



# FREELANCE TRAVELLER

*The Electronic Fan-Supported Traveller® Magazine and Resource*



## Andrew Boulton 1969—2012

Featured Article

### Underworld Characters

by Harry Bryan

Issue 033  
September 2012

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# From the Editor



When someone you've heard of dies, it's news. You note it and go on. When someone who you consider part of your circle dies, it hits home, in the way that another death doesn't.

In August, the *Traveller* community lost one of its own. Andrew Boulton, administrator on the Citizens of the Imperium forums, mainstay of the *Traveller* community, and top-flight *Traveller* artist, died on August 11. Andrew was known to suffer from several chronic conditions, but he kept the details to himself, and did not let them stop him from contributing to the *Traveller* community in as many ways as he could.

In addition to administering the Citizens forums, Andrew was an avid participant there and on various other *Traveller* communities, diving into various arguments with passion and enthusiasm, but always remaining a gentleman, and arguing with logic and

(where he could) concrete facts. Because of that, he was asked early on to participate in development and testing of *Traveller 5*, and Marc Miller has said that that game has been made better by his participation.

Andrew also worked to put out the *Traveller* Calendar, annually, since 2007. That calendar, with each month sporting a piece of *Traveller* art contributed by community members, was sold to that same community, with the proceeds going to worthy charities. It is to be devoutly hoped that someone can and will take up the banner, and continue this effort.

While encouraging the community to create artwork, Andrew never trumpeted his own efforts—and yet those efforts set a standard that others try to match. Andrew did four of *Freelance Traveller's* covers—but, according to some of our artists, his work was an inspiration and goal for many more.

Rest in Peace, Andrew. You will be missed. ☸

### Supplement 5-6: The Vehicle Handbook

reviewed by Jeff Zeitlin

Supplement 5-6: *The Vehicle Handbook*.

Colin Dunn, Matthew Sprange, Nick Robinson

Mongoose Publishing. <http://www.mongoosepublishing.com>

176pp, hardbound

US\$39.99/UK£29.99

After much adverse feedback, Mongoose revamped the vehicle design system and combined the originally-separate civilian and military vehicle guides into a single volume.

#### On the Shelf

The Vehicle Handbook is a generic supplement, not tied to any particular setting. As such, it sports the standard solid black cover, with the yellow *Traveller*-and-arrow logo. The unneeded and essentially meaningless tagline is "Transportation fluctuation".

#### Initial Impressions

As with most recent Mongoose supplements, this volume is easy to read, with well-chosen fonts and liberal use of white space. The sections appear to be in a logical order, so that one may work through a vehicle design with minimum flipping back and forth in the book. There are few illustrations, and those that do exist tend to be dark enough to obscure details. There is a mix of 3D renders and various styles of drawing.

#### On Closer Inspection

It must be understood that I did not previously examine the original Supplements 5 and 6 (Civilian and Military Vehicles, respectively), so I cannot comment on the changes to the design system.

The book leads off with explanation of the reason for the new rules and design system, and notes explicitly that not all core rulebook rules are superseded. A design checklist follows, and then the specific new rules pertaining to various types of vehicles and specific performance metrics. This is sufficient to bring us to page 8, with the actual 'gearheading' beginning on page 9. These sections follow the sequence in the design checklist at the beginning of the

# TRAVELLER

Supplement 5-6:  
*The Vehicle Handbook*

book, making it fairly easy to work up a complete design quickly.

The available options are extensive, and vehicles that weren't possible to design sensibly in previous versions of *Traveller* are easily accommodated in this volume—including such things as trams, commuter trains, walkers (including 'mechs'), and so on.

Unlike previous versions of *Traveller*, this supplement treats Battle Dress as a vehicle, rather than as a type of personal armor. The basic design sequence is the same, but the special nature of Battle Dress means that a separate section, with its own relevant tables, is quite definitely warranted.

Two worked-up examples follow, one purely civilian, one military. The examples define the vehicle mission and design parameters, then walk you through each step, and finally present you with the worked-up vehicle stat block. Up to this point, the book has been quite economical, and we're only up to page 54... so what is on the remaining 122 pages?

(Continued on page 3)

(Continued from page 2)

It's not always going to be possible to sit and work up a custom design, and sometimes a 'stock' design is all that you really need. These are provided in abundance, broken down by type, with separate sections for civilian and military vehicles, and additional sections for looking at alien (including human aliens like Zhodani or Sword Worlders) designs. Sections for *Judge Dredd*, *Strontium Dog*, and *Hammer's Slammers* vehicles are also included.

## Active Measures

### Spacer Hill

by J. E. Geoffrey

*Author's note: This adventure was inspired by Marvel Star Wars #7*

**Setting:** a small, low-population world with a D or E starport.

Father John Xubulr has a problem: he is the priest for the local community on this backwater planet (or at least the only one at its starport) and one of his fold has died recently. The old spacer, Jacso, had been in space for nearly his whole lifetime, shipping goods to nearby worlds. Now he is dead, and his last wish was to be buried on 'spacer hill', a part of the local graveyard that rises over the starport.

For generations, the hill has been reserved for the community's spacers, those who lived their lives between the worlds to bring home what wealth and prosperity they could, and it has been like that since the colony was founded. There is a problem though: old Jacso had been in an accident some time back, while he was contracted to one of the megacorps, and half his body had been replaced with cybernetics on the company's bill.

He was an old spacer, and nobody gave him much grief for it while he was alive, even though a lot of them stared at the chrome he had, and most of what local friendships he had cooled noticeably. Now, some of the local folks are upset, to put it po-

## Conclusion

It could be argued that this supplement is overpriced, given that only about a third of it is actual rules. However, if it were presented as two softcovers, one with just the rules and a separate Vehicle Catalog, the final tab would probably be higher, and you wouldn't get the more durable hardcover binding. Though something like it has been called for for years, it's become almost a reflex to work around its lack. If you do need or want what it offers, though, it's money well-spent. 🌟

## Getting Off the Ground

lately: all due respect to Father John, but no way is a 'dirty stinkin' robot' going to be buried on their hill! He might have been born here, and done good by his neighbors, but he—it, rather—was half machine and should go to the scrapyard like the rest of them.

Father John needs some help: he promised Old Jacso he'd bury him up on the hill, and part of the congregation expects him to do exactly that. A vocal minority is dead set against this and threatens violence if that 'dirty chipper' is even brought close to the hill.

Father John will offer the characters a handsome amount of money the old spacer left to the parish if they will help him get the body (which is heavy due to the cybernetics in it) up the hill and into the ground.

### Possible Denouements

1. Everything is as it appears. The people who oppose the burial grumble a bit, but nothing happens.
2. As 1, but the dissenters take an intense dislike to the "blasphemers", and were more numerous than Father John believed. They will not make this known directly, but small stuff (public shunning, refusal of service, etc.) should bring it across.

(Continued on page 4)

## Active Measures

(Continued from page 3)

3. The characters have an angry mob at hand. There is a serious risk of violence, and Father John may be killed if the party cannot calm the situation.
4. As 3. Additionally, if the characters have their own starship, they will repeatedly discover sabotaged equipment on it, some of which might even lead to problems in space. If the characters are not here with their own ship, they might be refused passage off-world, due to the captain's dislike for their actions. In any case, they will have to leave the community quickly, and (at the referee's discretion) Father John may have to leave with them.
5. As 3, but somebody will try to get rid of the body by digging it out again after the burial.
6. As 5, but the body removes itself from the grave: the cybernetics were far more extensive than anyone realized and the characters now have to deal with a cyberzombie looking to be repaired. Subsequent events are up to the referee. 🌟



## Raconteurs' Rest

### The Old Scout: In the Pawn Shop

by Jeffrey Schwartz

The Old Scout came into the pawn shop, wearing an expression that signaled mild amusement. After 160 days, the long-awaited opportunity had finally come. Three Jumps to set up a backstory, make contacts, and cultivate friends were all time consuming, but even a mid-tech backwater could have pretty good investigation capabilities, if they wanted to. Parts were fun (and thinking about "Lisa!" brought a fond mental sigh) but it was still work, and a reminder of some of the less pleasant things that'd had to be done while on Active Duty.

The last hundred days had been relaxing. The locals had given permission to land the *Snipe* in the dunes by the shore, and it made a fine beach house for a detached-duty Scout. Soaking up the warm sunlight on the beach had also been relaxing, and the barely-clad locals who were doing the same provided some enjoyable scenery. Sometimes the opportunity arose for more than just looking, and one of the "space bunnies" could easily earn a ride with some smooth talking. A lot of them enjoyed the bi-weekly run to skim the local gas giant, a run the Old Scout made just to keep in practice. They'd both enjoy the excitement of the skim (and maybe some other activities), and then the *Snipe* would refine the fuel on the way home. Fifteen tons of refined fuel,

sold to the starport, made for a lot of beer-and-pretzel money.

Paul was a local contact—one of a fair number—who'd become a friend. He owned an off-port pawn shop, and the Old Scout had (deliberately) become a good sounding board and information source when someone dropped off something that the local was unsure about.

This time, it was a 'sea bag' with an IISS logo on it. The bag was polymer on the outside and inside, with a foil-thin layer of crystaliron between them for extreme durability. Paul explained, "Kid came in and said it was his granddad's. The old guy passed on half-a-year back, and they found a key for a port locker. I guess they were hoping it was full of cash or something, and rushed to see what was in it... and were disappointed in finding the bag. I didn't like the kid's attitude—zip in the way of sadness for the death of his ancestor, or any respect for something that had obviously been important to him. He had nothing but 'how many credits can I get for it.' I ran his ID, checked it with a cop I know. It's not stolen. I gave him a kilocredit for it, since some of it looks valuable. Looking closer, I started worrying if I should be selling it, though—some of it looked like it might be classified. I decided to call you, see what you thought."

The Old Scout nodded—trafficking in restricted hardware was something that'd bring the Imperials

## Raconteurs' Rest

(Continued from page 4)

in, rather than just local law enforcement, and it was easy to understand why Paul wouldn't want the hassle. The bag opened right up to a touch on the clasp, despite the layer of dust that still clung to it.

The Old Scout looked inside, and then raised an eyebrow and nodded. "Ja, Paul. I appreciate you calling me. Nothing here's flat-out illegal, but there's things the Service would rather not have just floating about."

Inside, the Old Scout breathed a sigh of relief. This particular bag was supposed to be in a starport locker that had been rigged years ago to operate not only with a key, but with a code known to appropriately-briefed personnel. In the early days of the Imperium, as worlds were brought out of the Long Night, there had been more than one instance of a bit of backsliding, and an embedded agent finding himself stuck on a world with very little but his wits. Stashing caches here and there became standard practice, and retired Scouts were supposed to keep an eye on them. In this case, the man had died before he could pass it on to someone else, and the grandkid had pilfered it.

None of that showed on the Old Scout's face, though. "What you've got here is an old—about 40 years old—'Do I?' kit. The 'Do I?' comes from the section that issued it: Detached Duty Office/Intelligence section. I guess spelling it DDOI would make more sense, but there's a joke about someone seeing the bag and saying, 'Carrying that, you look like a spy!' and the guy replying, 'Do I?'"

Paul laughed, adding, "So what *is* this stuff, or should I even ask?"

The Old Scout picked through the bag, and put some things back in without answering. It was obvious that, by their being ignored, those were the things the Service would really rather not have on the street. This left a few things still on the counter, and the Scout said, "I can tell you about some of them."

A fairly ordinary looking wristwatch—very much like the Old Scout's own—was the first item of interest. Showing it to Paul: "All the normal spacer's watch functions—auto-time reset on local beacons, barometer/altimeter, temp, accelerometer/INS. Plus the same PDA/smartphone functions that you'd find in an upscale watch. Enough memory for reference books, some movies. Little camera and recorder."

Pausing as if thinking for a moment, the Old Scout pressed two buttons, then double-tapped another. The watch's display changed to look like a little radar screen, which showed one other dot that was right in the middle of the reticule. "Something not so common: IFF transponder. The dot here is *my* watch. Handy for finding someone else without searching the whole building. Range is only a hundred meters or so, but it *is* handy. The Zho figured out a decade or two ago what freqs and encoding we were using, so that's not classified any more. Obviously, it doesn't work unless you turn it on, or the bad guys would have an easy time finding you."

More fiddling, and another tap: "Backchannel radio transmitter. You can tap out didah code, and someone with a similar watch feels the pulse on their wrist. Same limited range, but useful."

The Old Scout hit the mode button on the watch, and it cleared. Paul wondered if there were other ... interesting... functions, but decided not to ask—he didn't want to risk straining his friendship with the Old Scout by asking about what might well be secrets. If the watch was like one of those new hand computers Paul had heard about, then there'd be some kind of "app store" for it—maybe you synced it to a scout ship's computer to load them?

A little folding knife was the next item of interest: it had a half dozen blades, including scissors, a fishhook remover, a file, and other esoteric things. On the side was the IISS logo. "A Scout Knife," continued the Old Scout, with an almost-smile that indicated some private joke. "The blades look like normal steel, but the edges and spine are superdense wire. They put the wire forms in a mold, pour in

## Raconteurs' Rest

(Continued from page 5)

molten steel, and then let it cool. The file is like a little wire brush of superdense, with the steel around it and just the tips showing. Given enough time you can saw through a jail cell door with it."

Paul wondered at that example, then decided not to ask—the Old Scout was full of stories, and easily derailed into any of them... and he wanted to find out more about this 'Do I?' bag.

The Scout opened an attractive little accessories case, and grinned at the four cufflinks inside—"Heh, poser—he actually had all four. Everybody that actually *used* them lost at least a couple, and they were ...somewhat difficult... to replace. It's rare to find a kit that isn't missing at least one. These two here, with the silver posts, are transponders. You can track them with the watch. They have a bit more sending range, though, so you can follow a truck while hanging back a ways.

"The other two, with the brass trim, are receivers—you can pulse them with the watch." The scout didn't say what they did when they were pulsed, but the studs for those cufflinks looked a little odd, and it took Paul a bit to realize that if you twisted the knob that held them in the buttonhole all the way off, the shaft looked a lot like a standard Imperial datalink plug. Plugged into a computer's keyboard slot, they could send strings of text. Then Paul remembered getting in an old Marine explosives controller a while back, and it had the same connector. The cufflink would plug into lots of things...

The back of the same case had a bolo neck tie about a half-meter long. Paul had seen them worn now and then by Scouts when they wanted to dress up for some semi-formal occasion. There was a round clasp with the IISS colored starburst on it, with a funny looking clip on the back rather than the two holes that most bolo neckties had. The Old Scout continued, "Cord's made of woven poly-steel. You won't break it with anything normal. The clasp can be clicked a few different ways—normally, it

goes like *this* so if you get the tie hung on something, you don't hang yourself. Like *this*, it makes a slip-knot, so you can trap game with it. Or whatever."

Paul sensed the "whatever" was when you wanted to hang *someone* with it.

"Draw it down, and loop the running end back into the clasp, and it stays shut. Great for holding a bag closed, or keeping a couple of tree branches lashed when you're making a lean-to. Here..." The Scout looped it around Paul's wrist and clicked it, and Paul was struck by the realization that it closed a lot like a zip-tie, and that unlocking it was complicated enough that someone 'cuffed' with it wouldn't be able to uncuff themselves.

"Like *this*," unlocking it and fiddling with it again, "the clasp acts as a weight on the end, and it makes a dandy window-breaker. Or head breaker. I usually wrap it around my hand, like so, to keep a sure grip..." The Old Scout demonstrated, then stepped back, and in a well-practiced way, swung the weight in a figure eight. It was obvious that the dense metal clasp would hurt whatever it hit.

The tie went back into the accessories case, and a small case full of writing pens was the next item. Many spacers carried such things for taking notes, since there were a lot of places where doing things electronically didn't happen. A common 'spacer's pen' would write on anything, which meant you could mark your trail or initial a box in ways that electronics wouldn't let you do on low-tech worlds.

"Normal pen, yeah. Oh, bug pen—these were fun, until the Vargr figured them out. It's got a little magazine of near-microscopic bugs.

"Every time you click the pen open, it checks to see if one's in its radius, and if not, it releases one. The idea was you 'lost' it, and someone would pick it up, carry it into wherever, and click it to sign in. Then they'd go to their desk, and click it. Then in a meeting... you get the idea. It spreads the bugs without the person who 'found' the pen even knowing. Didn't last long as a really useful item—the Doggies tightened their scan protocols for their embassies



## Raconteurs' Rest

(Continued from page 6)

pretty quick. Works OK against locals who don't have the technical backing. Dandy Christmas present for your nephew if you think his Dad's cheating on your sister."

Putting it down, the Old Scout picked up another and twisted the barrel, explaining, "Ink, stylus... flashlight. Laser pointer. Pretty common, you've seen these in a high-price office toys store. Handy, though. But if you turn the barrel *here*, turning on the laser pointer, and then turn the clip like *this*, the laser's modulated by the little microphone inside. A ship's scanners can pick it out pretty easily, since the atmo will spread it so much. Nice for a tight beam signaling device, like when you're on a mid-tech world that can detect and home in on radio and you really, really want to ID yourself for pickup."

There was more there, but customers were starting to come in. Paul wanted to hear more, but at the same time needed to tend to his store.

Both of them were momentarily distracted by the cute blonde approaching the counter. Then, the Old Scout shuffled the things back in the bag, saying, "I'll tell you what... you've got a K in it. I know the Service would rather this stuff weren't on the street. I'll give you two, and hope that I can get reimbursed when I pass it up the chain. You're up on the deal, and even if I get stiffed, I get brownie points and they are happy about me holding onto the *Snipe* all these years."

Paul grinned, "Double my cost back is better than having Imperials here hassling me. It's a deal."

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A few hours later, the bag and its contents were buried, and the ground cover pushed back over the disturbed ground. It still looked like something had been going on there, but it was far enough away from any roads or trails that accidental discovery by a person was unlikely, and there was enough rooting wildlife—especially one pseudo-pig-like omnivore—that it wouldn't look remarkable after a few

days. The Old Scout grinned in satisfaction, folded the entrenching tool, and thought about the little pool and waterfall a short distance away—that'd be just the thing for taking off the sweat.

---

Writing reports was probably the most obnoxious part of detached duty, but this one was both simple and satisfying: almost a one-liner, reading "Cache 11472 recovered intact. Placed in new location, coordinates attached. Assignment Complete."

Cache 11472 had come to the Service's notice when two messages arrived. First was the obituary for the gent who was the Covert Station Chief. The second was a notice that since locker 217-b-3 was now empty, the starport would no longer bill rental for it. The "it's empty" got people more upset, because no one knew the order: had the locker been emptied by the CSC? Was he on the run from something, grabbed the locker contents, and then got hit? Had he been hit to facilitate emptying the locker?

In the end, the ground car accident had actually been just an accident, and the emptying was a jerk of a grandson cashing in on what he thought was a legitimate inheritance... but not knowing had led to the Service sending someone in quietly to find out, rather than rushing in and spooking off any clues.

As the computer encrypted and sent the report, the Old Scout kicked back and skimmed the news, looking for a world that would be fun to visit rather than one 'suggested' when the *Snipe* was in at the Scout base. Getting the damage to the M-drive dealt with wasn't a bad deal—recover a misplaced bit of lifesaving gear in exchange for a new drive to replace the one that had melted down.

The Old Scout had actually enjoyed this mission, and memories of Lisa, both her enthusiasm about the trip and how they'd enjoyed each other, would be long-lasting. It was time to move on, though. No mission could last forever, and this one was complete.





## Earth Alliance Survey Shuttle

by Richard Page

Earth Alliance Light Shuttle (Survey Shuttle Variant)			Tons	Price (MCr)
Hull	90T Distributed	Hull 1 Structure 1	90	1.71
Armour	None		0	0
Manoeuvre Drive	sP Reaction Drive	Thrust 4	3.5	7
Power Plant	sG Fusion Plant	2	3	6
Cockpit	1 Crew		1.5	0.1
Computer	Model 2	Rating 10	0	0.16
Electronics	Survey Sensors (as Advanced Sensors)	+1 DM	0	0
Weapons	None		0	0
Fuel	42T + 3T (Fusion Plant – 28 days endurance)		45	0
Software	Manoeuvre/0, Library/0, Intellect/1, Intel. Interf./1, Expert/1, Remote Ops		0	0.0031
Extras	Airlock, 4 Firmpoints, 2 Staterooms, All-Terrain Landing System, Survey Module		26	13.8
Cargo	11T		11	0
<b>Total Tonnage and Cost</b>			<b>90</b>	<b>29.5831</b>

The STG-19s Survey Shuttle configuration started life as a jury-rigged modification done by independent survey crews who wanted a small, versatile survey ship. Within a few years, ship construction companies were offering the survey shuttle as a standard model of the light shuttle. With the addition of the extra equipment fitted to the survey shuttle, the original 80T light shuttle has grown into the 90T survey shuttle.

### Features

**Firmpoints:** Each Shuttle is equipped with 2 pairs of Firmpoints (0.5T, 0.2 MCr per pair; one pair permanently allocated to the Survey Module (q.v.)) which can be used to attach different types of modules to the shuttle. Each pair of Firmpoints are on either side of the shuttle and must use the same type of attached module (for example, you could attach 2 fuel modules or 2 cargo modules to the front pair, but not one of each). On the Survey Shuttle, the rear pair are permanently used to hold the survey module (thus making the hull 'Distributed' rather than 'Standard') and are unavailable for any other module. The most common modules used are 5T cargo and fuel modules (not interchangeable – you can't use the cargo ones for fuel or vice-versa), which cost 0.01 MCr empty, have negligible mass and hold 5T of cargo or fuel respectively.

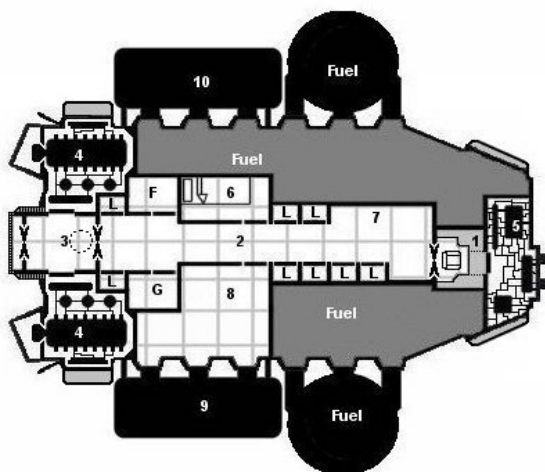
**Survey Module:** The Survey module is fitted as standard on the survey shuttle and consists of a pod containing 4 survey probes, a pod containing 2 sample gathering probes and a large gantry system to both deploy and retrieve them. It also incorporates an advanced survey sensor package (use as the survey sensor system – p. 45 of MGP High Guard with the sample probe as a 2T mining robot with a 0.5T sample container with 10 separate compartments). Both types of probe have a virtually unlimited range around a planet and a flight duration of 6 hours, using 0.05T of fuel per 6 hours of flight (may refuel from the ship) and can return to the ship under their own power. The module takes up 15T and costs 12 MCr.

**Landing Struts:** The STG-19 Shuttles are designed to operate from ships, stations and prepared landing areas. Because of this, the landing struts are unsuitable for landing on unprepared or uneven ground. An 'All-Terrain' extendable landing pad system is available – it takes up 1T of cargo space and costs 0.2 MCr. This is fitted as standard on a Survey Shuttle due to the extensive survey module.

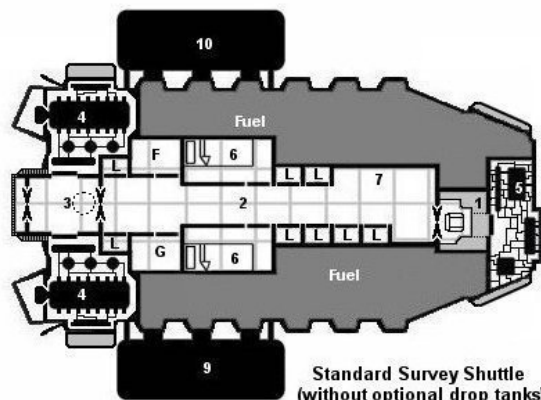
**Other Features:** each survey shuttle is usually equipped with two or more lockers for EVA suits (located near the airlock), as well as many small compartments located in the overhead area or under seats to store light hand luggage. The galley is suitable

# The Shipyard

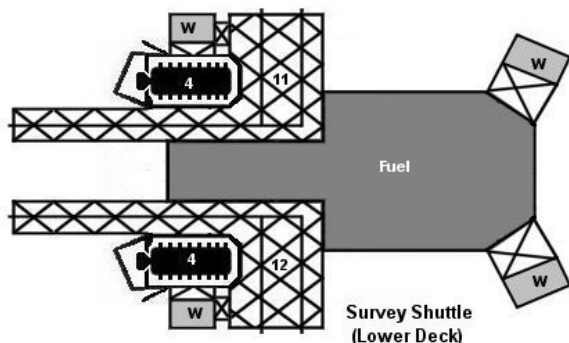
(Continued from page 8)



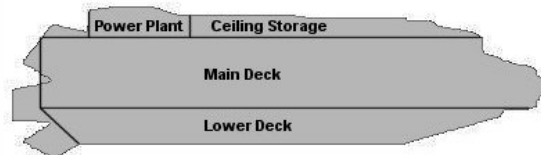
Survey Shuttle (Modified)



Standard Survey Shuttle  
(without optional drop tanks)



Survey Shuttle  
(Lower Deck)



## Deck plan key

1. Cockpit/Control Cabin.
  2. Main cargo or transport cabin.
  3. Airlock with fold-down powered ramp and ceiling access to Power Plant.
  4. Engines (access panels located in airlock).
  5. Sensors and Computer/Electronics (access panel located in crawl-space under co-pilot control console).
  6. Basic single or double-occupancy cabin.
  7. Exercise Equipment.
  8. Analysis Lab and Sample Storage.
  9. Sample collection probes.
  10. Survey probes.
  11. Survey probe retrieval gantry.
  12. Sample collection probe retrieval gantry.
- F. Fresher.  
G. Galley.  
L. Lockers.  
W. Landing strut well.

ble for preparing light meals, snacks and hot or cold drinks suitable for zero-g consumption from pre-packaged stores. There is also space allocated in the survey shuttle for exercise machines to alleviate the effects of long periods of zero-g.

## Optional Modification Package

One upgrade option available for the Survey Shuttle is the Lab Package – this removes one of the staterooms and 2T of cargo space and replaces it with a 4T lab area and a 2T storage area suitable for containment and analysis of hazardous materials. The modification is quite extensive and allows the sample gathering probes to deposit the gathered samples directly into the storage area for immediate analysis. The sample area can also be automatically vented into space if any materials become unstable. The Lab Package uses 6T of space and costs +0.7 MCr.



## M-9b Crocodile Grav IFV

by Scott Diamond

### M-9b Crocodile Grav IFV TL-15 5.15MCr

The M-9 was developed as an infantry fighting vehicle grav carrier that could be used as a standard IFV for both battledress and light infantry. Originally, the specs were for the M-9 to be able to land on a world through re-entry on its own, but while in theory it can do it (and on desperate occasions it has), in practice the design ended up being too difficult to control for making re-entry operations standard procedure. Soft-landing as a required method of transport was the beginning of a lot of teething problems and cost overruns that started with a streamlined combat car similar in size and speed to the M-8 *Bulldog* grav MBT it was imagined it would descend en masse from orbit with to the bulky, squared-off bullet-shaped IFV with tac missile rails, communications pods, and about everything including the kitchen sink added to it.

Still, it has proven itself in countless battles as highly versatile, deadly if used by commanders who didn't treat it as a minitank but as the infantry close support fighting vehicle it is, and since you can carry three of them in the same space that one M-8 MBT takes up in a transport they have been very popular as a rapid response combat vehicle, especially with the Imperial Drop Troop regiments who use them exclusively as their infantry combat carrier.

The "B" model was revised after the last war ended and was part of the MBT ULUP (Unit Lifespan Upgrade Program) for all grav combat vehicles. The program also streamlined the diversity of those vehicles and now the two heavy front line vehicles are only the M-8c *Bulldog* MBT and the M-9b *Crocodile* IFV and their artillery variants, which merely involve swapping a standardized turret system out of either vehicle.

The *Crocodile* requires a crew of 3 (commander, gunner, and driver) and can carry either 6 battle-dress heavy infantry or 8 combat armor equipped light infantry. A turretless ambulance version will carry 10 casualties (8 if in battledress). The Command & Control version carries 3 communications and ELINT personnel and 3 command staff (w/out battledress); the rest of that version is stuffed with communications and ELINT gear. A light artillery variant was developed but hasn't proved to be a successful design due to requiring too much power for the mass driver systems so that version was redesignated as a variant for the *Bulldog* MBT chassis. Cargo stowage, including various nooks and crannies that crew can find, is 2 tons.

The *Crocodile* is 9m long, 4m wide and 2m high at the chassis. The turret is 2m long, 3.5m wide and 1m high and masses 64.4 metric tons. For purposes of shipboard transport it requires a volume of 7 tons if stowed in non-combat ready configuration, 9 tons if ready to deploy to combat immediately upon landing.

Using a 72MW fusion power plant, the IFV can reach a maximum speed of 950kph in flight, a cruise speed of 650kph, and a nap-of-earth speed of 190kph using terrain-following LADAR. The combat range with 2592 liters of fuel is 24 hours with a rate of consumption of 108 liters/hr at max output.

### Defensive Systems

The M-8b is heavier armored than the original with slabs of bonded superdense equaling the following Striker values:

<b>Chassis</b>	Front Glacis (50)	R/L Sides (42)	Rear (29)	Deck/Belly (34)
<b>Turret</b>	Front Glacis (42)	R/L Sides (37)	Rear (37)	Deck (34)

The vehicle has active countermeasures using prismatic anti-laser aerosols and extensive active ECM, and is a sealed environment with life support for the crew and passengers whose endurance is limited only by available power for the vehicle when operated on a world with at least a Thin atmosphere;

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in Very Thin or Trace atmospheres, or in Vacuum, life support duration is 24 hours.

### Communications

The *Crocodile* carries a new communications upgrade for better battlefield datalink integration with other forces and for coordination from orbital as well as ground C3I centers. A 500 power meson communicator system with an integrated battlefield mapbox/computer system is backed up by a 500 power radio and laser communication unit.

Image enhancement with a back up thermal imaging target acquisition weapons guidance system is available to both the commander and the gunner. The driver has image enhancement and thermal imaging for vision.

### Armament

The turret is equipped with an electric powered 2cm hyper-velocity autocannon with a rate of fire of 160rpm and a single barrel. Direct fire control and full stabilization allows the weapon to be used by either the commander or gunner while the vehicle is on the move. Up to 16 targets may be engaged at once.

The weapon fires kinetic energy armor-piercing fin-stabilized ammunition with an effective range of 3km. The magazine is equipped with an automatic linkless feed loader and holds 4800 KEAPER rounds (30 shots).

Ammo	EFF	LNG	EXT	Targets
2cm KEAPER	3 km (22)+5	4 km (20)+4	5.5(18)+2	16

The commander's hatch is equipped with a cupola-mounted RAM auto-launcher and there is a coaxial mount VRFGG with a 30-shot magazine for use by the gunner. The RAM launcher has storage for 16 magazines.

The primary anti-vehicular armament of the *Crocodile* is a turret mounted *Bushmaster* ATGM box launcher with 4 ready to fire ATGMs. Two spare 4-round disposable box reloads are stowed behind the launcher and are automatically reloaded when the empty "magazine" is ejected after firing the last missile.

#### Bushmaster ATGM

18cm HEAP warhead	PEN=50	Target Designation guidance
Range 3km	wt.= 22kg	844 Cr. Price tag

The commander also has a laser target designation system for marking heavy target threats for artillery and ortillery support.

The chassis of the current model is now equipped with 4 tactical heavy missile launchers that can fire either the SADARM-2 ATGM that can be equipped with either a standard HEAP warhead or tactical nuclear one. The launchers are rails protected inside closed box firing units and armored. They can be fired by either the gunner or commander, but for use of the nuclear missiles the commander must use his command override key. In practice this is available to the gunner as well.

#### SADARM-2 ATGM

##### (Search And Destroy ARMor model 2)

A "Fire-and-Forget" homing missile that is designed to be a mini-cruise missile for the battlefield containing imaging and electronic output profiles of enemy vehicles so that the ATGM can be launched from cover and then "search" the battlefield within its 6-km combat radius for a suitable enemy target. It then engages the threat with a pop-up dive that allows it to attack the thinner deck armor with its 23cm HEAP or .5kt nuclear warhead. The nuclear warhead is primarily used for bunker-busting and against dispersed, but dug-in armored targets.

HEAP penetration = 57	wt. = 61.75kg	1032Cr. Cost
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## Underworld Characters

by Harry Bryan

In *MegaTraveller*, advanced character generation revolves around large, formal, and most importantly, legal career paths. On occasion, however, player-characters need access to the seamy side of the Imperium. Whether gun-running, smuggling, or disposing of merchandise of indeterminate ownership, there is a need for the skill-sets that can't be picked up in a typical law-abiding career.

(Note: All tables for this article appear on pp. 16-17.)

**General Background:** The interstellar underworld is divided into three parts.

*Organized Crime:* Also referred to as 'syndicates', these groups tend to be larger organizations involved in multiple non-legal activities. The principal motivation is the accumulation of wealth. Organizationally, they tend to be modeled on the social groups of the milieu in which they are operating (or from which they originate), and in large measure share the same mores and social codes. Often, they will have induced the cooperation of low- and mid-level government functionaries (or covertly placed their own members in such positions) in some of their activities, or in evading or avoiding adverse action. The larger and more influential syndicates also have control over legal enterprises, generally for the purpose of converting illicit gains into 'legal' wealth. In some cases, syndicates provide services to citizens that a weak or inattentive government can't or won't provide.

*Gangs:* Unlike syndicates, Gangs generally do not have any connections in local government, nor do they act in the role of a government, except in the most extreme cases of actual governmental impotence (or nonexistence). Often, their members are alienated from the cultural milieu in which they operate. Their motivations vary, but power, profit, or ideology tend to be central. Gang activities are almost invariably wholly illegal, and often actively opposed by local government (with varying levels of

success). It is not unusual for all of a gang's activities to be focused on a particular enterprise, for example, drug-running, bank robbery, jewel theft, or even just general mayhem. Violence is common, and 'wars' with other gangs (over territory, or 'turf', for example) are to be expected.

*Independent Operators:* These individuals operate outside the protection of syndicates or gangs, and generally specialize (use a single tactic). Motivation is almost invariably either profit or ideology. They may be approached by Syndicates or Gangs for assistance if the Operator's special skills are needed — or if plausible deniability is needed.

**Underworld Ranks:** While Gangs often have a hierarchical structure, it tends to be fluid, and not formalized—one is a leader, or one is a follower. See the special Gang rule under *PROMOTION*.

Syndicates, however, generally have a more formal rank structure, and members move through that structure on merit. In these rules, *Listener*, *Runner*, and *Worker* are 'Working' ranks, corresponding roughly to Enlisted rank; *Enforcer*, *Seller*, *Chief-of-Staff*, *Adviser*, *Boss*, and *Kingpin* are 'Made' rank, the equivalent of Officer rank. Obviously, the referee is at liberty to alter the rank structure and titles on a case-by-case basis.

Individual Operators, obviously, have no need for rank, and do not roll for promotion.

There is no general term for an Underworld character, and the number of terms coined by Law Enforcement for them may well be greater the number of Law Enforcement organizations.

### Initial Activities

Initial activities include pre-career options, enlistment, organization and area selection, and initial training.

**Pre-Career Options:** Characters intending an underworld career may consider College (*MegaTraveller Player's Manual*, p.44). Characters who choose not to go to college may, with the referee's agreement, begin their careers at age 14, but may not promote during their first term.

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**Enlistment:** For acceptance into the underworld of interstellar rogues, a newly generated character must throw 5+ on 2D (DM +1 if Social Standing 7-, DM +2 if Strength 8+). Success or failure at this roll represents finding a ‘mentor’—either by being recruited or by the character seeking out such a person—who is willing to protect the character while the character ‘learns the ropes’.

**Organization Assignment:** Roll 2D on the Organization Assignment table to determine what sort of organization the character initially joins.

**Area Assignment:** At the beginning of each term, a character determines the area of their activities by rolling 1D on the Area Assignment table.

*Off-planet* represents work involving space travel, while *On-planet* indicates the term will be spent on a planet’s surface. The *Prison* assignment represents the character’s arrest and detention for previous crimes committed. A character’s first term is always *On-planet*.

**Initial Training:** The initial year of service in the underworld is dedicated to initial training. At the end of the year, the character receives an automatic **Streetwise** skill and one roll on the appropriate Organization Skills Table.

### Career Resolution

Career resolution begins once a character graduates from all pre-career schools and has enlisted.

### Assignments

Each term, a character resolves four assignments.

Each one-year assignment is resolved separately using a two-step procedure: the specific assignment is rolled, and the assignment is resolved in terms of survival, promotion, connections, and skills

(*Note: In the first term, only resolve three assignments. The fourth assignment (actually the first) is Initial Training, as previously described.*)

**Specific Assignments:** Roll 2D on the Assignments table to determine the nature of the character’s activities.

After determining the assignment, a character rolls on the appropriate Assignment Resolution Table for survival, promotion, connections, and skills.

**Assignment Resolution:** Roll 2D each for Survival, Promotion, Connections, and Skills (*but also see the section Resolving Special Duty, below*).

**SURVIVAL:** The throw for survival determines if the character survives the current year of assignment. Failing the survival throw forces the character to end character generation and muster out. They must roll on the Discharge Table. If the Discharge Table roll is 2-5, the character must immediately roll for benefits and leave the service. On a 6, resolve *one* term in a *non-military* career other than Pirate, Rogue, or Law Enforcement, then muster out. (The character must meet the normal requirements for enlistment in the career, but need not roll for enlistment. This should not be considered a ‘first term’.) On a 1, roll a new character.

*Optional Survival Rule: If the character fails the survival roll, roll the same survival roll again. If the roll is failed a second time, muster out as above. If the second survival roll succeeds, the character may continue in the career (subject to referee agreement and other relevant rules), but the Area Assignment for the remainder of the current term and the next term is automatically Prison.*

**PROMOTION:** Roll if the character is in a Syndicate or Gang (see the *Special Gang* rule below). A Syndicate character starts out as a *Listener* and progresses through the ranks, becoming a ‘Made man’ when promoting from *Worker* to *Enforcer*. Until becoming an *Enforcer*, a character may receive a promotion every *year*; once ‘Made’, the character is limited to one promotion per *term* (but may roll once each year during a term until successful).

If a character who is not yet ‘Made’ rolls an *unmodified* 12 for Promotion, they become ‘Made’ and immediately promoted to *Enforcer*, regardless of current rank.

*Special Gang rule:* A character who rolls *less* than the number of terms served (including the current term) on 2D is a Leader in the Gang.

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**CONNECTIONS:** A successful roll provides a contact that can be useful to the character. Connections signify familiarity with influential people in the indicated area. Connections do not eliminate bribes; rather, they make it easier to bribe the right people. The referee determines the location and relationship. If a character needs to bribe someone where the player and referee agree that an established Connection can be helpful, award an additional DM +1 for the bribe attempt.

**SKILLS:** A character may receive skills because of the assignment. If the character rolls the indicated number or higher, then he or she gains one skill that is immediately determined. A character may roll for a skill on either the appropriate branch or Location Assignment table.

**Assignment Descriptions:** Although not strictly necessary for using the rules, knowing what's involved in an assignment will allow the referee to better adjust the various tables for specific campaign needs. (This list includes Special Duty assignment descriptions.)

*Assassination:* See *Murder*.

*Barratry:* Typically, theft of carried goods by the ship's crew or officers, directed against the owner of the goods. More generally, any fraud involving misrepresentation of the fate of goods perpetrated by a transporter against the owner of the goods.

*Bodyguard:* (Special Duty) Not, strictly speaking, an illegal activity. The character is acting as physical protection for a more important individual in the organization. May involve illegal carrying of weapons, or use of force in ways not legally condoned.

*Bookmaking:* Facilitation of gambling on various activities. The activities themselves may be legal or illegal; the gambling is always illegal.

*Computer Crime:* (Special Duty) Crimes that specifically and necessarily involve the use of computers. Generally, these involve the removal or duplication of confidential data and the use or sale thereof.

*Factory Labor:* Physical toil under relatively controlled conditions. May be productive of goods or services that the state requires or distributes, e.g., manufacture of vehicle registration plates, prison laundry, or other such. Time spent at such labor may equate to later privilege or luxuries.

*Fencing:* (Special Duty) Sale of goods acquired illegally.

*General Detention:* The character is in the custody of the state, under conditions that are neither conducive to privilege nor specifically punitive beyond the norm.

*Hard Labor:* Extreme physical toil under adverse, but usually not deadly, conditions. May or may not have useful results; the principal intent is to 'break' the prisoner and make them compliant with prison discipline. Also called *Chain Gang*, *Breaking Rocks*, or other such terms.

*Highjacking:* The interception and appropriation of both a transport and its contents by a party not connected with either the transporter or the owner of the contents. Called *Piracy* when waterborne or space ships are the transports involved.

*Infiltration:* Covert placement of personnel who will work in the syndicate's interests into positions of power or access to information.

*Informer:* (Special Duty) Superficially, like *Infiltration* (q.v.), however, the informer is working for (and passing information to) the state, rather than an underworld organization. Also called 'stool pigeon' or 'nark', among other things.

*Kidnapping:* Seizure, concealment, and restraint of people, with the objective of inducing a legal entity (company, government, church, etc.) to act in a specific manner favorable to the syndicate's or gang's interests, e.g., payment (ransom), release from imprisonment of convicted members, change of policy, etc.

*Larceny:* Covert or stealthy removal of property from a legal custodian. Includes 'swindling' or 'con games', where the custodian is induced to 'willingly' part with the property.



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**Murder:** (Special Duty) Deliberate killing of individuals. The actual killer is generally acting for profit; the person or organization employing the killer may have a variety of motivations. If the target is a prominent figure, killed for reasons relating to his prominence, this becomes *Assassination*.

**Piracy:** (Special Duty) See *Hijacking*.

**Racketeering:** Corrupt manipulation of entities such as governments, unions, or businesses, or certain forms of *Larceny* (q.v.) when 'inside information' is involved. May take many forms, such as 'no-show jobs', 'protection' rackets, union organizing, bookmaking or market manipulation where the organizers have 'inside information', and so on.

**Robbery:** Forcible and overt removal of property from the immediate presence of the legal custodian.

**Smuggling:** Covert transport of illegal goods, or of legal goods where appropriate taxes or fees have not been paid.

**Solitary:** (Special Duty) The character is kept away from the general population of the detention facility (Solitary Confinement), and is not permitted even normal activities without direct supervision and enforced isolation from others.

**Work-Release:** The character is permitted to work outside the direct custody of the state. He is returned to general incarceration at the end of a daily work shift. Limited to cooperative individuals without a history of trouble while incarcerated.

**The Transfer Assignment:** If the assignment rolled is *Transfer*, the character changes organization assignment. Roll 1D as follows: 1-2, Syndicate; 3-4, Gang; 5-6, Independent Operator. If a character rolls the same type of organization he is currently in, it represents moving to a new organization of the same type. (Lose one level of rank if changing syndicates.) Roll for Area assignment, then specific assignment, and resolve normally.

**Resolving Special Duty:** When a character rolls Special Duty for an assignment, resolve as follows:

Roll 1D on the Special Duty Assignment table, taking the assignment from the column for the character's current Area Assignment. Except as noted:

- Survival and Connection are automatic and no promotion will occur.
- Roll 1D for 5+ on the Special Duty Resolution Table once for *each* skill listed in the column for the specific assignment. On success, the character receives +1 in the indicated skill(s).

The Special Duty assignments that follow different procedures from the previous are as follows:

**Informer:** The character has been approached by prison officials with a request to cooperate in an investigation.

If he reports regularly on fellow inmates, he receives Surveillance +1 and is released at the end of the year. If an individual refuses, he is sent to hard labor, with a DM -1 to his next survival roll.

**Solitary:** No Connection; otherwise, resolve on Special Duty Assignment table.

**Murder or Assassination:** Individual trains with the local assassin's guild, or is contracted to kill someone. Resolve as Rogue, *MegaTraveller Player's Manual* pp. 24-25. If Skill roll succeeds, roll 5+ on 1D on *each* Rogue Acquired Skills Table (EDU 8+ needed to roll on Advanced Education table) and choose skill on success. No Promotion, auto Connection.

**Piracy:** Individual serves a year of service as a pirate. Resolve as Pirate, *MegaTraveller Player's Manual* pp.24-25. If Skill roll succeeds, Roll 5+ on 1D on *each* Pirate Acquired Skill Table (must have EDU 8+ to roll on the Advanced Education table) and choose skill on success. Do not roll Position; automatic success on Connection roll.

### Promotion

A Syndicate character who promotes to "Enforcer" is considered a member of the 'family', and is accorded the appropriate privileges and protections. Gain one additional Connection.

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## Re-enlistment and Mustering Out

A character can automatically reenlist at the end of a term of service. No reenlistment roll is required. Likewise, a character may muster out at the end of any four-year term of service. A character may be forced to muster out after failing a survival roll.

*Mustering Out Benefits:* The Underworld Character rolls on the Rogue mustering out tables. A character gets a combined number of rolls on cash and possession tables equivalent to the number of terms spent in service. However, they can only take up to three rolls on the cash table.

## Special Rules

The following special rules apply to Underworld characters.

*Brownie Points:* As Underworld characters are never decorated, award 1 BP per connection instead.

*Courtesy Calls:* When travelling outside the area of influence of the character's organization, an underworld character—even one who has mustered out—must conduct one encounter with a representative of the local underworld, to reassure them that the character's organization is not looking to expand into the area. Independent Operators must do this as well, even though they are not members of an organization, as independent specialists also have their own 'turf' and do not appreciate competition.

If this is not done within one local day of landing, the character's party will receive a -1DM on local encounters until this task is accomplished.

*Just when I thought I was out, they pull me back in:* Just because a character has retired from their organization it doesn't mean that the organization is done with them. On the anniversary date of retirement, roll 2D. On 11+, the syndicate or gang has a mission for the player. The mission is up to the referee. 🎲

Organizational Assignment	
Roll 2D	Type of Organization
2–5	Individual Operator
6–9	Gang
10–12	Syndicate

Area Assignment	
Roll 1D	Type of Organization
1–2	Off-planet
3–5	On-planet
6	Prison

Discharge Table	
Die	Result
1	Death (killed by police or fellow criminals)
2	Character goes to trial; lose all benefits
3	Hunted by assassins; lose 2 benefit rolls
4	Under close police surveillance; loss of all connections
5	Publicly exposed as criminal; SOC-2
6	Clean start; transfer to any nonmilitary "legal" service for one more term.

Assignments			
Roll 2D	Off-World	On-World	Prison
2	Highjacking	Kidnapping	Work-Release
3	Barratry	Robbery	Factory Labor
4	Racketeering	Larceny	General Detention
5	Smuggling	Bookmaking	Hard Labor
6	Infiltration	Infiltration	Factory Labor
7	Racketeering	Larceny	General Detention
8	Smuggling	Bookmaking	Hard Labor
9	Highjacking	Robbery	General Detention
10	Barratry	Kidnapping	Work-Release
11	Special Duty	Special Duty	Special Duty
12	Transfer	Transfer	Transfer

Special Duty Assignments			
Die	On-World	Off-World	Prison
1	Murder	Assassination	Solitary
2	Infiltration	Infiltration	Solitary
3	Enforcement	Kidnapping	Informer
4	Computer Crime	Smuggling	Informer
5	Bodyguard	Piracy	Informer
6	Fencing	Fencing	Informer

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## Assignment Resolution

Off-World	<i>Barratry</i>	<i>Hijacking</i>	<i>Infiltration</i>	<i>Racketeering</i>	<i>Smuggling</i>
Survival	4+	6+	Auto	5+	5+
Promotion	11+	9+	12+	10+	11+
Connection	10+	11+	10+	11+	10+
Skill	8+	7+	7+	6+	8+
On-World	<i>Bookmaking</i>	<i>Kidnapping</i>	<i>Larceny</i>	<i>Robbery</i>	<i>Infiltration</i>
Survival	4+	6+	5+	5+	Auto
Promotion	11+	10+	11+	10+	12+
Connection	9+	11+	10+	11+	9+
Skill	7+	6+	6+	6+	7+
Prison	<i>General Detention</i>	<i>Factory Labor</i>	<i>Hard Labor</i>	<i>Work-Release</i>	
Survival	5+	4+	7+	4+	
Promotion	11+	12+	None	None	
Connection	8+	10+	10+	9+	
Skill	7+	6+	5+	8+	

DMs:

- Survival: +1 if END 9+ or INT 9+ (cumulative)
- Promotion: +1 if DEX 10+
- Connections: +1 if INT 9+
- Skill: +1 if EDU 8+

## Special Duty Assignments

Assignment	Infiltration	Solitary	Enforcement	Computer Crime	Bodyguard	Fencing	Smuggling	Kidnapping
<i>Skills</i>	<b>Interpersonal</b>	+1 STR	Demolition	Computer	Hand Cbt	<b>Economic</b>	Admin	<b>Interpersonal</b>
	<b>Vehicle</b>	+1 END	Intrusion	Forgery	<b>Gun Cbt</b>	Vice	Bribery	Intrusion
	<b>Economic</b>		Hand Cbt	Admin	<b>Vehicle</b>		Surveillance	<b>Vehicle</b>
			Liaison	Electronic				<b>Space</b>

### Organization Skills

Die	<i>Individual Operator</i>	<i>Gang</i>	<i>Syndicate</i>
1	Streetwise	<b>Blade Cbt</b>	<b>Gun Cbt</b>
2	<b>Physical</b>	<b>Physical</b>	<b>Mental</b>
3	<b>Vehicle</b>	<b>Vehicle</b>	<b>Vehicle</b>
4	Computer	Intrusion	Instruction
5	Intrusion	<b>Inborn</b>	<b>Inborn</b>
6	Hand Cbt	Carousing	Interrog

### Area Skills

Die	<i>Off-World</i>	<i>On-World</i>	<i>Prison</i>
1	Ship's Boat	Gambling	Bribery
2	Vacc Suit	<b>Inborn</b>	<b>Blade Cbt</b>
3	Gunnery	<b>Vice</b>	+1 End
4	Mechanic	<b>Gun Cbt</b>	Brawling
5	Engineering	Recruiting	Streetwise
6	<b>Space</b>	Disguise	Prospecting
7	<b>Interpers</b>	Stealth	Stealth
8	<b>Economic</b>	Leader	<b>Inborn</b>

DMs: +1 if Rank 4; +1 if on Term 5+

### Syndicate Ranks

Rank	Working Rank	Rank	'Made' Rank	Basic Rank
E1	Listener	O1	Enforcer	1
E2	Runner	O2	Seller	2
E3	Worker	O3	Chief-of-Staff	3
		O4	Advisor	4
		O5	Boss	5
		O6	Kingpin	6



## NHR 7000 Autonomous Low Berth Robot

*designed by Ewan Quibell*

Robot ID: NHR 7000 Autonomous Low Berth Robot, TL10, Cr 154,468 URP=YFx03x, STR=795, DEX=15, INT=0, EDU=6

Hull: 1/2, Size=14.715 klitres, Config=0USL Open, Armour=1E, Unloaded=1.2972 tons, Loaded=1.3004 tons

Power: 1/2, Batteries=0.165 Mw, 1/2, Solar=0.1026 Mw, Duration=4.4 hours/66 hours/165 hours/unlimited

Loco: 1/2, Stand Grav Trust=1.65 tons, MaxAccel=0.268 G, Agility=0, NOE=40 kph, Cruise=225 kph, Top=300 kph

Commo: Radio=Continental (5000 km), Interface=Brain, Power, Program

Sensors: Active EMS=Dist (5 km), Passive EMS=V Dist (50 km), Environ=V Dist (50 km), Magnetic=V Dist (50 km), Headlight x2, Basic Sensor Package, Touch x3, Video Recorder,

Off: Hardpoints=1

Def: DefDM=+8

Brain: NHR Low Function 210 CPU=Linear x11, Storage=Standard x30, FundLogic=LowData, FundCmd=LimitedBasic, Software=Grav Vehicle-1, Medical-1, Rescue -1

Control: Panel=Electronic x1, Slave Link x1

Append: Heavy Arm x1, Light Arm x2

Accom: Low Berth=1

Other: Cargo=0.032 klitres, Medical Instruments, ObjSize=Small, EMLevel=Faint

Comment: Cost in Quantity=Cr 123,574 Excess Power=0.02235 Mw

The NHR 7000 Autonomous Low Berth (ALB) was designed as a rescue robot for disaster situations, based on the Daud Enterprises' TL10 Portable Low Berth concept. NHR licensed the patent from Daud Enterprises and added one of their own to create the ALB. The ALB is designed to be able to run all the instrumentation, command, sensors, and communications, as well as the low berth, indefinitely from the Solar Cells directly, and is able to run these on battery for up to 66 hours if needed, however, the robot brain can power off (and on) equipment (including itself) to extend the duration of the low berth to 165 hours as needed. If the grav drives are powered up, the ALB has a duration of 4.4 hours at maximum acceleration. The batteries can be recharged from the solar cells in 7.3 hours. The ALB can be connected to an external power source as

may be necessary through the standard power interface provided. The robot itself, including the frame and components, costs Cr 104,468 (or Cr 83,574 in quantity), and design and manufacture is such that shipboard low berths may be attached to it without losing continuity of power, thus allowing the berth and occupant to be moved between installations without the need for them to be woken.

Designed for first response rescue, the robot has the ability to search through rubble or wreckage in order to locate sophonts in distress, following which it can analyse the area for weak points or danger areas before freeing the sophont by digging through or moving the rubble as necessary. Once the sophont is free, the robot uses its grav drive to nullify gravity in the area and the weight of the sophont to be able to manoeuvre them into the low berth easily for treatment. The low berth is used as a treatment bed so the robot can administer first aid or other medical procedures as may be necessary before freezing the patient and returning them to hospital or a designated disaster medical relief area.

Following the adoption of the robots by the emergency services, and their exceptional service record, users found that by the use of the brain and program interfaces they were able to re-task the robots on the fly, enhancing the medical skill at the expense of the ability of the robot to rescue sophonts. This enabled the robots to perform as trauma doctors performing complicated procedures and operations at the site of the incident without the need for the patent to be taken to hospital. The slave link controls also allows human medical experts to take control of the robot remotely in order to perform even more advanced procedures if the robot flags them, sometimes negating the need for further surgery when the patient is taken to hospital to recuperate. The ability to swap out low berths has enabled disaster relief efforts to be better organised with some ALBs performing rescue and first aid, while others perform advanced medical procedures, and

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## In A Store Near You

(Continued from page 18)

still others are re-tasked with high grav vehicle skill in order to allow patients to be delivered more quickly and more safely to hospital.

The ability of the robots to be re-tasked has opened up the medi-bot market to the ALBs. Their initial programming is set to Grav Vehicle-1, Medical-2, and they are sent out to normal emergency response calls for medical assistants instead of sending out ambulances and human paramedics or

doctors. Without the need to rescue patients the robot can assess, diagnose and treat the patient before taking them to hospital to recuperate, or freeze them and take them as necessary. This has allowed those robots that would normally only be used for disasters to be utilised as an everyday resource while the users know that they can easily be re-tasked to achieve their original objectives. The small cargo compartment is normally used to carry medical supplies and blood. ☪

## Critics' Corner

### 21 Plots Too

reviewed by "kafka"

*21 Plots Too*. Various authors

Gypsy Knights Games. <http://www.gypsyknightsgames.com>

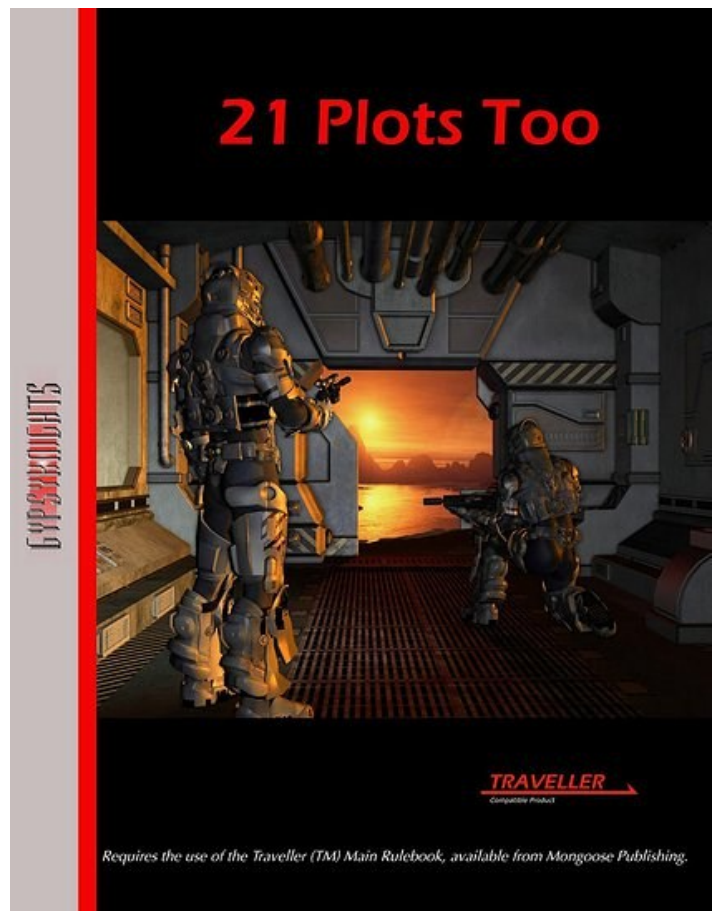
23pp, softcover or PDF

US\$9.99(softcover or softcover+PDF)/US\$4.99 (PDF only)

*This review originally appeared on rpg.net in January 2012, and is reprinted here with the author's permission.*

I would first like to thank the owner/publisher of Gypsy Knights Games, John Watts, for gifting a copy of this soft cover for the purposes of this review. Thank you very much. Gypsy Knights Games (GKG) is a gaming collective turned into a gaming company, dedicated to bringing old time *Traveller* goodness to a new audience through the Mongoose Open Game License designed for the Mongoose *Traveller* rules. Nowhere is this more evident than in *21 Plots Too*. For this product, like its predecessor and likely successor products, focuses on plot hooks in the form of Patron Encounters (in which a job is formulated and 1D6 possible outcomes) usable as either Campaign filler or just enjoyable one-shots with minimal effort needed by the Referee save to sketch in the details of the adventure.

*Traveller* has a long history of this type of adventure, even before they were called Adventure Seeds, and GKG is bringing that tradition back. But, why



buy this product over others? Well, *Traveller* has a particular vibe that distinguishes it from other SFRPGs that I and others have characterized a grey gritty Hard Space Opera. Whereas many games, including those commissioned by licensed *Traveller* companies, have veered too far toward Hard SF or too far toward Space Opera, most *Traveller* players

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have been happy with the game being balanced in between: realistic enough to know that Space can kill you (if the chargen does not do it first) but also fantastical enough to allow things like hyperdrive, antigrav devices, psionics, anti-aging drugs, etc. to exist along side. Many of us view *Traveller* as being situated in the far future of the Golden Era of SF literature (1930-1960s), as a result; however (maybe it is my age), I don't think so – I would rather situate *Traveller* in the far future of the time in which it was written – the 1970s – and perhaps later, as it has (to some extent, and belatedly) kept pace with the times albeit two or more steps behind. Thus, *Traveller* isn't cyberpunk, but it will have chrome fittings; nor is it Transhumanist, despite one of the major interstellar polities being known for advances in genetic engineering. *Traveller* is—and really always has been—a heuristic for adventure, and that is where *21 Plots Too* enters the picture.

Building upon the work outlined in the various *Quick Worlds* folios, GKG is building an Alternative *Traveller* Universe that is quite unlike its competitors. It takes the notion that a Sector will have a (local) history unto itself, even if it has a history as part of the larger universe (the metasetting?), and just runs with that. The local history should be enough for any Referee to run a game, without having to worry about the metasetting—but, too often, in other products, it isn't. This is an area that GKG is rectifying with its Subsector Sourcebooks, ultimately allowing the use of both histories side-by-side, and acknowledging that one of the great strengths of *Traveller* is the idea that it is connected with the metasetting, even though it is a constant topic of debate in the *Traveller* community about how much of the metasetting to take in. This where I find *21 Plots Too* does a great job in providing a backdrop that I could use in my Official *Traveller* Universe (OTU) or

continue to follow the unfolding story that GKG is taking me on. My review of *Subsector Sourcebook 1: Cascadia* will reveal the merits of going on the journey. But, the most important thing to know is that you are not a prisoner of having to use GKG's setting; just that it would be helpful, if you do.

Like its earlier companion volume, *21 Plots, 21 Plots Too* shows great respect for the *Traveller* heuristic, and for finding the balance between Hard and Soft, and Light and Dark, that makes *Traveller*, well, *Traveller*. These 21 plot points represent completely believable and credible encounters in any *Traveller* universe. They range from the zany to the serious in which 1D6 or Referee's fiat will determine the contours of the adventure.

The cover art, which unfortunately is the only art present, is quite striking. It is very reminiscent of the *MegaTraveller Player's Manual*, and the *Traveller* fan familiar with the latter will either assume that it inspired the artist, or will just squeak for joy in John's wise choice of art selection. The price may be high for a mere 21 plot points [reported as \$15.98 in January—ed.] but in that case go with the less expensive PDF alternative. However, if you are like me, you prefer the feel of a book as opposed to just paper printouts – then you will be rewarded with a nice saddleback book with sizable fonts. For a small company, it is very nicely rendered. 🌟

## News About Traveller

### Recent Traveller News and Findings

August 2012

- **Mongoose Publishing** has released *Deneb Sector* and *Solomani Rim*.
- **Gorgon Press** has released *Ship Book: Chiron-class Hunter*.
- **Terra/Sol Games** has released *Techbook: Chrome*
- **Gypsy Knights Games** has released *Subsector Sourcebook 4: Sequoyah* 🌟



## A Most Unfortunate War

by Andrew Vallance

### Part 2

#### 130th of 2025 (321-93): A Meeting on Mikur

Force Commander Charles Diishu waited to see the admiral. His crisply pressed uniform the very epitome of Marine precision, His nails were spotless and every hair was in its assigned place. Precise, meticulous and measured, that was Force Commander Diishu's way. The young lady lieutenant looked up from her desk and indicated that Darant was free now. He entered the room and noted the classic form of its adornment, Pictures of the admiral's illustrious ancestors stretching back into the Sylean Federation<sup>21</sup>, ships both old and new of the fleet. Darant was studying a starchart, symbols and lines indicating forces red and blue. "Ah, Force Commander, thank you for coming. Is it Charles or Charlie?"

"Charles, sir." Diishu loathed Charlie.

"Well Charles, you come highly recommended."

"Thank you, sir." His voice was steady, measured and betrayed absolutely nothing.

"Well, I suppose you know why I requested you?"

"The war is not progressing well, sir? And you are in need of timely intelligence? I took the liberty of studying the latest reports along with details of their culture on the journey here, sir."

The admiral was impressed, the reports of Diishu's attention to detail appeared accurate "Yes, yes, you are quite correct, Force Commander." There was just the trace of irritation in Darant's voice.

"Sir, if I may be so bold, has no one considered negotiations? My research indicated it might prove fruitful."

Somewhat more than a trace this time "While they hold Imperial territory? Unthinkable."

"Of course, sir." It was not Diishu's place to question such things.

"So, Charles, to cut to the core of this. We need intelligence, we have a number of prisoners with vital information who have proven... resilient. Can you achieve results?"

"I believe so, sir; my studies of their culture have indicated several approaches that may prove successful. It may however, require the occasional... unorthodox methodology."

Darant had heard the rumours "But you will remain within the rules of war?"

Force Commander Diishu remained silent. Admiral Darant pondered, *so many lives already, and so many more if we don't end it soon.* "Very well, Force Commander." He signed an order. What he was unaware of was that he had also just signed his death warrant.

#### 195th of 2025 (021-94): Trapped at Kangesa

A cruiser, a hulking great cruiser. I looked around, Willy, Petra and Sarah were already dead, Shadta was covered in so much blood, who knew about the rest. Shadta nodded "*Raledenet*". I smiled. "*Raledenet bu shish wala.*" I brought the *Lucknow* hard over into a violent spin, put on Tolur's 10th and pushed the drives past the red. This would be a fun ride.

Captain Ishugashii sat on the bridge of the *Skanna*. *Not a bad haul, three raiders destroyed, one crippled and the fifth to follow.* He'd studied the way the Luriani fought, from the Consolidation Wars onward. These raiders tied up so many resources but when you managed to catch them, easy meat. Jamison on sensors spoke "Sir, red two, the cripple sir, it's being odd."

"Odd?"

"Yes, sir, I think they're dead, gone into an uncontrolled spin."

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## Raconteurs' Rest

(Continued from page 21)

"Good, target everything at red five then." Something was niggling at him.

Jamison again "Sir, very odd, I can't be sure, but I think red two is still accelerating."

"Well, be sure, man!"

"Yes, sir, but hard to get a lock with that much spin." Vital time ticked by "Yes, sir, it's accelerating."

"Vector?" Something still niggled, what was it?

"A moment please, sir." More time.

"No vector sir, it's uncontrolled, the pilot must be dead, left the drives open."

Weapons this time "Lock on red five, sir."

Something was wrong. "Hold fire, maintain lock, transfer the plot of red two to my console." The clock was ticking perilously close to zero. He studied it carefully, it wasn't possible, nobody could control a ship in that spin. Comms this time "Sir, I'm getting a transmission from red two."

"Transmission? A surrender, a distress call?" Captain Ishugashii didn't know it but the *Skanna* was out of time now.

"No sir, I think it's music."

"Music? Put it on speaker." Tolur's 10th, *Raledenet bu shish wala*. 'No Fear to Dance Alone'. A classic piece, one of his favourites. The title made no sense—*never let a bunch of poets and musicians design a language*. It was a metaphor of course, the Luriani never dance alone, a metaphor for... The realisation settled on him as a look of sheer terror. He screamed his next orders "Shift fire, everything on red two!"

"With respect sir, it's no threat, nobody could fire from that spin." But the captain knew red two had no intention of firing.

"Fire the damn weapons at it!" But he'd let red two get too close. The *Lucknow* came out of her spin and set vector.

---

The bridge exploded in a sheet of flame. The *Lucknow* was breaking in half, but it didn't matter,

I'd got her more than close enough now. I felt my harness give way and I was floating. It was like drifting with the *sesherin*<sup>22</sup>, by instinct, almost, I sealed eyes and ears, emptied lungs<sup>23</sup>. I'd never been religious till then, but I swear it was Sesh Herself's hand that guided me gently through a storm spray of shards and fire and molten metal. It was almost serene flying from the inferno into the blackness, odd thoughts as I watched my long hair drift, *how come my stylist never got my hair to look that good?* I watched as the glowing funeral pyre the *Lucknow* had become tore soundlessly through the heart of the cruiser. I saw the bright blue flash as the *Markwies* departed. The pulsing strobes of rescue balls, there were survivors. I prayed for them, *pae Sesh vuryin shi afer bias shi bu emmes*, I thought as I counted the stars. I should be dead, dead many times over. I had danced alone, but death hadn't taken me. I touched the button on my emergency beacon.

---

Lieutenant-Commander Mann watched as over five thousand metric tonnes of white hot metal and ceramics slammed into the *Skanna*. They never stood a chance. Her XO looked on in horror, then spoke "Ma'am?"

"Red five?"

"About to jump ma'am."

"Let them go, we'll never get a lock in time. Survivors?"

"Working on it ma'am. We have forty nine on sensors."

"Standard recovery sweep if you please."

Mann paused a moment "Who is acting for the Protectorate during the war?"

"Ma'am?"

"Their diplomatic proxy."

The XO tapped on his pad "The Hiryu Feodorate"

"Do they have a diplomatic mission in the system?"

(Continued on page 23)



## Raconteurs' Rest

(Continued from page 22)

More tapping "Yes."

"Get me a secure line, I need to make a recommendation for gallantry<sup>24</sup>."

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Mann dictated a brief note, attached red two's transponder code and confirmed send. The XO spoke again, sounding incredulous "Ma'am we have another survivor. I don't believe it, one from red two. The *Skanna's* last salvo must have thrown them clear. Should I pick them up?"

"Yes; this is war, not murder."

---

The *We-etab's* sick bay was a bustle of activity; it was not designed to deal with this. Lieutenant-Commander Mann crossed herself as she passed the bodies in the corridor. Doctor Alveraz was bending over somebody on the table. "So this is her, Carla?"

The doctor did not look up, busy cutting into the pressure suit, "It would seem so; how she survived is beyond me."

"How is she?"

"Best I can make out, second degree burns, some very nasty lacerations, probably eight broken ribs, both legs fractured and she's lost a fair amount of blood. Nothing I can't fix. I'm worried about radiation; she was out there a long time without a suit. But I'm not sure how she'll react to standard drugs<sup>25</sup>."

Mann looked the woman on the table, the look of gentleness surprised her, "Carla, I would very much appreciate it if she were not to die." Mann noted the holster, right handed, odd<sup>26</sup>.

Carla snorted, "I shall do my best."

Mann added, "Oh, and remove her sidearm and get a Marine guard down here." Mann had no intention of underestimating this woman.

### 226th of 2025 (052-94): A Hospital on Mikur

Admiral Darant strode the corridors of the hospital. He had never liked the place, the white

walls and smell of antiseptic. He reached the room he was looking for, the plaque on the door said Baron Doctor Samuel Franks, Director, there was a long string of letters beneath. He knocked, paused and entered. "Ah, your Lordship, a very pleasant day is it not?"

The director was busy "I'm sure you're not here to talk about the weather, Admiral."

"No, indeed not. Your patient, the Luriani Lieutenant-Commander, how is she doing?"

His eyes narrowed. "She is much improved, but as I said last week, a full recovery will take some time." He doubted the Admiral's interest was motivated by a concern for her health.

"Mmm, yes, but we don't require a full recovery; is she well enough for some more questioning?"

"I'd imagine so, but I doubt you'll get any more from her than last time."

The admiral's mouth formed a tiny smile "Yes, I imagine you're right, she is quite charming but very stubborn."

"Well, she did fly her ship into a cruiser; that tends to indicate a degree of determination."

The admiral chuckled, "We could use some of that determination on our side. However, she also has a vast amount of intelligence we need. We need to interrogate her properly."

The director's ire was rising. "As I told you, she will not be ready for transfer for at least a month, probably more."

It was the admiral's turn to feel his anger "I don't think you understand the seriousness of the situation; the war is not going well for us. Our counter-offensive was a costly failure. We've got uprisings on half a dozen worlds and another dozen on the brink. Our forces are too thinly spread; when they launch their next offensive, and they will, they'll rip right through us again. And those damn raiders not only hit our supply lines, but keep the uprisings going. We've got the commander of one of those raiders and they don't know we've got her. We've already got a huge butchers bill for this war.

(Continued from page 23)

The information in her head will save countless Imperial lives!"

The director was on his feet. "I will not sign any release papers!"

Admiral Darant regained his composure "Fortunately, that will not be necessary, your Lordship" he slid a sheaf of papers over the desk. "I think you'll find them all in order."

### 242nd of 2025 (068-94): The Memorial on Iguu

Iguu had become the centre of Protectorate's first defence line. It was a hive of activity as deep guns were emplaced, minefields were sown, troops were prepared. They knew, sooner or later, the Imperium would want their world back, but they'd make them pay for it. Amongst all this activity, a ceremony was being held. A memorial for another dead *ami*, one of many now. But the one for the *Lucknow* was slightly different, a little more silver<sup>27</sup>, a Star for Valour was still special. They were gone, like so many others. They sang, they cried, they remembered, they talked. But grief would have to wait.

Jane found Siish after the service, weeping alone. She cradled him in her arms. All he could say was, "I should have told her, Jane."

### 269th of 2025 (095-94): Interrogation Centre 17

I shivered, everything ached. They had been at me for weeks, months... I'd lost track of time. Night and day didn't exist here, just the searing light of arc lamps. I couldn't remember the last time I'd slept or ate. The chair was hard, the room freezing and the bindings cut into my wrists and ankles. Diishu came into the room. He walked around me several times, sat in front of me and began to eat. "Well, *Komada-Lekhtenant*, here we are again." With effort, I raised my head. "...would appear so."

"We could go at it again, but I'm running out of patience, so I'll give you a choice. I would like a list of communication codes please."

I tried to think of a quip, but I was so tired, all that came was, "I'd really rather not."

"I thought so. Well there *is* another approach I have found effective in the past. I believe it is called *sishgukhidtar*." I shuddered, he couldn't... "Ah, I see you are aware of it." Aware of it? How could any Luriani *not* be aware of it? "So, I will ask you again: Will you co-operate?"

He waited. I mumbled, "No, no, you can go to hell."

---

Strapped to a surgical table, the smell of disinfectant and alcohol was overpowering. I lay there waiting. It was cold and dark. I felt the door open and three large people walked in. The lights came on, blinding. Captain Ashimakhi came up to the table behind me, I couldn't see her but I knew she was there. I couldn't see or hear the others, but I could feel them moving. "Well *dinkir*, I guess you know I'm here. For now at least." *Dinkir*, Siish called me that, but it sounded very different when he said it. "Right handed? Marked, they say. I suppose it's pointless trying to convince you to co-operate? Is there anything you'd like to say?"

I was terrified. "*Pae Sesh vuryyn shi afer bias shi bu emmes*."

"The prayer for those lost at sea? I can assure you, *dinkir*, I know exactly where I am. Or perhaps it was for yourself, *dinkir*?" I summoned the last of my courage and lied, "No, it was for you."

She kept walking, pacing, moving. "'May Sesh find you and lead you to safety', mmmm. Or is it 'guide'? I can never remember which it is. But that's Luriani for you, so annoyingly precise and so frustratingly vague at the same time. So many words saying basically the same thing, each with its own specific meaning, giving great precision. But then, when you actually speak it, you use so much allegory and allusion that nothing means what it's supposed to mean." She kept pacing. "And then there's the fact that you won't speak it if you can't be sure everyone understands it, because that would be

## Raconteurs' Rest

(Continued from page 24)

so, so impolite<sup>28</sup>." She stopped for a moment. "Ah, but wait, you didn't know I spoke Luriani, so you were being rude to me, *dinkir*, oh, very clever, *dinkir*."

Back to moving, moving all the time. "But Luriani are good at that, aren't they, making one thing be something else. Take for instance the Vilani and the *Mmarislusant*. Do you know what the difference between them is? Nothing. Nothing at all; they are the same thing. They are the same thing... except *Mmarislusant* are part of the people and Vilani are evil and untrustworthy<sup>29</sup>." So much movement. "They will grind you to dust, *dinkir*, wipe your precious people from the stars, and plant their flag on Daramm's smoking carcass. All because you can never say what you actually mean. And I will rejoice when they do it. And how do I know all this, *dinkir*? Because I am *Mmarislusant*, and I am going to rip your soul out."

She laughed. "And that, *dinkir*, is the most painful thing that will happen to you here, you will know one of your own precious people did this to you." Pacing, pacing all the time pacing. "So, *dinkir*, is there anything you'd like to say?" She was standing over me like some immense colossus, her eyes fixed directly on mine trying to bore into the very centre of my being. Hate and venom had dripped from her every word.

With the slightest grin I replied, "It's guide, *yishin* is to lead."

### 326th of 2025 (152-94): Interrogation Centre 17

Special Agent Fakri Vu of the Imperial Ministry of Justice sat patiently in Commandant Diishu's office. He'd been here many times before. His blue suit was neatly pressed and his briefcase sat perfectly positioned on his lap. Commandant Diishu liked to make him wait, it was a way of showing he was in control. But this time Agent Vu didn't mind waiting, he had almost kissed Baron Franks when he

came to him. The commandant eventually entered, walked behind his desk, sat, rocked back and put his feet firmly on the desktop. "Agent Vu, again. How may I help you?"

Vu looked at the solidly built marine. "Force Commander Diishu" he started airily "Under the terms of Imperial Edict 375 I formally request access to this facility to conduct an investigation into the abuse of prisoners detained here."

"Fakri, Fakri, Fakri; we've been through this so many times before. This is a military instillation during time of war, you can only act with my approval. So, declined, good day, see your self out, I've got work to do." He sat up, picked up some papers to shuffle and looked down.

Vu gave a quiet cough. "Not quite finished this time, Force Commander."

Vu took a communicator from his case and said, "Go."

Diishu was puzzled. "What are you playing at, Fakri?" There was a distant crash. Vu smiled, he had rehearsed this over and over. He wanted to get it right. He knew all he had to do was show it, but this called for some... dramatics. "That will be the door." Two agents burst through the door, their carbines painting red dots on Diishu's forehead.

"Charlie, Charlie, Charlie, you should have gone with 375." Vu opened his case, took out a heavy leather bound volume and tossed it on the desk with what Vu thought was a somewhat disappointing thump. Diishu leaned forward. "Edict 97?"

Vu detected the trace of panic in his voice and confirmed, "Imperial Edict 97." Vu stood "Force Commander Charles Diishu of Imperial Marine Regiment 1749, under the authority of an Imperial Warrant<sup>30</sup> issued in accordance with Imperial Edict 97, I hereby require and demand that you give me full and unfettered access to this facility, its personnel and records, both here and elsewhere, to enable the conduct of such investigations as I see fit." He paused to draw breath and control the rising feeling of triumph, "Furthermore, you are required to im-

(Continued from page 25)

mediately cease all operations and hand control of said facility, personnel and records to myself," another breath, his voice was reaching crescendo, "and place yourself in my custody pending the outcome of the aforementioned investigations!" He pulled the warrant from his case and pounded it on the desk with a much more satisfying crash.

Finally he could control himself no longer. With a look of sheer joy he added, "I've got you, you torturing bastard!"

### 347th of 2025 (173-94): A Fateful Decision

Admiral Darant reviewed Special Agent Vu's report. Most regrettable, tragic really. That charming lady Lieutenant-Commander too. But this was a war and what was done was done. There would have to be an apology of some sort, naturally, possibly compensation as well. But it would have to wait until after the war was won. The casualty count was already far too high; inciting these people to further anger would only make things worse. What were forty-nine more lives compared with those who would die and so many who had died already? He signed the order classify the entire affair and place the victims in isolation.

### 53rd of 2028 (244-96): Marine Detention Facility on Musni

I sat in my cell, I always sat. One metre by two metres by two point four metres, stark, stainless, and cold. Well, sixteen point two degrees Celsius actually, but it was still cold. There was no life, no love, and no colour in this cell, not that that had mattered for a very long time. I wished I'd died out there in the cold of space, quietly counting stars. There was a voice, "Prisoner, stand by your door." I stood, the heavy metallic click as the door slid open. "You have a visitor." A visitor? Someone entered, I heard them but felt nothing. I turned. It was an old man. He spoke gently, "May I sit please?" I looked at the bed. He stood for a moment, then sat. "Is it

not the custom of your people to introduce yourself?"

"They call me 'prisoner', 'Lieutenant-Commander' when they're trying to be nice."

"But that is not your name?"

"In this place, it is." Names, they'd taken them too. "And you are?"

He pondered, "A tired old man. Well then, *Komanda-Lekhtenant...*"

"*Komant.*" *Komada-Lekhtenant* had... unpleasant memories.

"My apologies, *Komant.*"

He was different from the others, there was a kindness in his eyes, I responded, "No, I'm sorry."

He smiled, "Well, *Komant*, they tell me you survived ramming a cruiser; your gods must have been smiling on you that day."

"That day, yes."

He thought, "Of course, I am so sorry."

"No, it's alright, I'm the one who should apologise."

"So, *Komant*, how should we end this war?"

A strange question. "Stop fighting."

"Yes, but how do we stop the fighting?"

"No, stop fighting."

He was puzzled, "I'm sorry, I don't understand?"

I sighed, "No, I am sorry, and you should stop apologising or we'll be here all day."

He paused, then gave a small laugh, "Quite so, but I don't understand." I sat on the bed next to him.

"Look at us, look at you, can we win?"

"No, you can't"

"Look at everything, what came before, how it started. So, why are we still fighting, and why so hard?"

He thought for awhile, "It can't be that simple."

"It is."

He smiled and took my hand. "Well, *Komant*, thank you; it has been most illuminating. Is there anything I can do for you?"

(Continued from page 26)

“No,” there was nothing anyone could do for me any more.

### 76th of 2028 (267-96): The Battle of Iguu

The drive was out, Jane was working furiously, they had to get clear. The *Cleon II* was covering the withdrawal and most of the fleet was gone now, but if she didn't get the jump drive online again they'd be staying behind. She joined wires, conductors, circuits burnt and charred. She heard Greg on the communicator, “Any time now, darling, if you please.” There was a heavy crash that shock the entire ship. That had been a bad one, there'd be a lot of damage from that one. Finally done, a huge spark arced and scorched her hand. She swore. The drives were spinning up, the capacitors hummed as they discharged and then the sickening wrench as they entered jump. Jane's mouth formed a broad grin as she touched the button on her communicator with her off hand “There you are my darling, fixed!” There was no response. “Greg?” Still nothing. “Greg, bridge respond.” Silence. “Greg, damn you, talk to me!” The dead air burnt her ears, she barked, “Damage control schematics to this console now!” She scrolled frantically, good hand and bad. There, there, the bridge deck was red. She whispered “Greg?” and collapsed.

### Notes

(The notes numbered 1-20 appeared in Part 1)

21. Sylean Federation, precursor to the Third Imperium.

22. *Sesherin*, a highly intelligent and playful aquatic animal native to Daramm, often kept as pets by Luriani. [Acknowledgement: The *sesherin* were created by Micheal Brown in his JTAS online article, Seven Best Friends <http://jtas.sjgames.com/login/article.cgi?714>]

23. The adaptations that allow the Luriani to function in an aquatic environment also allow them to survive a vacuum for a short time. They possess a nictating membrane over the eyes and muscles that seal the ears and nostrils, as well as the ability to collapse their lungs and survive on oxygen drawn from modified fat cells and increased levels of haemoglobin.

24. While uncommon, it was not unheard of for either the Imperium or Protectorate to make recommendations for gallantry regarding the actions of their opponents during the war.


25. Luriani physiology is significantly different from other branches of Humaniti and standard drugs can have unpredictable effects on them.

26. Approximately 96% of all racial Luriani are left handed. A right handed Luriani is unusual, traditionally regarded by the Luriani themselves as a mark of a special destiny.

27. Refers to the silver braid of a flag rank Protectorate officer.

28. This is stated somewhat incorrectly. The actual social more is that it is incredibly impolite to exclude a person from a conversation, which speaking a language they do not understand would do.

29. Refers to the long held Luriani dislike towards Vilani dating from their extremely harsh treatment under the Ziru Sirka. This prejudice has been preserved by art and song for thousands of years. *Bilanee*, the Standard Luriani word for Vilani, has the additional meaning of “treacherous and untrustworthy.”

30. An Imperial Warrant is a signed instrument of the Emperor. It essentially allows the bearer to act directly in the Emperor's name, bypassing normal legal and bureaucratic hurdles. Since this gives the holder virtually unlimited power within the Imperium, all but a tiny handful also contain very carefully framed terms of reference that lay out exactly when and where the warrant applies. 

## Feedback

Please tell us ...

- what you think of both magazine and website
  - what you think of the articles we publish
  - how we can make our magazine better
  - how we can make our website better
  - what kind of articles you do or don't want to see
  - what you think of our look
  - how we can make it better
- Please, give us your opinion! We've provided several ways you can do so:
- e-mail: [feedback@freelancetraveller.com](mailto:feedback@freelancetraveller.com).

- feedback form at <http://www.freelancetraveller.com/infocenter/feedback/ftfbf.html>.
- Forums:  
Traveller Fanzine section of SFRPG: <http://www.sfrpg-discussion.net/phpBB3/viewforum.php?f=36>  
Lone Star at Citizens of the Imperium: <http://www.travellerrpg.com/CotI/Discuss/forumdisplay.php?f=13>  
**Note: you must be registered with the forums to be able to use this method.**

## Traveller on the Internet

IRC: The #Traveller and #LoneStar channels

*Freelance Traveller* sponsors channels for *Traveller* fans on the Undernet and Otherworlders IRC networks, and the two channels are "bridged" so that if you're visiting either, you can see what's going on in the other, and talk to people there. For more information about both channels, see our informational pages at <http://www.freelancetraveller.com/infocenter/travnet.html#IRC> and <http://www.freelancetraveller.com/infocenter/travchat/index.html>. Come talk "live" with other *Traveller* fans about anything at all, *Traveller* or not, and make both channels "jumping" places to hang out!

You can also run "play-by-IRC" game sessions in either channel; please stop in and ask one of the channel operators (FreeTrav or EMT\_Hawk) to schedule it, so we can ensure that the 'bridge' and the 'bartender' are set into a nondisruptive mode.

*Please watch the Traveller Mailing List, the Mongoose Traveller forum, and the Lone Star section of the Citizens of the Imperium forum for announcements of Topical Talks!*

## Information Center: Request for Information

Here is a list of all of those publishers that we are aware of that are currently putting out material for *Traveller* (any version) or *Traveller*-compatible material not specifically for *Traveller* (this list is based on products that the editor owns, and notifications from "follow your favorites" from DriveThruRPG). If you know of others, or if any of those on this list are not in fact currently operating/publishing, please write and let us know. We'd also appreciate either lists or pointers to lists of all of the *Traveller* and *Traveller*-compatible material put out by any of these companies, or any companies that we may have omitted from the list. If you have contact information, we'd appreciate that as well.

### List of Traveller/compatible Publishers

Avalon Game Company  
Avenger Enterprises  
D.B. Design Bureau  
DSL Ironworks

FarFuture Enterprises  
Forever People  
Game Designers' Workshop(!)  
Gypsy Knights Games  
Jon Brazer Enterprises  
K-Studio  
Loren Wiseman Enterprises  
Mongoose Publishing  
Postmortem Studios  
QuikLink Interactive  
Samardan Press  
Sceaptune Games  
Scrying Eye Games  
Spica Publishing  
Steve Jackson Games  
Terra/Sol Games  
Toxic Bag Productions

## Submission Guidelines

### What is *Freelance Traveller* looking for?

We're looking for anything and everything to do with *Traveller* – reviews of products, house rules, alternate settings, NPC profiles, world write-ups, adventures, equipment, starships, fiction, “color” articles... If you see it in *Freelance Traveller*, or on our website, we're interested in it. Even if you don't see it in the magazine or on the website, we might be interested; write to [editor@freelancetraveller.com](mailto:editor@freelancetraveller.com) and ask.

Some things that we want that you might not think of as “*Traveller*” would include reviews of non-*Traveller* products that easily lend themselves to being ‘mined’ for ideas for use in *Traveller*, or reviews of fiction (in any medium) that “feels” like *Traveller* in some way. In these cases, your article should focus on the *Traveller*-esque aspects of the item. There may be other things, as well; if you're not sure, write and ask.

### What about ...

The rule of thumb is “If it's a *Traveller* ruleset, or a setting that has been published for use with a *Traveller* ruleset, go for it!”. That includes the non-Official *Traveller* Universe settings that have been published for use with any version of the *Traveller* ruleset, including (but not limited to) *Judge Dredd*, *Strontium Dog*, *Babylon 5*, *Reign of Diaspora*, *Twilight Sector*, the two *GURPS* variants on the Official *Traveller* Universe, Avenger Enterprises' *Far Avalon*, and the forthcoming *Traveller Prime Directive*, and any others we may have forgotten.

### ...Hyperlite?

We've made the decision to support *Hyperlite* as though it were an alternate *Traveller* setting, much like *Twilight Sector* or *Reign of Diaspora*. The changes that Sceptune Games has made to *Traveller* to get *Hyperlite* aren't really much more than the differences between Classic *Traveller*, *MegaTraveller*, *Marc Miller's Traveller*, and *Mongoose Traveller*, and converting between any of those systems and *Hyperlite*, in either direction, should be ‘trivial’.

### ... Diaspora, or Starblazer Adventures?

If your article is about “crossing over” between these products and any of the “standard” or supported *Traveller* rulesets or settings, by all means, submit it! If it's support for those systems beyond *Traveller*, we'll accept and hold

the submission, but will not print it unless/until we've had a reasonable level of expression of interest in such support from our readers.

### How should I submit my article?

#### What needs to be in the submission?

At the very minimum, we need the submission itself, your name (for credit), and a valid email address to contact you at if we need to.

#### What format should I submit it in?

That depends on what you're submitting. Generally:

Text should be submitted in Microsoft Rich Text Format (RTF), Microsoft Word 2003 (DOC) or 2007/2010 (DOCX), OpenOffice Writer (ODT), or plain text (TXT). Most word processors will support one of those; if yours seems not to, please write to us for assistance. Avoid PDF if at all possible; it is difficult to reformat PDFs for our magazine or website.

Graphics should be submitted in the format that's best for the type of graphic. Most of the time, that will be GIF, PNG, or JPG/JPEG. Submitting in higher resolutions is better; we have tools to resample a picture to make it smaller if we need to – but it's not possible to make a picture larger without it becoming pixellated.

If you're submitting a graphic that you'd like to see us use for a cover of an issue, please make sure that it will fit nicely on both US Letter and ISO A4 pages—we'll crop the picture to fit, to avoid distorting shapes, so please leave reasonable “margins”; don't run “critical” imagery right to the edge where it will look bad if we crop it. A good resolution is 100 dpi or more.

Plans (deck plans, building plans, maps, etc.) may be better submitted in a vector-based format such as CorelDRAW! format (CDR) or any format that can be imported into CorelDRAW! X4. Scalable Vector Graphics (SVG), Windows Metafile (WMF), Enhanced Metafile (EMF), Encapsulated PostScript (EPS), or Microsoft Visio (VSD) are some common vector formats that can be imported.

#### How do I get it to you?

Email it to us at our submissions address, [submissions@freelancetraveller.com](mailto:submissions@freelancetraveller.com). Your subject line should specify the type of article that it is, and what section you think it should be put in, e.g., “Combat Rules for Doing It My Way”.

