases Combat by +4.

**Small Arms, Lavish:** A unit with Lavish small arms typically allows personnel to choose variants of a standard set of weapons, tailored to their own specifications, along with the very best sights, sensors and ammunition available. Capabilities are not much wider than with Standard weaponry – the unit will have limited self-support capability with launched grenades, rockets and powerful anti-materiel weapons but ultimately can engage only the same targets as a force with Standard equipment. However, it can do so more effectively and lighter equipment means more ammunition or backup weapons can be carried. Lavish small arms increases Combat by +5.

**Small Arms, Excessive:** Excessive small arms can be in terms of quality, quantity or both. Weapons are the very best versions available, lovingly maintained and possibly custom-handmade to the specifications of each soldier. Shaving a few grams off every piece of equipment means a force can carry yet more ammunition or additional grenades, support or specialist weapons. The net result is to increase Combat by +6.

## Infantry Combat Assets Costs

Combat Asset	Cost per Section	Cost per Platoon	Cost per Company
Minimal	Cr2500	Cr10000	Cr35000
Sparse	Cr5000	Cr17500	Cr60000
Basic	Cr7500	Cr27500	Cr100000
Standard	Cr10000	Cr35000	Cr125000
Generous	Cr20000	Cr75000	Cr250000
Lavish	Cr50000	Cr175000	Cr650000
Excessive	Cr100000	Cr350000	MCr1.25

## Tech Level Modifiers for Hardware

Normally a unit will be equipped at its nominal TL in all areas, though it is possible for TL in some areas to differ – for example if the unit has retained its TL13 grav tanks during a retreat but had to re-equip with locally made TL7 small arms. The costs given for equipment assume the force is being equipped at TL9. If higher or lower TL equipment is desired (and is available) apply the following cost multipliers:

TL	Cost Multiplier
1	x0.2
2	x0.3
3	x0.4
4	x0.5
5	x0.6
6	x0.7
7	x0.8
8	x0.9
9	x1
10	x1.25
11	x1.5
12	x2
13	x3
14	x4
15	x5

## COMBAT ASSETS: VEHICLES

A force does not need any vehicles in order to be able to fight. Its equipping level indicates the type, number and effectiveness of any vehicle-mounted combat systems the formation has. That is to say, the amount of vehicles a formation has defines its Mobility but the type and firepower of its vehicle-mounted weapons is what defines its Combat characteristic. This is only the case if the vehicles are intended for combat. Those that are purely transports do not affect Combat but define Mobility. If the vehicles are intended to fight using their onboard weapons, their Combat is based on 1/2 their Tech Level. If the weapons are intended for defensive or fire-support purposes, Combat is rated as 1/3 of Tech Level. If the unit is primarily an infantry-type force with some fire support either on its transports or aboard dedicated combat vehicles, the unit's infantry weapons are used to define its Combat characteristic, with a bonus from vehicular weapons.

The cost of vehicles is not abstracted in the same way that infantry weapons are. The Travellers must obtain whatever vehicles they can afford or otherwise get hold of, at which point the Referee will rate the equipping level from Minimal to Excessive. If a force is intended to fight using the weapons on its vehicles, its Combat characteristic is based on that of the vehicle-mounted weapons rather than infantry weaponry carried by the crews. However, personnel will expect to be issued small arms for self-defence.

If a unit is intended for direct combat using vehicle-mounted weapons, such as a tank or armoured car formation, its starting Combat characteristic is 1/2 its Tech Level. Transport formations start with a Combat characteristic of 1/3 Tech Level if they have any vehicle-mounted weaponry and zero if not.

Note that an infantry-type unit can only benefit from the most potent fire support weapon it has. Only the highest bonus to Combat is considered.

**Vehicle Weapons, Minimal:** Minimal vehicle weapons represent the lightest of infantry support weapons, typically on an unprotected pintle mount. Minimal equipment allows the formation's Combat characteristic to be rated at 1/3 of Tech Level rather than 0 but otherwise has no effect. A military unit riding in vehicles will be better off using its own small arms and thus its own Combat characteristic, so the only time this is likely to matter is when the vehicles have no passengers.

**Vehicle Weapons, Sparse:** A Sparse level of equipment indicates infantry support weapons, up to the level of a heavy machinegun on a ring mount, are present on the vehicles. Typically a force riding such lightly armed vehicles will use its own weapons. Sparse weaponry is unlikely to be encountered aboard combat vehicles such as tanks, other than at low Tech Levels. Sparse weaponry allows a formation's Combat characteristic to be rated at 1/3 its Tech Level and adds +1 either to this rating or as an additional bonus to the Combat of infantry riding Sparsely armed transport vehicles.

**Vehicle Weapons, Basic:** Basic vehicle weaponry is typically found as a defensive armament aboard artillery platforms or transport assets. It includes light autocannon or light laser weapons intended for anti-personnel work or perhaps engaging lightly armoured vehicles. Basic vehicle weapons allow a formation's Combat characteristic to be rated at 1/3 its Tech Level and add +2 to this, or add an additional +2 to the Combat of a formation which includes these weapons as fire support.

**Vehicle Weapons, Standard:** Standard-level weaponry is encountered aboard light tanks and reconnaissance vehicles, and mounted on transport vehicles that are intended to offer some direct-fire support. In the latter case, Combat characteristic is based on 1/3 of the unit's Tech Level, with an additional +3, or the unit's vehicle-mounted weaponry adds +3 to the Combat of

an infantry-type force using the vehicles as transport. A unit that uses its vehicle weapons as a primary combat capability bases its Combat characteristic on 1/2 its Tech Level and adds +4 to this for its Standard level weapons. These are typically heavy autocannon, lasers, rifled or smoothbore cannon up to around 90mm calibre or vehicle-mounted laser systems.

**Vehicle Weaponry, Generous:** A generous or better allocation of vehicle weaponry requires Quality weaponry. This level of equipment is sometimes found aboard fire-support vehicles – in which case it adds +4 to the Combat of the infantry force it supports or as the main weapon of a grav sled, tank or armoured reconnaissance vehicle. In the latter case Combat is based on 1/2 the unit's Tech Level, +6 for the Generous weaponry. Examples include conventional cannon of up to 150mm, hypervelocity guns, missile systems, early plasma weapons and heavy laser cannon.

**Vehicle Weaponry, Lavish:** Lavish vehicle weaponry includes early fusion guns, heavy plasma guns and the very best of conventional cannon or missile systems. A fire support vehicle with this level of capability adds +5 to the Combat of an infantry formation it supports; if mounted on a tank or grav gunship Combat is based on 1/2 the unit's Tech Level, +8 for the lavish weaponry.

**Vehicle Weaponry, Excessive:** Excessive weaponry indicates the top end of the plasma and fusion gun fields plus exotic weapons such as vehicle-mounted disintegrators. A fire support vehicle with this level of capability adds +6 to the Combat of an infantry formation it supports; if mounted on a tank or grav gunship Combat is based on 1/2 the unit's Tech Level, +10 for the weaponry.

## Vehicle Weapons

Weaponry Level	Combat: Transport Vehicles	Combat: Fire-support Vehicle	Combat: Direct-combat Vehicle
Minimal	1/3 TL	0	1/3 TL
Sparse	1/3 TL+1	+1	1/3 TL+1
Basic	1/3 TL+2	+2	1/3 TL+2
Standard	1/3 TL+3	+3	1/2 TL+4
Generous	1/3 TL+4	+4	1/2 TL+6
Lavish	1/3 TL+5	+5	1/2 TL+8
Excessive	1/3 TL+6	+6	1/2 TL+10

## Example

The Travellers have an infantry platoon with Combat 8. They are in a position to obtain some TL8 wheeled armoured personnel carriers mounting 25mm autocannon – Basic level vehicular weaponry. If these were formed into a unit on their own they would have a Combat characteristic of 1/3 their Tech Level (2.67, rounded to 3) +2 for their Basic weaponry. If these had been armoured cars of the same Tech Level their Combat would be 4 (half of their TL 8) +2, making 6, but APCs are not tough enough to be considered direct-combat vehicles.

This is not an effective armoured unit, so the Travellers team the vehicles up with their infantry platoon. The Combat of this unit is increased by +2 for the fire support available from their vehicles' 25mm autocannon and the platoon is now greatly increased in mobility. A wheeled-mobile infantry platoon with a Combat 10 seems more useful than the two units separately.

Next, the Travellers buy a TL10 light grav tank mounting a plasma gun. If this was formed as a unit on its own it would have a Combat of half its TL (10, halved to 5) +6 for the Generous weaponry it carries. Combat 11 seems impressive but it is a lone tank. The Travellers integrate it into their existing platoon instead. Mobility of this unit is not increased; it can only go as fast as its wheeled APCs can manage. However, the addition of a plasma gun adds +4 to the unit's Combat.

The force is still based around its infantry component but is now wheeled-mobile with a tank-mounted plasma gun and some 25mm autocannon in support. The Travellers think the plasma gun will bring their unit's Combat up to 14 but they have forgotten that their force can only benefit from the most potent support weapon it contains. The +2 from the APC-mounted autocannon is disregarded but the +4 from the Generous plasma cannon still gives Combat 12. The Travellers consider detaching the APCs but then they would have an infantry formation teamed up with a grav tank, leaving the unit unable to benefit from its mobility. Such are the choices made by mercenary commanders.

## COMBAT ASSETS: ARTILLERY

Artillery weapons are those capable of indirect fire or bombarding a distant target from beyond the range of small arms. This means that primitive black powder cannon would be considered Combat assets rather than Artillery in this context. Even something as basic as a grenade launcher can outrange black powder guns, allowing a mercenary force to destroy them from a safe distance.

Like vehicles, the cost of artillery systems is not abstracted. The Travellers can buy any weaponry they can get their hands on and the Referee must rate its effectiveness according to the type, nature and quality of the equipment fielded. Artillery affects the Bombardment characteristic, which starts at 0 if no artillery weapons are provided to the unit. Assuming a force has at least some artillery weapons its Bombardment begins at 1/2the unit's Tech Level.

Artillery weapons can be man-portable if they are very small but are usually carried either on an unpowered carriage or in a vehicle. The former is typically referred to as 'towed' artillery, whilst those in vehicles are 'mobile'. However, some very large pieces mounted aboard slow-moving vehicles are not really 'mobile' and might better be characterised as 'siege' weapons. The vehicles used to carry artillery weapons can usually mount some light direct-fire systems, which will give them an increased Combat characteristic. If not, the Combat of an artillery unit is based on the small arms carried by its crews and any security element that may be present. The vehicles themselves affect Mobility but do not change Bombardment or Combat.

Note that if an artillery weapon is included in an infantry force as a fire support element it can provide an increase to Combat and Bombardment but Bombardment begins at 0 in this case – an infantry battalion with a self-propelled gun is still an infantry force. Only units where the primary function of the formation is bombardment base their Bombardment characteristic on 1/2Tech Level.

**Artillery, Minimal:** Minimal artillery includes support versions of soldier-portable weapons, such as belt-fed automatic grenade launchers or even just large numbers of personal grenade launchers. An infantry unit where everyone has a launcher and several grenades for it – which constitutes a heavy personal load – could be considered to have Minimal artillery. At higher Tech Levels, one-use seeker drones grant a similar capability. Minimal Artillery grants the formation a flat Bombardment 1.

**Artillery, Sparse:** Sparse artillery is the minimum for a force to be considered 'artillery' rather than 'combat'. Examples include light man-portable mortars and similar weapons, and man-portable guided missile systems. If a non-artillery force is given Sparse artillery its Bombardment is set to 2. A force primarily equipped in this manner and deployed as artillery bases its Bombardment on 1/2Tech Level, +1 for its Sparse artillery.

**Artillery, Basic:** Basic artillery is typically medium to heavy mortars, light artillery guns or howitzers, or light unguided rockets. Light guided missiles can also be used as bunker-busters in this role. Basic and heavier artillery is not man-portable and needs a towed carriage or vehicle mount, or a static emplacement. A 'straight' artillery unit equipped in this manner bases its Bombardment on 1/2Tech Level, +2 for Basic artillery. A multi-role formation, such as one equipped with a mix of tanks and self-propelled artillery, bases its Bombardment on 1/3 Tech Level, +2 for Basic artillery.

**Artillery, Standard:** Standard artillery is typically made up of medium-calibre guns or howitzers in the 150–220mm range or heavy guided or unguided rockets. Some alternate systems use swarms of drones instead, although this is less cost-effective than tube or rocket artillery. Standard artillery is the most potent level likely to be found in composite units. Artillery formations equipped in this way gain +4 to Bombardment.

**Artillery, Generous:** A generous or better allocation of artillery requires Quality weaponry. Sometimes weapons are the same as at the Standard level, just more of them and with a few refinements. The dividing line between Standard and Generous artillery is often in terms of ammunition; Generous artillery can shoot further from the same type of gun, hit more accurately and do more damage. Some specialist munitions may be available, such as autonomous self-guided top-attack missiles for use against tanks or field artillery scattered mines. Generously equipped artillery formations gain +6 to Bombardment.

**Artillery, Lavish:** Lavish artillery features advanced targeting and guidance, improved warheads and considerable refinement to ensure the target is saturated or penetrated. Specialist warheads are likely to be available, such as Agent Defeat Munitions designed to take out stockpiles of biological or chemical weapons, deep penetration rounds for cracking bunkers and infrastructure-denial systems to short out power supplies. The weapons themselves are typically not all that different from more basic systems but the package as a whole is vastly more effective. Lavish artillery grants +8 to Bombardment.

**Artillery, Excessive:** Excessive artillery tends to be crammed with bells and whistles whether it is of a conventional type or something more exotic. At higher Tech Levels, battlefield meson guns provide a different kind of indirect fire, effectively shooting through terrain rather than lobbing something over it. Excessive artillery grants +10 to Bombardment.

## Artillery

Weaponry Level	Bombardment if added to Infantry Formation	Bombardment in Composite Formation	Bombardment for Artillery Formation
Minimal	1	1	N/A
Sparse	2	2	1/2TL+1
Basic	N/A	1/3 TL+2	1/2TL+2
Standard	N/A	1/3 TL+4	1/2TL+4
Generous	N/A	N/A	1/2TL+6
Lavish	N/A	N/A	1/2TL+8
Excessive	N/A	N/A	1/2TL+10



## Example

The Angry Gun Rowdies is a rather amateurish formation that has come into possession of a TL8 125mm gun-howitzer on a wheeled chassis. After trying it out on the local scenery, the Rowdies decide to form an artillery component for their force. Their first idea is to create a composite platoon of infantry and the artillery piece. One weapon is a rather low allocation for an artillery platoon-equivalent but the Referee thinks this is acceptable for a composite force. The unit's Combat is based on its infantry component and the Referee allows the formation to be considered a platoon-sized composite unit with Basic artillery. The Rowdies are even granted +2 to their Combat as they have a 125mm weapon providing fire support. Bombardment is a disappointing 5.

The Rowdies were hoping to blow up more stuff than that, so redefine their gun as a pure artillery unit. Instead of a platoon, this is now a single major combat vehicle, thus the equivalent of a section. One gun on the section scale is enough for consideration as an artillery unit, so the new independent artillery section is rated as having Standard artillery. This means its Bombardment is half its TL of 8, +4 – a more respectable 8. The Rowdies are pleased but if this single-gun battery engages a platoon-sized unit it suffers the usual DM-4 for a difference of one level in unit scale. This increases to DM-8 if taking on an enemy company. The Rowdies will just have to learn that there is a limit to what can be achieved with small amounts of artillery.

## COMBAT ASSETS: AEROSPACE DEFENCE

Whilst the most primitive flying machines can be chewed out of the sky with assault rifles as they trundle slowly past, serious combat assets – whether they are aircraft, grav vehicles or even flying creatures – require specialist weaponry to deal with them. Where a ground force is attacked from the air from short range – such as by a local biplane with a couple of machineguns strapped on it – the force may use its Combat characteristic to fight back. More significant threats require aerospace defence weaponry, and it is considered must-have equipment by most mercenary forces.

Aerospace weaponry can be given to any formation. Those that are not dedicated aerospace or anti-aerospace forces base their Aerospace off 1/3 of their Tech Level – providing they have enough weaponry to be effective – whilst specialist units use 1/2 their Tech Level as the base for their characteristic.

The Travellers can of course choose not to obtain aerospace defence equipment. If they do buy some, defensive weaponry of a sort that can be carried by personnel or mounted on a non-specialist vehicle can be rated up to Standard level. A greater anti-aerospace capability requires more significant weapon systems, which are only found in specialist formations. The same ratings are used for a unit's self-defence capability, long-range area defence capability or the weaponry of an aerospace vehicle such as a fighter or interceptor.



**Aerospace Weapons, Minimal:** Minimal weaponry typically represents conversions of standard light support systems, such as machineguns on a high-angle mount. A Minimal equipment level permits the force to assign a value of 1 to its Aerospace characteristic, indicating a very minor ability to harm flying vehicles beyond the range of hand-held small arms.

**Aerospace Weapons, Sparse:** A Sparse level of equipment typically indicates the unit has some effective anti-aerospace weapons but very few of them. Weapons are generally light autocannon or lasers on a high-angle mount and low-quality shoulder-fired missiles. A Sparse allocation of aerospace weaponry allows the unit to set its Aerospace to 1/3 of its Tech Level, +1 for the weapons fit. It is unlikely that a dedicated aerospace defence formation would be so poorly equipped.

**Aerospace Weapons, Basic:** A Basic aerospace outfitting uses the same weapons as a Sparse one, although generally of better quality and much greater numbers. Vehicle-mounted missiles are often exactly the same as shoulder-fired versions but typically in multiple mountings. Basic outfitting is the effective minimum for a dedicated anti-aerospace unit. Basic weaponry allows a non-specialist unit to set its Aerospace to 1/3 of Tech Level, +2 for its weaponry; specialist units use 1/2Tech Level as a base.

**Aerospace Weapons, Standard:** Standard-level equipment is typically composed of better versions of Basic equipment plus medium-range missiles and heavier or faster-firing weapons. Standard level equipment adds +3 to a unit's Aerospace.

**Aerospace Weaponry, Generous:** A generous or better allocation of aerospace weaponry requires Quality weaponry. Weapons include gatling lasers and fast-response missile interceptors as well as long-range surface-to-air missiles. If fitted to a vehicle as a defensive system base Aerospace is 1/3 of Tech Level +4 for the weapon systems. Dedicated aerospace units base Aerospace on 1/2Tech Level, +6 for the weapon systems.

**Aerospace Weaponry, Lavish:** Lavish aerospace weaponry includes heavy surface-to-air weapons and even small PAD (Planetary Aerospace Defence) missiles capable of hitting targets in low orbit. Sophisticated short and medium range weapons in fast-slewing mounts and using 'smart' interfacing between weapons may also be present. Often the dividing line between Generous and Lavish aerospace weaponry is the ability to layer defences and plug the gaps in one system's coverage with another. Lavish levels of equipment are only possible with dedicated aerospace units, where they add +8 to the unit's Aerospace.

**Aerospace Weaponry, Excessive:** Excessive weaponry provides high capabilities at all ranges, from near-instant response in the case of a point-defence threat to area defence against very distant targets. Heavy PAD missiles and meson guns calibrated for orbital and airborne targets also qualify as Excessive. This level of equipment increases Aerospace by +10.

## Aerospace Weapons

Weaponry Level	Aerospace if Non-specialist Unit	Aerospace if Specialist Unit
Minimal	1	N/A
Sparse	1/3 TL+1	N/A
Basic	1/3 TL+2	1/2TL+2
Standard	1/3 TL+3	1/2TL+3
Generous	N/A	1/2TL+6
Lavish	N/A	1/2TL+8
Excessive	N/A	1/2TL+10

## Example

The Travellers decide they want their TL8 wheeled APCs to have some aerospace defence capability. The vehicles already mount a 25mm autocannon, so the Travellers retain the weapons but update the mountings to fast-slewing, high-angle systems and fit a co-axial single-shot missile launcher. This is a vehicle-mount version of a standard infantry air defence missile and only marginally effective against grav vehicles. The combination of gun and missile is useful against mid-tech air threats, which is what the Travellers needed. The Referee deems this to be a Basic fit, since it is present on all the vehicles. As a non-specialist unit the Travellers' APCs have Aerospace 5. The guns can still be used for fire support but not at the same time as providing air defence.

## SUPPORT ASSETS

Support assets vary considerably. They can include medical, electronic warfare, decontamination, combat engineering and many other fields. A properly equipped unit will have some capability in at least some of these areas and will use 1/3 of their Tech Level as a base when determining its Support characteristic. Equipment levels all the way up to Lavish are possible even with non-specialist units but only a specialist formation operating in its area of expertise can base Support on 1/2of their Tech Level. Some levels of support equipment are bought with Materiel when the unit is formed, although high levels require the purchase of specialist equipment.

**Support Equipment, Minimal:** Most properly organised military formations provide a modest capability to treat casualties, communicate effectively and conduct basic field engineering. A Minimal level of equipment implies that little equipment has been provided or the unit has had to scrounge for what it needs. Minimal equipment sets Support to 1.

**Support Equipment, Sparse:** A properly equipped unit has enough medical kits, spades and similar items to get most out-of-combat jobs done, if not all that well. Sparse equipment is assumed to have been provided if the unit has sufficient Materiel when it is formed. Sparse equipment is barely sufficient to allow a specialist unit to function properly but permits Support to be based on 1/2TL for specialist units and 1/3 TL for non-specialists.

**Support Equipment, Basic:** Basic equipment includes medical facilities suitable for the size of the unit, communications gear able to carry out electronic warfare operations and a good set of hand tools for engineering works. It increases Support by +2. Basic support equipment is obtained by paying 25% extra Materiel when forming the unit or providing this amount later.

**Support Equipment, Standard:** Standard-level equipment includes some vehicle-mounted engineering tools, a good medical provision and sufficient electronics capability to require a few expert personnel. It is obtained by paying 50% extra Materiel when forming the unit or later. Standard support provision adds +3 to the unit's Support.

**Support Equipment, Generous:** A generous or better allocation requires Quality equipment. It is obtained by paying 100% extra Materiel when the unit is formed or

when it is upgraded. This permits Support to be based on 1/3 TL. For a specialist unit, Support can be based on 1/2TL but this requires the provision of additional equipment. This is likely to be mobile or vehicle-mounted such as engineering or medical variants of armoured vehicles. This equipment must be purchased separately. Generous Support equipment adds +4 to the Support of non-speciality units and +6 to specialists.

**Support Equipment, Lavish:** Lavish equipment is the highest level possible for non-specialist units. A Lavishly equipped unit can turn its hand to almost any non-combat task and may be able to provide a better service than local specialists. For example, a Lavishly equipped lift infantry formation might find itself acting as the local command communications net and also helping with engineering tasks the locals cannot handle. Lavish equipment is obtained by paying an additional 200% Materiel cost when the unit is raised or upgraded and in addition providing a large amount of high-quality equipment. A Lavishly equipped communications formation, for example, would have a full complement of vehicles stuffed full of sensors, comms gear and electronic warfare equipment. Lavish support equipment adds +5 to the Support of non-specialist units and +8 to specialists.

**Support Equipment, Excessive:** Excessive equipment simply means the best available and too much of it. Excessive equipment is obtained by paying an additional 400% Materiel cost when the unit is formed or upgraded and buying huge quantities of the very best equipment available. This might include a mobile field hospital full of top-end autodoc or a fleet of combat engineering vehicles. Excessive support equipment adds +10 to the Support of specialist units.

## Support Equipment

Weaponry Level	Requirements	Support if Non-specialist Unit	Support if Specialist Unit
Minimal	Scrounge some equipment	1	N/A
Sparse	Materiel cost paid when the unit was raised	1/3 TL+1	1/2TL+1
Basic	Materiel cost +25%	1/3 TL+2	1/2TL+2
Standard	Materiel cost +50%	1/3 TL+3	1/2TL+3
Generous	Materiel cost +100%, + specialist equipment if specialist formation	1/3 TL+4	1/2TL+6
Lavish	Materiel cost +200% + specialist equipment	1/3 TL+5	1/2TL+8
Excessive	Materiel cost +400% + specialist equipment	N/A	1/2TL+10

## Complex Units

Military organisation is for the most part aimed at making it possible to wield a force as a tool of policy, which in turn usually means making administration as simple as possible under the circumstances. In general, formations are organised as neatly as possible and tend to be of a single primary type with a few supports. If this is the case it is easiest to rate the force overall. An infantry battalion with a few mortars is an infantry battalion with a Minimal or Sparse artillery provision. Its bombardment capability at the battalion scale is negligible and will only matter in highly unusual circumstances.

Since the focus of the campaign is on the Travellers, they may wish to (or by circumstances be forced to) build a complex unit. In this case, each of the major sub-units must be rated separately. The Referee can then gain an impression of the force's overall capabilities. If the Travellers have a high-end grav tank embedded in one of their infantry platoons this is going to be highly significant when that platoon engages a similar force without one. However, at the battalion scale a single grav tank is less significant and might be considered to add only a Minimal capability to the force overall. The Referee can choose whether to resolve an action based on the unit as a whole or to use the sub-units. As a rule, if the Travellers want to play an action out in detail and use clever tactics their sub-units will become important – but this can go terribly wrong in some cases.

For example, if the Travellers' company has two platoons of infantry, one with a mix of light grav tanks and a fourth support platoon with artillery weapons, the force overall can be considered an understrength infantry company. The deficit is made up by the tanks and the Referee decides one platoon in four represents a Basic armoured-vehicle complement. One platoon in four of artillery is also Basic. The Travellers can use this overall force to fight as a company or can resolve the actions of the four platoons separately. In this case the artillery might be Standard or better but it bombards as a platoon-sized formation and suffers negative DMs if attacking a larger force; there is a reason why artillery and armoured vehicles are usually concentrated.

An action invoicing this force can be played out as related but separate combats. In this case the artillery bombards the enemy whilst the three platoons resolve their actions using the Combat characteristic. This system allows any or all of a battle to be played out at any level of detail. The force as a whole can resolve the action or parts of it can be abstracted whilst others are played out as an adventure. This does mean that the armoured force could be hugely successful whilst the artillery gets overrun by a counterattack. Of course, the Travellers should be given a chance to remedy the situation with a change of plan or desperate action, perhaps moving the focus from high-level abstraction to a roleplayed firefight as the command team try to hold off the counterattack long enough for the tanks to come racing back.

*Mercenary* is, after all, about adventure. Logistics, resolution systems and all these game mechanics are just a means to that end.



# UNIT AND PERSONNEL TRAITS



Military units tend to develop a reputation over time, which may or may not be deserved. This is in part modelled by the unit's Reputation characteristic but this refers mainly to its perceived degree of expertise and professionalism. A mercenary force may become known for a particular trait and may have a particular affinity for a certain style of combat. Sub-units may also display certain traits either as a result of deliberate decisions made by their leaders or experiences in the field. These traits can also be used to describe other units and their preferred modes of combat.

Traits can be assigned by the Referee when they seem appropriate and may be sought out by the Travellers. For example, the Travellers might want the Close Assault trait and start training and equipping their people accordingly. The Referee will award the trait when the unit has demonstrated it can perform this style of combat better than a normal force, which will usually be after a successful combat in which the tactic was used or perhaps a tough exercise that went well.

Some traits are distinctly undesirable. A unit that has bought cheap equipment from Ivan's Dodgy War Materiel Emporium might find it has gained the Unreliable Kit trait, whilst others are assigned to show a unit has problems or advantages. Traits of this sort can be added or removed any time the Referee thinks the unit qualifies.

## UNIT CAPABILITY TRAITS

Unit capability traits relate to the things the unit does better than average for a force of its type. They are always positive and can be acquired by a combination of experience, equipment and training.

**Can-Opener:** The unit is trained and equipped to engage armoured troops – those wearing combat armour or battle dress – and robots. It is equipped with a greater than average proportion of light anti-armour weapons suitable

for engaging infantry-type targets – crunch guns, anti-armour grenades, armour-piercing ammunition for its small arms and so forth. When fighting armoured infantry or robots this force gains DM+2.

**Champion Scroungers:** The unit contains some personnel who are experts at scrounging or otherwise obtaining items through less-than-official channels. Checks to obtain illicit items are subject to DM+2. This DM can also be applied to items the unit could legitimately get but there is a chance that the goods are less-than-kosher if successful.

**Close Assault:** The unit is skilled at the 'pell-mell battle' approach, getting close and personal with the enemy. Personnel will tend to be armed with handguns, submachineguns, shotguns and melee weapons in addition to or instead of longer-range small-arms. The same applies to armoured forces that specialise in mixing it up in a fluid mobile action, although 'close' has a different meaning for grav tanks. A unit with the Close Assault trait gains DM+2 in situations where it has been able to close with the enemy or they have foolishly attempted an assault of their own.

**Combat Pioneers:** The unit's personnel are adept at building field fortifications and demolishing them, clearing obstacles and so forth. All Support checks to do with field engineering or combat pioneering gain DM+2.

**Commandos:** The unit's personnel are highly trained in sharp, fast commando raids. When conducting small-unit infiltration type operations the force gains DM+2.

**Medical Excellence:** The unit's medical practices are well above average. Support checks in the medical arena gain DM+2.

**Meteoric Assault:** The force is highly trained (and must be equipped) for meteoric drops from orbit onto a target. In such situations it gains DM+2. Training levels for all meteoric assault-capable troops are high; to qualify for this trait the unit must be above and beyond.

**Sharp-Eyed:** The unit has good sensors or just exceptionally observant people. When attempting to detect intruders or conducting reconnaissance this formation gains DM+2.

**Sharpshooters:** The unit has long-range weapons available and is unusually adept at using them. This might be sniper or marksman rifles for infantry, tank guns, artillery weapons or even missile launchers. When engaging in long-range fire this formation gains DM+2.

**Skirmishers:** The unit is adept at making a nuisance of itself then breaking contact. It will be equipped with light, fast vehicles if it uses them. When resolving a battle using skirmish tactics, breaking off from combat or making a Mobility check the force gains DM+2.

**Stealthy:** The unit is adept at using stealth and is equipped with low-observable vehicles and hardware. When attempting to avoid detection or set up a surprise attack this unit gains DM+2.

**Tankbuster:** The unit is equipped with extra anti-armour weapons – missile launchers, satchel charges, anti-tank mines and the like – and is trained to resist ‘tank terror’. Whenever this unit engages a primarily armoured force or one making extensive use of armed vehicles it gains DM+2.

**Tough Kit:** The unit's equipment is inexplicably survivable. All checks connected with repairs or attempts to scavenge repairable equipment gain DM+2.

**Vacc Troopers:** The unit must be equipped for operations in minimal or no atmosphere and be extensively trained for the role. It gains DM+2 when operating in such an environment.

## UNIT CHARACTERISTIC TRAITS

Unit characteristic traits are more general and describe the current nature or state of the force. Effects of multiple relevant traits can stack.

**97%:** The unit has great faith in its medical support and the skills of its combat lifesavers. According to rumour 97% of those who the medics get to alive stay that way. This grants DM+1 on MOR checks.

**Brutal:** The force has gained a reputation for cruelty and vindictiveness, probably deservedly. It gains DM+1 on checks to resolve combat as many of its foes are more concerned about staying out of the unit's hands than winning the fight. However, the force is largely hated, except by zealots who approve such actions in the name of their cause.

**Gold-Brickers:** The unit contains numerous very lazy individuals who take every opportunity to goof off. This can leave gaps in security or important jobs only partly done. The net result is a reduction of -1 on ECEI.

**Hesitant:** The unit's personnel have suffered serious blows to their confidence. All checks to determine if Morale is lost suffer DM-1 until the unit's self-confidence is restored.

**Honourable Traditions:** The force has a tradition of honourable and reliable service. All checks to recruit personnel gain DM+1 and crew Morale is increased by +1.

**Mismatched Equipment:** The unit's equipment is a hodge-podge of pieces collected from all over, which reduces efficiency. All checks to determine if Company Efficiency Index (CEI) is reduced suffer DM-1.

**Notoriety:** The unit has gained a bad reputation for mistakes, mutinies and even atrocities. Morale is reduced by -2 and all checks to avoid Morale loss suffer DM-2.

**Reputable:** The force has gained a reputation for reliability even under difficult circumstances. Negotiations with a prospective client gain DM+1 and other negotiations – such as trying to convince a trapped enemy to surrender – may also receive this DM at the Referee's discretion.

**Unlucky:** The force seems to be dogged by bad luck and random misfortune. Morale is reduced by -1 and all checks to obtain replacement personnel suffer DM-2.

**Unreliable Equipment:** At the start of each Mission, the Referee should roll 2D. On a score of 10+ several of the unit's systems or pieces of hardware begin malfunctioning. A series of random intermittent faults impose DM-1 on all tasks carried out by the unit or a randomly determined sub-unit.

## PERSONNEL TRAITS

A mercenary campaign is not entirely about the unit as a whole. Many adventures will feature a few individuals either as major characters or as ‘scenery’ for the Travellers. It may be that some actions, like an inspection of the grav vehicles or a trip to the quartermaster’s office, will result in repeated encounters with the same members of the unit or outsiders. They might enjoy occasional comic relief from That Guy Who Keeps Trying To Join Us or dread having to deal with a particularly irritating official.

It would be possible to create the entire unit and everyone it interacts with using the standard *Traveller* Creation rules but that is more work than the benefits justify. Instead, the relevant skills of an individual can be assigned using the system on page 13 and rounded out with additional skills appropriate to their background. If more detail is desired, the personnel traits here can be applied. Indeed, the Referee might choose not to assign skills yet – it is generally enough to assume this person is a competent member of the unit and what will then stand out is any trait they may possess.

**Background:** The individual has an unusual background. This might be useful at some point, such as when the Travellers are about to plunge into a noxious swamp the individual is actually familiar with. Alternatively it might simply mean they have an unusual accent or odd figures of speech.

**Do-Gooder:** The individual is curiously unwilling to admit the practicalities of the mercenary trade and constantly urges others to ‘do the right thing’ even if it goes against the unit’s remit or puts people in danger.

**Glory Hound:** The individual actively seeks glory, medals and rewards. This may be legitimate, in the form of extreme courage, or the glory hound might be building on the work of others or claiming credit for it. It is also possible that the glory-chasing observed by the Travellers is actually the result of a death-wish or desire to atone for some terrible mistake.

**High-Flier:** The individual has been promoted highly for someone so young. This may or may not have been merited and the individual may or may not feel under pressure to keep overperforming in order to justify the promotions. Everything might be fine and above board, or the apparent high-flier might turn out to be a weak spot in the unit.

**History:** The individual has a history with someone in the unit or someone it has to interact with. This might be an old romantic relationship, a friendship, rivalry or outright hatred.

**In Limbo:** The individual was suspended from their former service in a mercenary unit, pending an investigation, and found employment with the Travellers’ force in the interim. They may be exonerated, punished or simply let go by the former employer, possibly leaving the Travellers with some decisions to make.

**Klutz:** The individual messed up a simple task and put others at risk, possibly more than once. They are despised by their colleagues. The Klutz may be desperate to make up for the mistake... or they may not.

**Multiskilled:** The individual has received cross-training or is simply good at many jobs, so they can provide skills well outside their official area of expertise.

**Poltroon:** The individual seems like a good soldier but there are rumours they are actually a coward who manipulates others into taking all the risks then takes the credit. The poltroonery might be suspected or even overt, if the individual is well-connected or somehow protected.

**Previous Experience:** The individual had an interesting career before joining the unit, some of it in unexpected places. They may have useful experience, such as in weapons procurement, or their experience might be in a completely unrelated academic field.

**Psychopath:** The individual is a ferocious and dependable fighter but may also be a sadist or clinical psychopath. This may or may not be apparent; the individual may have a calm and even friendly outward air, or they might frighten everyone around them.

**Questionable Hero:** The individual was decorated for heroism after an incident that claimed a lot of lives. Some idolise them as a true hero, some suspect the individual is suffering from survivor’s guilt and might be unstable.

**Rumours:** There are rumours about this individual. Perhaps there are those who think this is a terrible criminal hiding out under a false identity, or a rich and powerful person gaining experience incognito. They might be an investigator, a journalist or some other undercover operative. Perhaps they are a witness to a crime or avoiding some scandal. The nature of the rumours and their degree of truth is up to the Referee.

**Secret:** The individual is thought to have a secret. There may be odd gaps in their resume or curiously bland descriptions of some periods, suggesting work in something secretive.

**Zealot:** The individual holds extreme views, whether openly or otherwise, which may colour their actions. They might actively preach, or quietly wait for an opportunity to put them into practice. Alternatively the individual might be a thorough professional who just happens to have an unusual religious or political belief that makes others uncomfortable.

# FINDING EMPLOYMENT



There are always enough brushfire wars, corporate disputes and humanitarian aid operations going on at any given time to keep mercenaries employed. A major conflict might draw in the biggest and best formations, leaving the rest to pick up the smaller tickets. This can lead to a situation where a unit is offered a job it is not all that well suited to, creating opportunities to shine or to meet with disaster.

Unregulated mercenary forces will always exist and in some cases they can be extremely good. However, without some form of regulation every interaction between clients and mercenaries is prone to risk. A unit that chooses to operate this way can take its chances but it is likely to be offered jobs by the more shady of clients and if the client decides to change the terms of the contract at one end it will be down to the mercenaries, unaided, to deal with the problem.

In any environment where mercenaries are operating, some form of licensing agency is likely to exist and it is likely there will be several. A licensing agency exists to protect both the mercenary force and the client, often acting as a broker between units and their prospective clients. The agency itself might be a dedicated body, part of a full-service training and equipment supplier, a government or corporation that licenses mercenaries or some other model. It is even possible that the agency might be a sort of mercenaries' union set up by the bigger and more wealthy formations. If the Referee chooses the licensing agency can be a simple game mechanic in the background or several rival agencies might exist in the setting. This creates opportunities for politics between the agencies and for the Travellers to aspire to registering with the top agency.

Licencing agencies typically require a unit to demonstrate competence both as a military force and a business and, of course, to pay a fee to register. Fees vary but the usual model is three months' average salaries for a unit of the type. A typical infantry company has a monthly salary budget of Cr200000 so registering one with a licensing agency costs Cr600000. This is

a great deal of cash for a starting force but the bar is placed to keep amateurs and dilettantes from frivolously registering mercenary units and getting people killed. In addition, a percentage of every ticket is paid to the agency but since this is taken from the client it does not need to be considered by the Travellers.

For this fee, a mercenary unit gains 'accredited' status, which has several benefits. Clients generally prefer to work with accredited mercenaries, since this is seen as a guarantee of both competence and accountability. The usual model is for the client to register the terms of the ticket with the licensing agency and place payment in an account before the ticket begins. Once the mercenaries agree to the terms, the licensing agency handles any disputes that might arise and ensures payment will be made.

The mercenary unit is accountable to its licensing agency, which may investigate allegations against the client or the unit. A mercenary-related campaign might revolve around this part of the business, with the Travellers acting as auditors or troubleshooters for the licencing agency. This can mean investigating a unit's accounts or unravelling allegations of client corruption, which might not normally be all that exciting... but it is taking place in a war zone, which changes everything.

More commonly the Travellers will encounter auditors or requests for an explanation of their actions. A client might dispute completion of a ticket, requiring the Travellers to satisfy the licensing agency that they provided the service that was requested. The Tough Questions faced at the end of a ticket can come from the licensing agency and might impact payment for the ticket.

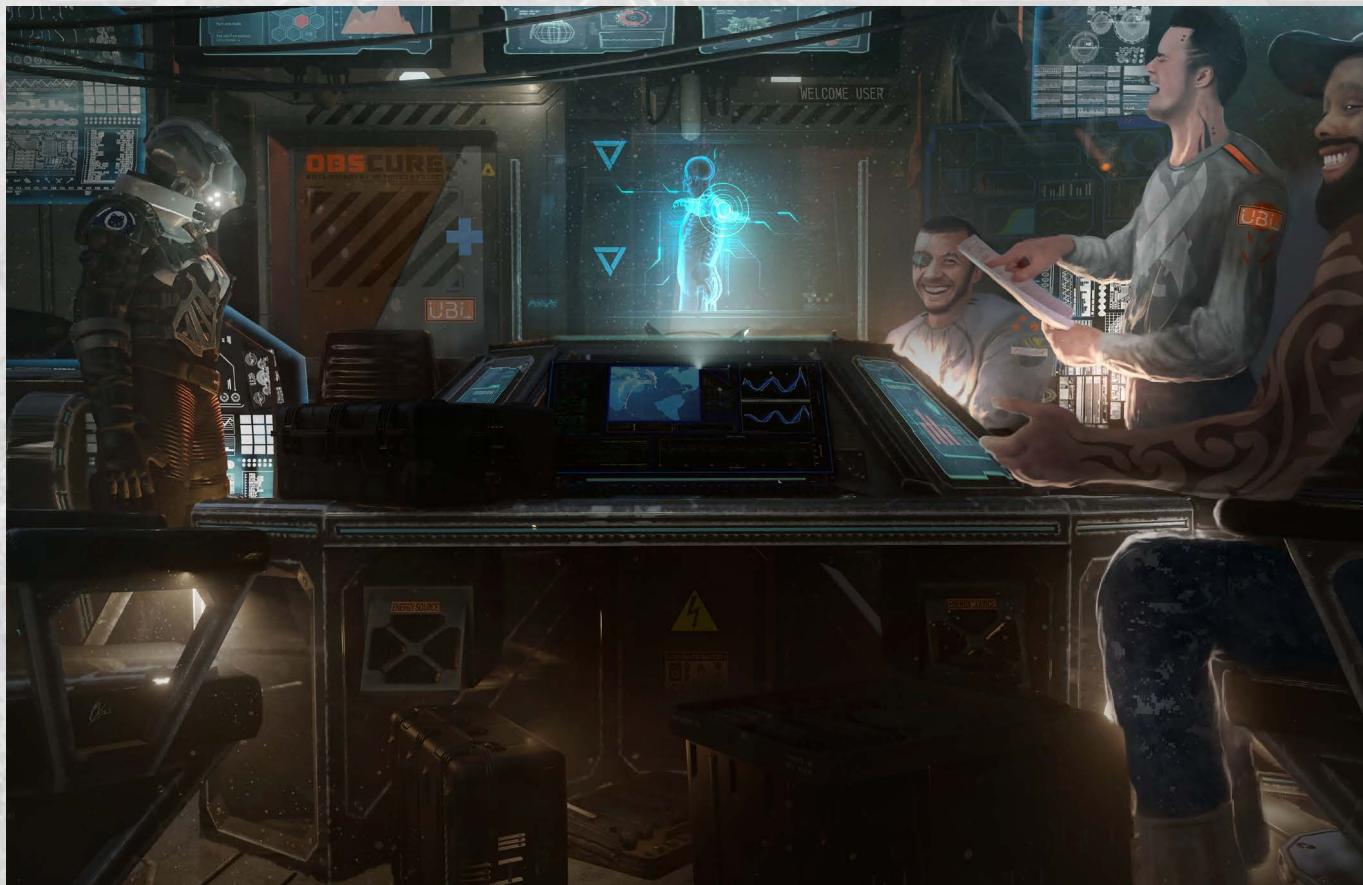
In return for this accountability mercenaries gain certain protections that otherwise must be negotiated with every client. One is 'legitimate combatant status', which means that the unit cannot be prosecuted for toting military equipment around or blowing up a piece of expensive infrastructure belonging to an enemy faction. A mercenary who surrenders is protected by this

status and has the right to fair treatment. Commonly, mercenaries who are captured are simply deported from the combat zone and registered as 'illegitimate' for that conflict. A mercenary who returns to the fight after being declared illegitimate forfeits legitimate combatant status and can be prosecuted for their actions. Indeed, just being there is grounds to lose accredited status or to have a large fine imposed. Arguments for and against such penalties can be handled with the legal system on page 46.

Most, but not all, mercenary contracts include a repatriation clause. This guarantees that a mercenary will be given safe conduct to a place outside the conflict zone and provided with the means to get there. Repatriation clauses sometimes apply to equipment as well as personnel. Registering with an agency may allow the unit to get its tank back after it surrenders, although there may be difficulties to overcome. A mercenary campaign could feature a team of hardware repossession agents tracking down appropriated equipment and 'negotiating' its return. Most forces that capture equipment will want to keep it, and this is a legitimate 'spoils of war' situation, but an agency can usually arrange what amounts to a buy-back at a percentage of the item's cost. A mercenary force will have its personnel repatriated for free but equipment

usually costs 25–50% of its purchase or current value. An independent mercenary force could also try this but probably lacks the clout to make a government take notice. The licensing agency, on the other hand, has the resources to make an agreement preferable to a dispute. This is part of the service provided by the agency and of course it makes money on such dealings.

Another common contract clause is almost the opposite of this. Colloquially known as a 'plunder clause', this piece of legislation allows a unit to legitimately take possession of equipment captured in the field. For smaller items these can usually be kept or sold on the surplus market, although registered equipment belonging to another mercenary unit is subject to the buy-back agreement mentioned above. Note that this applies only to equipment registered with the agency. A force might capture some gear and conceal it, avoiding any possibility of having to return it. However, unregistered equipment that is captured by an enemy is not subject to recovery by the agency. Some clients also impose plunder clauses, usually allowing the mercenaries to supplement their pay by legitimised robbery. Sometimes this is done in the hope that economic damage to the enemy will benefit the client but it is a red flag for most reputable mercenary commanders.



If the Travellers are registered with an agency or have some other reliable source of work, they may be presented with a list of jobs currently available and can choose which to pursue. More commonly, whether the unit is registered or not, its representatives will have to search around or inquire with the agency for prospective contracts. The vagaries of the mercenary marketplace sometimes mean that the work on offer is not exactly what the Travellers are set up to do. It is usually possible to detach a part of the force to take on a particular ticket and some large formations never actually operate as a single unit. A brigade-sized formation might have a lift infantry battalion deployed in one conflict zone, its training company detached to a cadre ticket somewhere else, its artillery component on hire to a world government and the rest of the force training up ready for the next ticket. Running such a force is a complex business but there is a lot of money to be made by those who can.

## Interstellar Operations

It is common for mercenaries to have to travel several parsecs to fulfil a ticket. For simplicity, these rules assume the client can arrange transportation to and from the target. The mercenaries will have to pay their troops for the time spent in transit, including supply and maintenance costs, but the client takes care of transportation. This is to avoid Travellers having to calculate the price of chartering a starship to transport 72 soldiers, three grav tanks and a field headquarters to the destination and back again.

## CREATING TICKETS

When the Referee creates potential tickets for mercenaries, the nature of their force should be kept in mind. It is probably a waste of time creating tickets that require a battalion sized formation with tank support when the Travellers are running an elite platoon of commandos. Such a force might actually be able to give the client what they want, albeit by a different means than the straight warfighting force specified, but the Travellers will have a tough time bidding outside their area of expertise.

The key elements of a ticket are Type, Background, Objectives and Details. Key information is presented in the Ticket Header. A full explanation of the situation will normally be provided for the Referee's use but would not be presented to the Travellers as part of the ticket. How much of this information they get depends very much on the amount of research they do before plunging in.

## Ticket Header

This is a shorthand summary of the ticket in just a few worlds. It states ticket type, force type required, payment and any critical requirements such as success-only.

## Ticket Type

The type of ticket gives an indication of what is required and the level of force required to perform it. Almost all mercenary tickets fall into one of the following categories: Commando, Striker, Warfighting, Cadre, Support or Specialist. Unit size will be typically cited as an equivalent of one of the standard formations. A ticket might specify 'Striker, Company' or 'Cadre, Battalion' and convey enough in those two words to tell a mercenary commander whether it is worth inquiring further. Sometimes additional terms are added, such as 'success-only' or 'fat ticket', which convey a lot of meaning.

## Ticket Background

Usually when someone pays for violence to be done to someone else, they have a reason. The background of a ticket may not be entirely revealed to the Travellers – and they may not care. However, the Referee should know who the client is and the target and why the mercenary force is being hired. The client might prefer to conceal their identity and work through an intermediary, which can be risky for the mercenaries unless there is a reputable agent available such as a licensing agency. The client might decline to give their reasons or have ulterior motives but this is not usually a problem so long as the objectives are clear and the success criteria is spelled out.

## Objectives

Here the ticket indicates the specifics of what the mercenary unit is supposed to achieve. Objectives are not usually revealed until the unit has shown 'credible interest and capability', for security reasons. The objectives will not be exactly the same as those in the Ticket Success Indicator; they will be a statement of what the client wants, often in very general terms. The success criteria can usually be deduced from the objectives, especially if they are very specific, but there is always a chance that what the client thinks they want is not the same as what will constitute a successful mission.

## Details

Any specific requirements the client may have will be presented here, along with information on remuneration, support level and any relevant clauses. Repatriation is standard; it is more common to specify when it will not be included.

## EXAMPLE TICKET

Striker, Platoon. Cr175000. Success-only.

Decentralised Mineral Extraction Incorporated (DMEI) has small facilities on multiple worlds. Many of these are frontiers with little effective law enforcement. DMEI personnel have recently begun suffering harassment and even violence from unlicensed competitors who exploit sites already in use by the corporation.

DEMI is offering Cr175000 for a platoon-sized unit to make a strike against one of the larger independent facilities. Loss of life is to be kept to a minimum but the facility is to be occupied and its extraction and processing equipment destroyed. The intention is to underline DEMI's legal position that it has exclusive rights to its registered sites and will not tolerate interference or violence towards its personnel.

The target site is known to be protected by an ad-hoc security contingent numbering around 20 personnel equipped with small arms. Total personnel complement is around 200, of whom an unknown number are armed.

**Referee:** The situation is more or less as presented. Appeals have been made to law enforcement agencies to protect the company's rights and have not produced significant results. The ticket appears (and is) legal and above-board. The Ticket Success Indicator criteria are easy to deduce – take possession of the site, wreck the machines and try not to kill anyone unnecessarily. Although not specified as such, the client is primarily interested in sending a message and will base the degree of success it perceives by whether the rivals back off and how much bad publicity arises from the matter. Mercenaries who realise this can tailor their actions towards these unspoken goals and do so without triggering a war between the corporation and its rivals. This is a typical 'corporate strike' mission that is all about business, not conflict.

Note that the rate of pay is roughly four months' salaries for a platoon-sized force, with an increment for success-only payment. This rate of pay is reasonable, given that the force might have to travel to a nearby world to carry out the mission and could be spending two weeks in transit either way. No mention is made of support, so the Travellers will have to make sure they provide for this themselves. The brief does not mention it but the client is expecting to base the unit at its local facility and, of course, if it were to be attacked the mercenaries would defend themselves. It might be that the client is hoping to get some free overpowered security for its site before the strike is made but

helping field engineers in a skirmish against rivals is not actually mentioned in the contract. Deciding whether or not to do so would be part of the adventure.

### Fat and Thin Tickets

The typical mercenary contract makes no provision for the client to support the mercenaries, although usually an area will be made available to use as a base. If the contract specifies Limited Local Support, known colloquially as a 'thin ticket', the client undertakes to provide rations, standard ammunition and the like. If a thin ticket is in place and things go well the Travellers will not pay supply or maintenance costs during their deployment. However, clients are not always particularly adept at supporting military forces, so the supply chain might be interrupted. It might also be sabotaged by enemies – security is unlikely to be very good if the client is a civilian organisation – or plundered by corrupt local officials. In theory, a thin ticket allows use of local repair workshops and the like, although it is common for the mercenaries to have to argue or otherwise persuade the operators to honour their requests.

If the ticket specifies Full Support, known colloquially as a Fat Ticket, the client is responsible for making sure supplies and equipment reach the unit and are of a suitable nature. Where a Thin Ticket can be satisfied by a feeble attempt to get some of what they need to a unit, a Fat Ticket allows the client to be penalised for supplying the wrong gear or failing to secure the supply line. In addition to supply and maintenance costs the client usually also pays a proportion of the unit's salaries. This can be 100% in some cases but is more typically around 25%. Fat Tickets are mostly used where a force is embedded with local units on an ongoing basis, such as a cadre assignment.

Fat Tickets can be used as a tool by the Referee to reduce the amount of book-keeping the Travellers must do. If all they are concerned with is the action, the Travellers can be given a series of Fat Tickets where the payout at the end is small but they get to keep all of it and the details of supply and maintenance are ignored. If the ticket also has a make-good clause the Travellers will have little book-keeping to do and missions are pure profit. However, in compensation for removing the costs and the admin time, the Referee should reduce the payment for such all-inclusive contracts to 10% of the normal offer.

### Bonuses, Ongoing Tickets and Payment

Commando tickets are normally of very short duration and some striker tickets are similar. In this case it is common to offer a flat fee for the whole job. Most

other tickets are likely to be ongoing, making a flat fee problematic. Some clients will still offer one, for example contracting a force to carry out three months' security work for an agreed amount. When the ticket runs out it can be extended for another agreed period but some renegotiation is likely. For this reason many clients (and mercenary unit operators) prefer an ongoing fee.

Payment for mercenary work is usually based on a multiple of the standard salaries for a unit of that size. For a short-duration ticket it is common to base the fee on one month's salaries. An ongoing ticket usually has a hiring and satisfactory-completion bonus, with payments for each month or part thereof the unit is on deployment. These figures are guidelines only, however, and many clients offer totally unrealistic fees for jobs they may or may not know are more difficult than stated.

Bonuses vary considerably. Many clients offer a success or good-conduct bonus even if the ticket is not success-only. This serves as reassurance that the mercenaries will put the effort in. A hiring bonus is also common on longer-term contracts. The sums involved are entirely up to the client and can vary considerably, although the usual intent is to make it attractive for mercenaries to take a relatively low-paying ongoing contract. Once in steady work they are unlikely to look elsewhere even if the contract permits it.

## COMMANDO TICKETS

A commando ticket is usually straightforward in concept but difficult to execute. Typically the mercenaries will be expected to get into a place they are not supposed to be and destroy or remove something. The actual duration of the mission may only be a few hours but reconnaissance, preparation and getting into launch position can take days or weeks. Commando tickets are normally success-only, which is reflected in the payment. A unit that moves quickly from one commando ticket to the next can make a great deal of money but may suffer personnel burnout or take casualties that cannot easily be replaced. Commando tickets are normally aimed at section or platoon level units, although occasionally a massed raid will require a larger force.

Commando tickets may specify a completion-by date rather than a specific time they are to be executed, unless there is a very narrow window of opportunity. For example, a commando mission to take out an orbital defence installation just as the assault force arrives to attack the starport must be completed within a critical time period. On the other hand, a mission to kidnap or assassinate a key figure might be executed at the

unit's discretion. This allows the force to set up the best possible scenario but they are paying salaries whilst they collect information and conduct reconnaissance so will feel internal pressure to get on with the mission.

Commando missions are normally based on the destruction of an object or installation or the elimination or kidnap of a person. They are usually conducted in an in-and-out basis, although slow infiltration is as common as a high-speed insertion. Base fees for a commando ticket are six months' salaries for a typical unit of the type, modified for difficulty and any additional factors that might apply, on a success-only basis. The client may offer part of the fee as a bonus, or add a bonus on top, but typically what is offered is a flat fee determined by the amount of risk the unit faces. Commando tickets are always hazardous but having to infiltrate and exfiltrate through very hostile territory can push the price up significantly.

## STRIKER TICKETS

Striker tickets are one of the most common mercenary contracts. The force is contracted to make one or more strikes against hostile targets, usually with the goal of destruction or capture. Striker missions can be carried out by almost any sized unit, although platoon or company sized forces are best suited to most operations. A striker unit typically has considerable leeway about how and when the attack is to be made and will normally have a completed-by date rather than a specific time. There are exceptions and sometimes circumstances dictate the strike has to be launched at a given time or place.

Fees for Striker missions are normally based on four months' salaries for the unit in question, modified for difficulty and other circumstances. Payment is usually success-only.

## WARFIGHTING TICKETS

Warfighting tickets are often open-ended, based on duration of hostilities plus a mopping-up period. Clients who hire mercenaries for a specific length of time sometimes find themselves re-hiring them at a higher fee for a conflict that has gone on longer than expected. Once hired for a warfighter contract, mercenaries are expected to obey the orders of local commanders and may alternate between defensive and offensive operations. There is considerable precedent about how hard a mercenary formation can be used and most contracts include clauses that allow the force to refuse combat or even declare the contract completed if they are used unfairly.

Warfighting contracts are the preserve of larger forces, for the most part, but platoons and companies might find themselves as part of a composite formation with other mercenaries or embedded within a local force. Payment is typically based on three times the unit's salary budget with a hiring and completion bonus. Warfighter contacts are usually payable on satisfactory service whether or not the war is won.

## CADRE TICKETS

Cadre tickets come in two main types. Peacetime cadre contracts require the unit to provide training and support to local forces and tend to be safe, if a bit dull. Active cadre tickets require the unit's personnel to operate with local forces, providing advice and training as well as setting an example when the locals get into a fight. Some cadre tickets are more about inducing the locals to fight than teaching them; the mercenaries may be openly or tacitly present to keep the locals from running away.

Cadre missions are usually performed by platoon to company sized forces, which will have personnel detached to carry out all manner of missions. A typical cadre assignment pays 200% of the force's salary budget per month and includes a 'thin ticket' provision to provide all the supplies and maintenance the unit needs. A hiring bonus equal to another month of salaries is commonly paid. An active cadre ticket may pay as much as three times the unit's salary budget each month but this tends to happen only when the cadre are leading the locals in

combat. More commonly the figure is 250% or 200% plus a combat bonus. Payment is upon satisfactory service, usually determined by the performance of the local forces.

## SECURITY TICKETS

Security tickets can be quite passive, such as a force guarding an important person or installation, or may be active in terms of sweeping for insurgents. Passive security tickets are normally paid for satisfactory service, determined by whether or not the principal or installation is still intact at the end, whereas active security tickets are more commonly paid for a period of operations or a set of specified results. For example, a force might be hired success-only to pacify a region, defined as not having any insurgent incidents for a certain time, or the capture or elimination of key insurgent figures.

The size of the force required varies considerably. A platoon or section is sufficient for most guard jobs; a small team might suffice as bodyguards while company and battalion sized units tend to carry out large-scale counter-insurgency work, so payment varies. A typical passive security job pays 200% of the unit's salaries plus a possible bonus if the client survives and might be success-only if an attack is expected. Active security typically pays the same but with a bonus equal to a month's salaries or more and a 'thin ticket' arrangement to reduce the unit's ongoing costs. Transportation tickets requiring something or someone to be protected are normally considered passive security operations.



## SUPPORT TICKETS

Support tickets vary according to the unit's capabilities. Terms are usually similar to an active cadre, plus an increment for advanced capabilities. Typically this is 10–20% per Tech Level the force is ahead of what is available locally and at least 25% if the force outperforms local versions by virtue of training and experience rather than equipment.

## SPECIALIST TICKETS

Specialist tickets vary considerably. As a general guideline, a specialist force's fee starts at around 250% of its monthly salary burden and increases with difficulty, danger and lack of competitors for the contract. Specialist contracts can often be taken by ordinary mercenary units if they have at least some capability in the field. The Referee must determine the fee for specialist operations on a case-by-case basis.

## OTHER CIRCUMSTANCES

The basic fee for a mercenary ticket can be amended for the level of opposition expected, how distasteful the job might be, whether or not it is success-only and any other factors that apply. Some of these are summarised below.

### Mercenary Remuneration Summary

Mission or Circumstance	Typical Remuneration Per Month of Operations
Commando	6 Months Salaries
Striker	4 Months Salaries plus bonus
Warfighting	3 Months Salaries plus bonus
Cadre	2 Months Salaries plus bonus
Active Security	2 Months Salaries plus thin ticket and bonus
Passive Security	2 Months Salaries plus thin ticket and possible bonus
Support	2 Months Salaries plus bonus for advanced capabilities.
Success-only	+25% or more
Low level of danger	-25%
High level of danger or intense combat	+25%
Extreme danger	+50% or more
Hazardous environment, for example vacuum	+10%

## NEGOTIATING THE FEE

The figures given are guidelines only. The Referee should use this to determine what the client is offering, rounding to a satisfactory figure. At this point the Travellers can negotiate. Negotiations can be resolved using the rules on page 113 of *Book 1* or can be abstracted by a simple Persuade check with the unit's Reputation as an additional DM. The Effect of this check is added to a 2D roll on the Fee Offers table.

If the negotiation is happening the other way around and the Travellers are asking for a particular fee, the Referee should determine what the client would be likely to offer using the method above. The Travellers may make an Average (8+) Persuade check with the unit's Reputation as an additional DM. This check is modified by DM-1 for every 10% more the mercenaries want than the client would offer and DM+1 for every 20% less they ask. Success indicates

### Difficulty Level and Payment

The Referee should keep in mind that the client may not be aware of exactly how difficult a mission might be and payment will normally be based on what the client thinks they can get away with paying whilst still getting the job done. The mercenaries might take on a low-end job and find it is a quagmire, or be offered an outrageously high fee for something quite straightforward. If they are stuck in a contract that is too tough for them, the Travellers can always negotiate a release from the contract. This will cost them, of course, in financial and reputation terms but the alternative is continuing to lose money and people.

Note that whilst fees are given as salary-months this is a guideline only. A commando ticket for a section-sized force is listed as four months' salaries but this is a guideline only. An infantry section's salary budget is Cr9000 per month, so the Referee's starting point for calculating the mission fee is Cr36000. Success-only and an expectation of significant opposition – this is common with commando missions – increases this to Cr54000. The Referee rounds this to Cr50000 as an opening offer, with a bonus of Cr10000 if the mission's criteria are fully met.

the client agrees to their fee. At the Referee's discretion the client will make a counteroffer 10% lower for every point of negative Effect but if the Travellers' demands are ridiculously high the client may walk away unless they are desperate for something only the Travellers can provide.

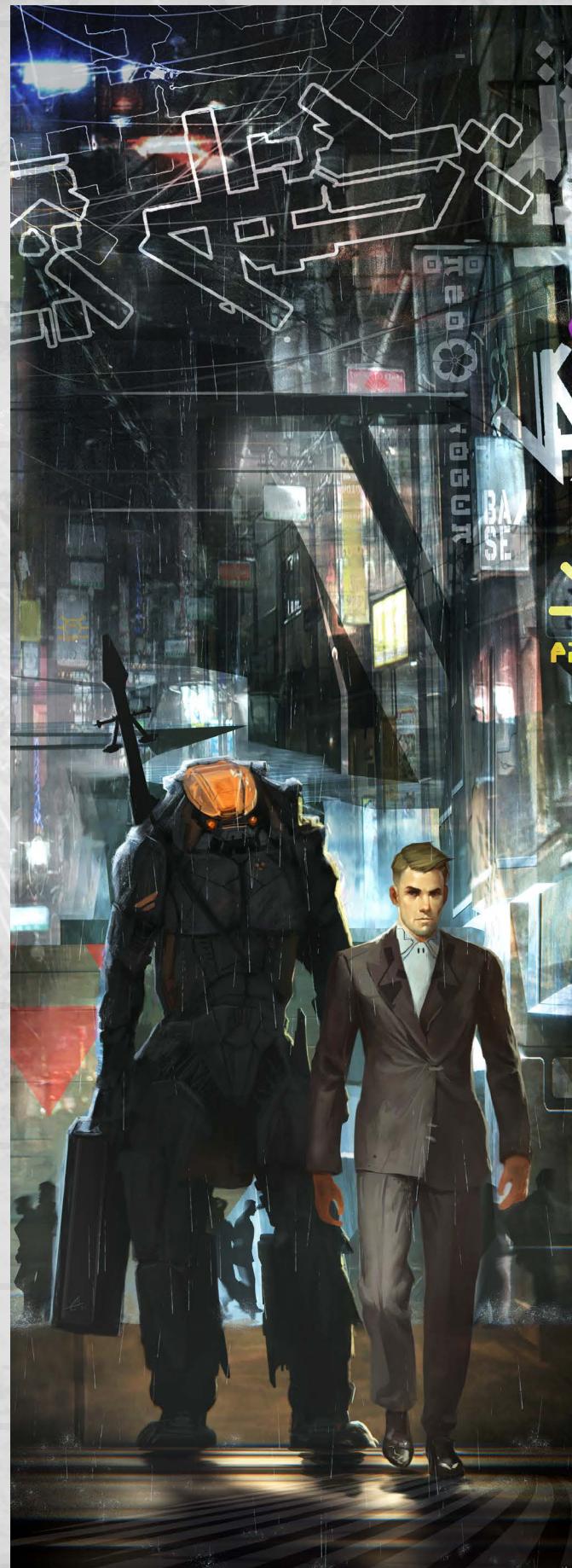
## Fee Offers

2D+ Modifiers	Final Offer
0-	50%
1-2	70%
3-4	80%
5-6	90%
7-8	100%
9-10	110%
11-12	120%
13-14	130%
15-16	140%
17-18	150%
19-20	175%
21+	200%

## Example

A client wants a company-sized force of grav-mobile armoured vehicles to carry out a striker mission and envisages the force will be in the field for only a few days. The fee for the mission is based on 4 months' salaries for the unit, which are Cr150000 per month on average. No matter what force is eventually hired, the client's offered fee is based on this estimate. They advertise the job for a fee of Cr750000, success-only. This is pretty normal for such a mission carried out by a company of light grav armour and if three guys in an air/raft can pull it off they probably deserve the money!

The Travellers could bid for the job by asking for a lower or higher price and trying to get the client to agree but they decide instead just to negotiate the details. Their unit has Reputation DM+2 and their negotiator provides DM+3. They roll a 6, modified to 11. After asking for all manner of small extras, costs covered, minor bonuses and an entirely imaginary set of overheads covered, the Travellers and their client agree on 120%. The job will pay Cr900000, success-only and the Travellers will take care of their own supply needs.



# RUNNING THE UNIT

The Travellers will want to acquire more and better personnel, equipment and weaponry after each ticket. This is entirely reasonable but the Referee should avoid giving them too much, too soon. Rapid acquisition of goodies leads to ‘campaign bloat’ where the Travellers are all generals commanding a huge army and have no reason to get their hands dirty any more. Instead, a mercenary campaign should be like fighting a battle; advancing towards eventual victory by the accrual of advantages and the overcoming of obstacles. The Travellers might get lucky once in a while but overall they should have to work for their successes.

Running a mercenary unit is a complex business and there are many opportunities for adventure outside of contracts and tickets. The Travellers might find themselves accused of war crimes or scrambling to get enough equipment together so they can take on a lucrative contract with very specific requirements. They might even undertake some ‘speculative’ operations on their own behalf under the cover of running a legitimate mercenary operation. The mercenary marketplace is a dangerous world and those who do well become adept at solving all manner of non-military problems.

## REPAIRS AND REPLACEMENTS

When a force engages in combat, its casualty percentage applies equally to equipment and vehicles. If field repairs are undertaken during a deployment, the vehicles may be returned to service but will still need to be properly

repaired afterward. Hardware damage is in the same categories as personnel casualties; Slight, Minor and Serious, with Serious casualties further subdivided.

For equipment, this translates as follows:

**Slightly damaged** hardware can be returned to full function in the normal post-ticket maintenance rotation, at nothing more than its normal maintenance cost (see page 18).

**Minor Damage** to a piece of hardware requires a modest amount of work and some spares. The cost is double the unit’s normal maintenance cost.

**Serious Damage** is subdivided into three categories: Damaged, Heavily Damaged and Destroyed.

Damaged hardware costs three times the unit’s normal maintenance cost to repair. Heavily Damaged hardware can be returned to service with a great deal of work, costing five times the normal maintenance cost. Destroyed hardware cannot be repaired. It may be possible to scavenge a few small components but the item needs to be replaced.

The cost to repair hardware is based on the cost to maintain it for one month. This is calculated at 1 Materiel per shipping ton, modified for the item’s propulsion system. Grav tanks are more expensive to repair than static-mounted anti-aircraft weapons but fortunately they are also more resilient. Hardware under repair is assumed to be maintained at the same time; maintenance costs

## Hardware Repairs

System	Slightly	Minor	Damaged	Heavily Damaged
Static or Towed Mount	Shipping x1	Shipping x2	Shipping x3	Shipping x5
Wheeled Vehicle	Shipping x2	Shipping x4	Shipping x6	Shipping x10
Watercraft	Shipping x2.5	Shipping x5	Shipping x7.5	Shipping x12.5
Tracked Vehicle	Shipping x5	Shipping x10	Shipping x15	Shipping x25
Aircraft	Shipping x8	Shipping x16	Shipping x24	Shipping x40
Grav Vehicle	Shipping x10	Shipping x20	Shipping x30	Shipping x50

do not need to be paid for the repair period. Maintenance cost is included in the Hardware Repairs table for Slightly damaged items.

When a vehicle or system is to be repaired, the Traveller in charge of repairs must make an Average (8+) Mechanic check, reducing the cost of repairs by 10% per point of Effect down to a minimum of 50%. Negative Effect increases the cost. If the unit has a small workshop or mobile workshop available, DM+2 applies. A full vehicle workshop of the sort found at major repair yards grants a further cost reduction of 25%.

If the Travellers wish to reduce costs another way, they can come up with a suitable plan and execute it. Perhaps they will be able to scavenge from a battlefield or get some cheap parts on the black market. Any such action requires problem-solving and perhaps an adventure, which can only be a good thing. These rules are not intended to be a straitjacket for the Travellers; they instead present the Travellers with problems to solve, enabling them to generate their own adventures.

## Example

The Travellers' G/cARRIER is thoroughly trashed after being disabled by a missile. Nominal repair cost is its shipping tonnage multiplied by 50 – a total of 750 Materiel. The Travellers have been buying Materiel in bulk, at MCr6 for 1,000 Materiel but this still represents a cost of MCr4.5 to repair an MCr11.5 vehicle! The Travellers have a mobile workshop and their maintenance and repair officer succeeds on her Mechanic check with Effect 1. This reduces the cost by 10%, or 75 Materiel. The Travellers still need to use MCr4.05 worth of Materiel to make the repair. They start looking at alternative options and discover there are several wrecks in a nearby valley controlled by insurgents. The Travellers begin planning a ‘speculative’ mission to grab critical components. This might be risky, so the Referee decides that the Travellers will be able to get almost everything they need plus a few unexpected bonus items... assuming, of course, they succeed.

## UNIT EXPERIENCE AND EFFICIENCY DEGRADATION

At the end of a ticket, the Ticket Success Indicator, or TSI (see *Book 1*, page 43) is used to determine how well things went. It is not easy to impress everyone when taking routine tickets and completing them in a mediocre manner but a unit can gain experience this way. The TSI can mandate increases to Reputation and Morale but learning from experience requires some post-ticket reflection and perhaps training to implement the lessons learned.

When a unit stands down from a ticket its Effective CEI is compared to its actual CEI. It is quite likely that ECEI will be lower than CEI due to the inevitable friction inherent in military operations. In most cases ECEI will be reset to equal CEI after a short period of regrouping and rest, although if some circumstance exists that might permanently affect CEI the Referee may modify CEI accordingly. For example, if a unit loses much of its communications equipment and does not replace it, the loss will reduce CEI. Under normal circumstances routine end-of-ticket actions will remedy the majority of problems.

CEI, and the DEI of sub-units, can be increased through experience gained in the field. The Referee will award experience points to the unit as a whole, which can be spent at the Travellers' discretion. Experience gained on a ticket is equal to the TSI score earned by the Travellers. A high-risk, difficult ticket will potentially earn the unit more experience than a routine task carried out in a mediocre manner. A force that engages in short, violent missions will gain experience more quickly than one that performs long, relatively safe training or security deployments as there are far more learning opportunities at the sharp end.

Note that experience points are the same no matter what the unit size might be. It takes just as many points for a battalion to qualify for a new trait or CEI increase as it does for a platoon. This assumes the battalion as a whole participated in the ticket. If a detached company carried out the missions whilst the rest of the force loafed about in barracks the Referee may assign experience only to that company. It can be used to improve that company or given to the unit as a whole. If this is done, the amount of experience gained is proportional to the sub-unit deployed. For example, if a single company gained 12 points of experience whilst the other two companies of a three-company battalion did nothing, the force as a whole gets 1/3 of the experience points, or four points.

A unit on deployment is assumed to maintain its skills by virtue of them being in use or potentially in use. At the end of a deployment, skills begin to atrophy whilst the unit is stood down. A force that is in training (see page 16) does not lose skills but one that is just waiting around for a contract will. Experience points are lost at the rate of one per week after the first that the unit is not on a ticket or engaging in training. If part of the unit is training, the rate of loss is slowed proportionally to the component engaged in training. In the case before, if the three-company battalion has one company in training and the other two resting it loses two experience points per three weeks.

Inevitably, most units will lose a few points whilst they are resting up. Retaining some of the unit's experience to cover this deficit will prevent atrophy of skills – essentially the waiting period before the next ticket cancels out some of the experience gained but for most forces this is not much of a problem. A proper rest and reorganisation is necessary after a combat deployment and a point or two of experience lost is part of the price of doing business. However, if experience is negative at the start of the next ticket the negative points must be 'spent' in the form of taking a negative effect. More commonly, experience will be positive and can be spent to improve the force or its sub-units.

Experience points are spent either at the level of the whole force or its top-level sub-units. Experience can be used to purchase an increase in Morale, Reputation, Influence, Company Efficiency Index for the force or Detachment Efficiency Index for a sub-unit, or a trait for the force as a whole or a sub-unit. Each purchase with experience points must be accompanied by an appropriate action on the part of the unit – in other words the Travellers cannot treat experience as a dry game-mechanics exercise but must roleplay the situation and come up with a plausible reason for the increase in capabilities. A force engaged in an exercise or other activity intended to implement experience is considered to be undergoing training and must pay the supplies cost for one week of activity per improvement purchased.

## Experience Purchases

Purchase	Experience Point Cost
Reduce DEI of a sub-unit by -1	-10
Reduce CEI by -1	-50
Reduce MOR by -1	-5
Reduce Reputation by -1	-10
Reduce Influence by -1	-10
Remove a positive trait (whole unit)	-50
Remove a positive trait (sub-unit)	-10
Gain a negative trait (whole unit)	-25
Gain a negative trait (sub-unit)	-5
Increase DEI of a sub-unit by +1	20
Increase CEI by +1	100
Increase MOR by +1	10
Increase Reputation by +1	25
Increase Influence by +1	15
Gain a positive trait (whole unit)	80
Gain a positive trait (sub-unit)	20
Remove a negative trait (whole unit)	75
Remove a negative trait (sub-unit)	15

Negative values indicate the number of negative experience points annulled by the action. A unit with negative experience at the start of a ticket suffers no ill-effects if it has better than -5 experience, but will suffer an increasing penalty if it has more. Negative experience can also be used to determine how badly hanging around barracks with no contracts or a similar long period of inactivity affects a unit.

## Negative Experience Penalties

Negative Experience Level	Penalty
0 to -5	No penalty
-6 to -10	MOR -1 during this ticket
-11 to -20	ECEI and MOR -2 during this ticket
-21 to -30	ECEI and MOR -2 during this ticket
-31 to -40	ECEI and MOR -2 during this ticket
-41 to -50	ECEI and MOR -2 during this ticket
-51 or worse	ECEI and MOR -2 during this ticket

## REORGANISATION AND PERSONNEL ISSUES

A period of regrouping is necessary at the end of a mission or ticket, in order to get people and equipment back where they should be. If the Travellers decide they should be somewhere else on a permanent basis they will have to reorganise the unit to accommodate the change. Expansion or reorganisation might necessitate promotion of personnel within the unit. The Travellers are free to assign whatever rank they like to personnel and use any titles they see fit. However, there is a degree of equivalency between mercenary units and a platoon commander is a platoon commander. If the Travellers want to assign this person the rank of Super-Sparkly-Subaltern they can try if they like but silly titles will undermine the professional reputation of the unit and annoy its members. Likewise, over-promoting personnel for their position will also affect the unit's reputation. A captain in charge of a platoon might be questionable but outsiders may accept there is a reason. Giving the platoon commander the rank of lieutenant-colonel will likely result in ridicule.

The Travellers may have to correct the behaviour of their personnel. Mercenaries are in a difficult position since they have to maintain discipline yet attract new members to the force when needed. A draconian regime

will put off potential recruits but excessive leniency will turn the force into a rabble. Mercenaries agree to accept discipline when they take a contract with the unit and commanders have discretion about how to go about it.

Few units will impose a death penalty on members but officers are usually empowered to shoot someone in the field ‘if absolutely necessary’. This is only likely in order to prevent a war crime or disaster, such as a critical member of the unit deserting their post at a time when their action will get others killed. Under such circumstances an officer may threaten to shoot the deserter and the threat would be meaningless if it could not be carried out. If a member of the unit refuses to submit to discipline and decides to resist arrest with lethal force the shooting is not a disciplinary act and would be justified (or not) by circumstances rather than any powers vested in the officer.

The commanders of the unit will typically grant rewards for satisfactory service including passes for additional R&R time, exemption from unpleasant duties and

similar minor perks. Likewise, they can hand out minor punishments such as confinement to quarters, extra duties or suspension of leave privileges. Bonus shares of a ticket payoff are used as an incentive by many units but a reward right now is often more effective than the prospect of more money sometime in the future. Commanders who present a good example and reward satisfactory performance generally have less discipline problems than those who hand out harsh punishments for every small infraction.

Most unit members will consider minor punishments such as extra duty or an unpleasant task to be ‘fair enough’ or just part of the mercenary life. Those who affect the individual’s career or future prospects will be resented more, even if they are deserved. Ultimately, a mercenary commander can dismiss personnel or hand them over to local law enforcement agencies if they have done something to attract attention. A mercenary who has been dismissed from one unit is unlikely to find a slot with a high-end force, although there are always units who will take anyone they can get.



# LEGAL PROCEEDINGS

The Travellers can implement a full court-martial against any of their personnel if they want, although more commonly a tribunal of officers will deal with matters in a summary way. Accusations made against the mercenary unit as a whole or some of its members may result in appearances in civilian or military court. It is even possible that a local government might initiate legal proceedings in a civilian court in the hope it can win the right to try mercenaries under its military court system. More commonly, local authorities will request cooperation from the mercenary force in arresting some of its members and try them under local law as visiting civilians.

Mercenaries acting on behalf of a governmental client have legal protections against being prosecuted – providing they do not commit war crimes. However, sometimes one party in a dispute refuses to recognise the legitimacy of mercenary operations and will attempt to prosecute mercenaries who fought against it. Mercenaries that are part of a properly registered force have the protection of the licensing agency – and mercenary operations have at times been instigated by the licensing agency itself against those who ignored its status.

Legal action can sometimes be used as a weapon in a conflict. A well-aimed writ can take a mercenary unit out of the campaign, at least for a time, and whilst this gambit rarely works there is always someone willing to try it. In the event the Travellers are caught up in any sort of legal proceedings the matter can be decided with a couple of Advocate checks if the Referee thinks this appropriate. A more detailed resolution provides opportunities for roleplaying and might lead to adventures if the Travellers have to obtain (or tamper with) evidence, find witnesses or rescue them from hostiles, and otherwise take direct action to ensure they get the result they are hoping for.

The outcome of a court case such as a war crimes investigation depends partly on the legal skills of the people involved but mainly rests upon the evidence each side has to offer. This may or may not be real; evidence can be fabricated or suppressed, witnesses can lie or be intimidated. Even if the Travellers are innocent they can be convicted – and there is still a chance to escape justice even if they are guilty. Clients sometimes use a legal proceeding as an excuse not to pay the full fee, typically accusing the mercenaries of something unpleasant or of not fulfilling the terms of their contract. This can attract the ire of the licensing agency but minor legal actions are typically beneath its radar. A common gambit is to threaten a lawsuit in

the hope the mercenaries will take a reduced fee and go away and occasionally mercenaries will have to sue their clients for payment.

The first stage in any legal proceeding is to determine what evidence each side has available. This may or may not have any resemblance to what actually happened and undermining the opposition's evidence is a common legal tactic.

**Solid, Reliable Evidence** provides DM-4 on the Outcome table

**Weak or Unreliable** Evidence provides DM-2 on the Outcome table

**Little or Conflicting** Evidence provides no DM

Images from surveillance showing the defendant taking the actions in question would count as solid and reliable, whilst testimony from witnesses might or might not be considered unreliable in this context – much depends on who the witnesses are and how sympathetic the court is to them. Members of the local armed forces, who are blatantly guilty of the war crime the Travellers are accused of, might be considered solid and reliable by a corrupt court. Actions that can be explained in more than one way would also be considered weak evidence by most courts but one that has a vested interest in a particular outcome might not see it that way.

Once the Referee has decided what evidence exists and how the court will view it, the matter proceeds through the following stages. These are presented for a criminal matter but the same process is used for a civil suit.

## Presentation of Evidence

Evidence for and against the defendant is presented. This can be abstracted as the Referee informing the Travellers of what level of evidence they face. There are opportunities here for skulduggery and adventure as the Travellers try to obtain, suppress or fabricate evidence, or influence the court in other ways.

## Case for the Prosecution

The prosecution makes as much as possible of the available evidence, which can be abstracted with an Average (8+) Advocate check (EDU). A typical local prosecutor will have DM+2. A more serious issue will usually require a prosecutor with DM+4 and for very serious matters such as investigation of atrocities a senior legal figure with DM+6 will be appointed. The Travellers may manipulate this process by throwing legal obstacles in the way, for example finding a law that says the case has to be tried at a particular place and time, which forces the prosecution to use whoever is available. Enemies of the Travellers might do the same.



## Case for the Defence

The defence then refutes the evidence or uses it to demonstrate innocence, again abstracted by an Average (8+) Advocate check (EDU). The Travellers can provide their own defence or use the defender assigned to them. This individual will have an Advocate DM one less than that of the prosecution.

The Travellers may also attempt other measures at this stage. Impassioned pleas for clemency and justice are unlikely to sway anyone but if the Travellers can come up with some reason to mitigate the consequences of their actions or even set aside what would otherwise be a guilty verdict, they can try. A Difficult (10+) Persuade or Diplomat check is normally required, although another skill might be used – for example, Tactics to demonstrate the Travellers had no better options or Medic to show they were suffering from stress and fatigue at the time. Evidence can be undermined by those with expert knowledge, such as using Gun Combat to show that the fatal rounds were not fired from the Travellers' position or with their weapons.

## Outcome

The Referee should roll 2D, subtracting any DM for evidence against the Travellers and subtracting the Effect of the prosecution's Advocate check, before adding the Effect of the defence and any additional measures. Consult the Outcome table for the outcome of the hearing.

## Outcome

2D	Result
0 or less	The defendant is found guilty and vilified beyond what is normal. DM-2 applies on the Punishment table and a local outcry begins that may have additional effects on the Travellers and their unit.
1-2	Guilty.
3-4	Guilty, with some mitigating factors. DM+2 is applied to the Punishment table.
5-7	Acquitted. The defendant is found to be innocent of the charges and suffers no legal penalties.
8-9	Honourably Acquitted. The defendant is found completely innocent and a few praiseworthy deeds are brought to light.
10-11	Praise and Thanks. The defendant is not only acquitted of the charges but is found to have acted in a way that brings credit to their unit.
12 or more	The trial is considered to have been a fiasco and a disgrace. The defendant is found to be entirely innocent and the prosecution may face investigation.

## Punishment

The Punishment table is subject to some interpretation, depending on local circumstances. In some cases the Travellers can ignore a local judgement and move on but this might harm their reputation and therefore their business. A judgement passed by the licensing agency cannot be ignored if the Travellers want to keep their license.

No modifiers are applied for minor offences. For major offences such as stealing munitions or refusal to obey orders, DM-4 applies. DM-8 is applied in very serious cases such as mutiny or aiding the enemy. Some actions may have automatic effects, such as where a particular crime carries a mandatory death sentence.

## Punishment

2D	Result
0 or less	The court imposes the most severe penalty it can. This might be death in the case of atrocities and almost certainly means a long period of incarceration.
1–2	The Travellers are pressed to dismiss the soldier from the unit. Jail time is likely whether or not this is the case.
3–4	The defendant is sentenced to a punitive assignment. This may be imprisonment, or service in a punishment unit. The unit will be heavily censured, imposing DM-2 on attempts to find contracts or recruit personnel for the next 2D months.
5–7	The defendant or their unit is fined and publicly censured, imposing DM-1 on attempts to find contracts or recruit personnel for the next 2D months.
8–9	The defendant receives a token period of imprisonment and their unit is fined a modest amount with the expectation its commanders will take it out of their pay.
10–11	The defendant or their unit receives a token fine and a stern reprimand.
12 or more	The defendant's extenuating circumstances or pleas for mercy result in nothing more than a reprimand and a record of the incident, which might have consequences for future dealings.

## MEDALS AND REWARDS

Clients sometimes award medals to mercenaries who serve them well. Doing so in the hope of a reduced fee rarely works but in some cases there is genuine appreciation for what the mercenaries have done. It is not uncommon for a grateful world government to grant permission for a mercenary unit to wear the campaign medal for the actions they served in and Commanders are sometimes given local decorations for exceptional service. Beyond this, mercenaries cannot expect to win a lot of medals during their service. Some units have a system of competence badges, long-service insignia and even medals for gallantry but, for the most part, there is a pragmatic approach that soldiering is a job you get paid for and doing it properly means you stay employed. Encouraging people to be heroes is not usually desirable.

Mercenaries may be offered a place in local armed forces, usually with a promotion to go with it. This can leach experienced personnel from a unit but can be beneficial, especially if the unit works with that client again in the future. Relatively few mercenaries take this route and it is not always a comfortable environment they enter since local officers tend to resent a stranger being inserted over their heads. Questions about national loyalty are also common.

Mercenary service is typically seen as a job rather than a calling and those who do it for a living have their reasons. If those reasons are not good enough they will get out, one way or another, and if they are good enough then rewards are not really needed. There are units whose uniforms are festooned with medal ribbons but they are usually seen as amateurish by those who simply get the job done and collect their payment.

