

**MGP**  
**3354**



# **EarthForce Campaign Book**



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*'The dogmas of the quiet past are inadequate to the stormy present. The occasion is piled high with difficulty, and we must rise to the occasion. We cannot escape history. We will be remembered in spite of ourselves. The fiery trial through which we pass will light us down in honour or dishonour, to the last generation. We shall nobly save, or meanly lose, or last best hope of Earth.'*

*– Abraham Lincoln*

# EarthForce Campaign Book

Gareth Hanrahan

Overview	3
History	8
Organisation	41
Life in EarthForce	75
Black Projects	111
Campaigns	117
Adventures	128
New Prestige Classes	156
License	160

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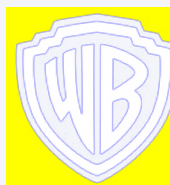
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# Overview

## From President Luchenko's Graduation Address to the West Point Class of 2264

You come into the service of Earth at a time of sorrow and transition. A time of reconstruction and a time of hope.

EarthForce was born in such a time. In 2091, the nations of Earth joined together to put their best soldiers and most powerful weapons under the control of a single planetary defence force, a force that would rise above the divides and smouldering hostilities engendered by the Third World War. This brave experiment reunited humanity and aided in the reconstruction of our damaged world.

When we stepped out to the planets, to Mars and the asteroid belt and all the worlds of Sol, EarthForce was in the vanguard of this expansion. When we made First Contact with the Centauri Republic and gained hyperspace travel, it was EarthForce that led the exploration of our neighbouring systems and defended our earliest colonies.

When war came, we were ready. The Ch'lonas, the Dilgar, the Minbari – all these challenges were accepted and faced by EarthForce. We gloried in victory, we rebuilt from defeat and we learned new tactics and new technologies from every encounter. In every battle and in every challenge, however, it was the indomitable spirit of humanity that shone forth. It was this spirit – born from the centuries of honour and tradition inherent in the EarthForce – that allowed us to be noble in victory and to weather defeat.

It was this spirit of humanity that was... subverted and tainted by recent events. EarthForce was divided against itself, between loyalty to Earth and loyalty to humanity. The civil war forced by President Clarke and his agents cannot and will not be allowed to bring EarthForce down. Just as Earth's armies were damaged, divided and distrusting after the Third World War, so too is the EarthForce you are entering into.

Through your bravery, your dedication, and your honour, you must bring EarthForce into this new age as an integral part of both the Earth Alliance and the new Interstellar Alliance. We need to let our essential humanity be a beacon of honour and light for our alien neighbours and for our own people.

I charge you, then, with the duty of renewing that essential spirit of humanity within EarthForce.

As of 2263, after the civil war and the ousting of President Clarke, EarthForce consists of some 12 million personnel and approximately 13,000 ships. The service is divided into five main branches; the EarthForce Navy (which consists of the Fleet, the starbases and all the support staff for these), the EarthForce Army (which consists of all ground forces, from infantry to tanks and even water-naval vessels), EarthForce Intelligence, the Colonial Forces and EarthForce Command. Occasionally, the Navy and Army are referred to as spaceside and groundside respectively,

while the Fleet is often used as a synonym for the Navy. The air force (as opposed to space-only fighters like the *Aurora*-class starfuries) is attached to the Army.

Of the two main branches, the Navy takes the lion's share of resources and funding, although the Army technically has more staff. In the age of space warfare and orbital bombardment, few battles are decided on the ground, so the Army's role has become the provision of security and peacekeeping.

EarthForce is heavily modelled on the old United States military – this is unsurprising, as the United States put forward its forces to serve as the core of a United Earth Force back in the 2080s. Over the two centuries since then, EarthForce has evolved somewhat and now differs considerably from the organisations that formed it. Still, the service is proud of its heritage and sees itself as maintaining an unbroken military tradition that dates back for millennia. EarthForce's overriding purposes are:

- ⑤ To defend the Earth Alliance against alien aggressors
- ⑤ To implement and enforce EarthGov military policy
- ⑤ To maintain security and order within Earth Alliance space, including all colonies
- ⑤ To explore the galaxy for the benefit of humanity

Exploration is the least important of these; at any time, there are only a handful of EarthForce vessels operating in unexplored space. Pushing the frontiers forward is a job normally left to civilians and corporations like IPX - the mighty Explorer Deep Survey vessels are technically part of EarthForce, but these mighty ships are more concerned with building new jumpgates rather than actual exploration. The navy does send vessels out to areas where previously un-contacted alien races of significant power are believed to exist – First Contact is too perilous and important to be left to amateurs if at all avoidable. The fact that a disastrous military First Contact led to the Minbari War only serves to reinforce the belief that the first humans a new alien species meets should be EarthForce officers.

Maintaining security normally amounts to chasing down raiders and pirates; as more and more of Earth Alliance commerce moves to the space lanes and jumpgates, piracy and theft have become much more common. Up until the recent troubles, a large proportion of the Navy's efforts were given over to hunting down the raiders. The EarthForce Army also serves as a backup to civilian law enforcement authorities, and are called in to deal with major emergencies or uprisings on the colonies. The Martian Food Riots of 2253 are the most recent and obvious example of EarthForce intervention in planetary affairs, and many inhabitants of the outer colonies mistrust the Army, seeing them as the mailed fist of EarthGov.

Implementing EarthGov military policy normally means sabre-rattling on the borders. The Alliance has suffered from alien adventurism on the past, such as Centauri raids and Koulani attacks on the Deneb colonies. Furthermore, since the wars with the Dilgar and the Minbari, the Earth Alliance has acquired a reputation as a militarily powerful race, and this reputation must be maintained and reinforced to support diplomatic policy. Many of the League worlds look to Earth to balance the aggression of the Narn or the dying hand of the Centauri (although with the demolition of the Narn fleets during the Great War and the current isolation and decline of the Centauri, it may be possible to forge a new, more positive reputation for humanity). Once in the history of the Earth Alliance, EarthForce has been called upon to invade another race's territory – that of the Dilgar, to drive the invaders back from League space.

The final and highest purpose of EarthForce is to defend human-occupied space. Earth was quite astonishingly lucky not to have been discovered much earlier by another race; First Contact with the Centauri came in 2153, by which time the Centauri were already on their way to decline. If the Centauri had arrived a century or so earlier, or if one of the other nearby races had invaded, then humanity would have been conquered relatively easily. As soon as humanity took its first steps into hyperspace and the wider galactic community, it became of paramount importance to have a human-controlled space fleet capable of standing up to alien aggression.

EarthForce held the borders against most of the challenges it faced over the centuries. It failed only in the ultimate test, during the war with the Minbari – and in that war, everything changed.

## Reconnaissance, Relations, Resources

Early in the Alliance's period of expansion, just after purchasing jumpgate technology from the Centauri, EarthGov launched the Aegis Program to oversee and guide the transformation of the Alliance from a single-system government into a galactic empire capable of sustaining and defending itself. The three priorities for EarthForce's efforts were identified as Reconnaissance (exploring the galaxy and identifying threats), Relations (making peaceful contact and alliances with friendly alien races) and Resources (finding and exploiting systems with natural resources or tactical significance). While the Alliance is long past its initial period of explosive growth and has settled down to consolidate its gains, the 'three-R program' still dominates EarthForce policy. Almost every new base or ship design and every new mission is evaluated in terms of the three Rs.

## Current Deployment

EarthForce is currently rebuilding itself following the ouster of President Clarke's regime and the disastrous civil war. In truth, the civil war was not especially damaging in terms of material – both sides were relatively unwilling to engage each other, the White Star fleet was more than capable of crippling EarthForce vessels without destroying them, and the final confrontation was ended almost bloodlessly thanks to Sheridan using cryogenically frozen telepaths to disable the ships defending Mars. The recent hostilities with the Centauri were almost as damaging in terms of losses of ships and personnel.

The real effect of the civil war was to shatter EarthForce's unity and morale. The fleet was divided into Earth loyalists and those who objected to Clarke's policies. The loyalists were by far the larger faction, but they were also on the losing side of the war. Indeed, for many loyalists, their defeat by Sheridan was a continuation of the Minbari War. Most of the loyalists were veterans of the Minbari War, either experienced officers who went through the terrible battles of that conflict, or draftees who had stayed in service after the Battle of the Line out of patriotism. These officers saw Sheridan's fleet as an alien armada, and fought not to defend President Clarke's regime, but to defend Earth once again.

## Current EarthForce Naval Disposition

Planet	Bases	Ships of the Line	Fleet
Beta Durani I	1	5	Exploratory
Beta 7	1	0	Exploratory
Beta 9	0	0	Colonial
Ceti Gamma II	3	20	Colonial
Cyrus	1	5	Exploratory
Deneb IV	2	15	Exploratory
Jericho VII	1	5	Exploratory
Orion			
<i>Orion III</i>	3	30	Colonial
<i>Orion VII</i>	1	10	Colonial
Proxima			Colonial
<i>Proxima III</i>	2	30	Fourth
<i>Proxima IV</i>	2	10	Colonial
Sinzar IV	2	10	Colonial
Sol			
<i>Sol I (Mercury)</i>	1	5	Sol
<i>Sol III (Earth)</i>	4	50	Sol
<i>Sol IIIa (Luna)</i>	1	10	Sol
<i>Sol IV (Mars)</i>	1	10	Sol
<i>Sol Va (Ganymede)</i>	1	30	Sol
<i>Sol Vb (Europa)</i>	1	10	Sol
<i>Sol Va (Io)</i>	3	40	Sol
Theta	1	10	Colonial
Vega	1	20	Colonial
Expeditionary Forces	3	30	Fourth
Exploratory Forces	3	40	Exploratory
Patrolling	0	150	Colonial/Sol
Cadet Fleet	1	15	Sol
Secret Forces	?	?	Sol
In Storage/Under Construction	8+	300+	Sol

The priority for EarthForce's leadership, then, is to bring the divided officers together. The trauma of the war will be a long time healing. It is hoped that EarthForce's participation in the new Interstellar Alliance can unite a divided military the same way that the original formation of the Earth Alliance unified a divided humanity.

The bulk of the fleet is stationed at the key systems of Sol and Proxima.

**Ships of the Line**, in this context, means Hyperion, Nova, Omega, Avenger, Poseidon and Explorer-class vessels.

**Expeditionary Forces** are the ships engaged in peacekeeping or escort duty outside the borders of the Alliance (such as at Akdor).

**Exploratory Forces** are pushing out towards the Rim.

**Patrolling Forces** are jumping from system to system along the border or engaged in escort duty.

The **Fleet** column indicates which fleet command the ships in that system are attached to. See page 58 for details on the four fleets.



## How Many Ships in EarthForce?

### Dilgar War – Beginning (2230)

Number of first line units available: **1,446** (*mainly Hyperions, Novas and Avengers*)

Number of second line and escort units available: **8,829** (*includes Olympus, Artemis, small patrolships, cutters, supply and freighter units*)

Total = **10,275** ships in active service.

### Minbari War – Beginning (2245)

Number of first line units available: **1,310** (*mainly Hyperions and Novas, with some Avengers and one Poseidon*)

Number of second line and escort units available: **12,729** (*includes Olympus, Artemis, small patrolships, cutters, supply and freighter units*)

Total = **14,039** ships in active service.

### Minbari War – End (2250)

Number of first line units available: **370** (*mainly Hyperions and Novas, with some Avengers*)

Number of second line and escort units available: **4,452** (*includes Olympus, Artemis, small patrolships, cutters, supply and freighter units*)

Total = **4,822** ships in active service.

**Note** – These numbers take into account even the introduction of new units built between 2248 and 2250.

### Civil War – Beginning (2260)

Number of first line units available: **1,137** (*mainly Omegas, with some Novas and Hyperions and seven Poseidons*)

Number of second line and escort units available: **12,126** (*includes Olympus, small patrolships, cutters, supply and freighter units*)

Total = **13,263** ships in active service.

**Note** – There are fewer ships total than before the Earth/Minbari War... but the units in this era are nearly three times the mass of units from before the Earth/Minbari War.

### Drakh War – Beginning (2265)

Number of first line units available: **1,306** (*mainly Omegas, with some Novas and Hyperions, seven Poseidons and a few Warlocks*)

Number of second line and escort units available: **9,821** (*includes the newest Olympus variants, small patrolships, cutters, supply and freighter units*)

Total = **11,127** ships in active service.

**Note** – These statistics take into account the losses of the Civil War.

**Note** – In the defence against the Drakh, the Earth Alliance scrambled something between 20% and 25% of its first line units with less than a day of pre-alert.

### Drakh War – End (2275)

Number of first line units available: **1,730** (*mainly Omegas, Warlocks and even newer models*)

Number of second line and escort units available: **7,997** (*includes the newest Olympus variants, small patrolships, cutters, supply and freighter units*)

Total = **9,727** ships in active service.

**Note** – These statistics take into account all Earth Alliance shipyards running at maximum output **and** war losses. Drakh forces concentrated on attacking Earth Alliance trade lanes.

#### EarthForce Fleet History – Total (2150 to 2275)

Total number of units constructed since EarthForce was established: Between 41,975 and 65,000.

First line units : Cruisers, destroyers, dreadnoughts, carriers.

Second line and escort units: Frigates, corvettes, patrol and logistic craft.

# History

## Foundation

**'The existence of an orbital satellite network of laser weapons... can only be considered a threat to our nation's security and sovereignty... and cannot be tolerated in its current form.'**

**— Nadia Chertinov, Russian Consortium Ambassador to United Nations, 2083.**

The EarthForce Charter was formally ratified and signed on October 19<sup>th</sup>, 2091, but the organisation took decades to evolve into its current form. It was originally little more than a political solution to a military problem. The United Nations had collapsed during World War III. The United States controlled an orbital anti-missile system called EarthShield, which had been used to prevent the war from turning into an apocalypse, but which had also destroyed the precarious balance of mutually assured destruction that had held the nuclear powers in check for over a century. While the United States held such a devastating strategic advantage, the other major power blocs – primarily the Russian Consortium, the United Islamic Nations and the sections of China that had survived the war – refused to join any replacement international body.

The solution was a surprising and daring one. The United States proposed the creation of a new international body, the Earth Alliance, which would be considerably more powerful and active than the old United Nations. The alliance would be supported by a military, the United Earth Force, which would have control of the EarthShield network. The proposal was endorsed by the traditional supporters of the United Nations such as the European Union, but was initially seen by many as a transparent attempt to extend American dominance over the whole world.

It was, at least in the beginning, but Earth was tired of war. The new Alliance took hold and grew swiftly. Initially, the Unified Earth Force had a permanent staff of only a few thousand administrators and satellite technicians, with its peacekeeping troops drawn from the national forces of member states, primarily the United States and Europe. Russia joined in 2100, which brought the Alliance and the UEF into conflict with China almost immediately, as China attacked the Russian border. The technically advanced forces of the UEF, backed up with satellite weaponry, were able to swiftly turn back the invasion – and, more significantly, were able to rein in the Russian counterattack.

Within ten years, most of Earth was united under a single government, but its military was still fragmented among the various nations. It would take decades for EarthForce to grow into a truly unified force, for soldiers to stop thinking of themselves as American or Russian or Chinese or whatever national army they once belonged to, and to start seeing themselves members of the Unified Earth Force.



## Into Space

**'This is not the militarisation of space. Space has been militarised for years. What we are trying to do is make sure that space does not become a warzone.'**

**— UEF General Simone Sinclair**

The expansion into space was the catalyst that transformed the Unified Earth Force into a united military. While the traditional branches of the military – land, sea and air – were dominated by the old national militaries, space was a relatively untried arena. The only military presences in space were various surveillance satellites and the aging EarthShield network. When the UEF began to construct military space vessels and stations, it was creating a new form of warfare and a new service – one that drew from older branches but had its own unique identity. This is still evident in the structure of EarthForce today, as the Army suffers more from internal feuding and is less cohesive. It was only recently, during the Dilgar War, that the Army managed to unify its weapons inventory and use only a handful of designs instead of having multiple redundant designs.

The trigger for the expansion into space was the pirate wars of the 2130s. The asteroid belt had come under the control of the mining consortium known as the Belt Alliance. The asteroids between Mars and Jupiter proved to be burgeoning with valuable minerals and heavy metals, and the energy cost of transporting them back to the orbital factories proved less than the cost of transporting similar amounts up out of Earth's gravity well. This wealth drew the attention of a new breed of pirate, who used Martian-built Delta-V fighters. Many of these pirates were ex-miners, desperate men whose claims had been jumped by mega-corporations or had failed to repay the incredible start-up costs for asteroid mining. While the Belt Alliance built its own fighter fleet to battle the raiders, public opinion dictated that the Earth government step in. The first EarthForce warships – little more than heavy transport vessels armed with missiles and carrying short-range fighters – saw action in orbit of Jupiter and Saturn in dozens of petty engagements with the pirates.

By 2140, the raider threat was destroyed and the Unified Earth Force had transformed into a truly unified military, which became known as EarthForce. However, while a new military tradition had been forged in space, the ground-based army was still divided. The western militaries – essentially, the old NATO countries and a few

## Lessons from History #1

### THE SINO-RUSSIAN BORDER - 2100

The nascent Earth Alliance established a tentative mutual-defence pact with the Russian Consortium in late 2099. Beijing suspected that this pact would not stand up to actual pressure, so more and more units of the Chinese military were moved to the northern border. The Russians responded by ramping up their border patrols and calling in UEF allies. The Chinese leaders became convinced that the Russians would rearm with UEF support and technology and invade China.

Events hurtled towards war with alarming speed. Both sides rushed to build up forces in the disputed border zone. While the Alliance's EarthShield network would stop nuclear missiles, analysis suggested that both sides would at least attempt to deploy tactical nuclear weapons from mobile launchers or man-portable bombs. The Alliance was faced with three unpleasant options – break the pact with Russia, support the Russians in a costly and brutal war with China, or break its word and use the EarthShield satellite laser network on a ground-based target.

UEF intelligence reported that the majority of the Chinese infantry forces were conscript troops; the formerly well-equipped and well-trained People's Liberation Army had been devastated during World War III, so the morale and discipline of the infantry troops was extremely low. Furthermore, they were convinced that the EarthShield network was going to be used against them, blasting them from orbit.

To capitalise on this fear, UEF covert operations teams targeted a major Chinese fuel dump during the first day of the Five-Day War. A specially designed super-intense flare was launched immediately before explosive devices detonated the base. From the perspective of the observers, it looked as though a beam of light destroyed the fuel dump. When coupled with communications jamming, data warfare and surgical strikes on C3 sites, this resulted in rumours tearing the army apart. Tens of thousands of Chinese troops were convinced that EarthShield had been used, and they broke in terror.

In modern warfare, sheer numbers of ground troops are normally irrelevant; control of space is

key, and that is normally dictated by the side with the best ships. EarthForce has one of the most powerful fleets in the known galaxy, but often the threat of this power is just as effective as actually using it. The terror of fighting a technologically superior foe in space runs deep. The example of the Earth-Minbari War serves as a reminder to all races of just what can happen in such a situation.

### *Lessons from History #2*

#### **OPTICAL MED-ANIS - 2158**

During the Belt War, both raiders and Belters used medium-range Beta-V fighters. These vessels were relatively lightly armed, so battles between the two sides normally ended only when a lucky shot breached the hull of another fighter, dooming the opponent to a slow death by freezing, asphyxiation or radiation.

When EarthForce came to the Belt in order to end the war, its primary fleet consisted of short-range London-class fighters, which were carried by long-range Orestes. It soon became evident that while the Londons could catch the Beta-Vs, they could do so only at the cost of their entire fuel supply. In contrast, the Orestes lacked the acceleration to catch a fleeing fighter. Two engagements ended in a bloodless loss for EarthForce. The raiders had adopted the practice of turning isolated asteroids into bases by bolting prefabricated environmental domes to the surface. The Orestes dreadnoughts would approach the asteroid at a low relative speed, so that its marines could dock with the base and deal with the raiders. However, when the raiders detected the approaching Orestes, they would flee in multiple directions. The Londons could catch any one of the fleeing raiders, but lacked the endurance for a chase.

The solution, obviously, was to use two Orestes. For example, in the assault on Madhatter base, the first *Laika*-class ship, the *Lexington*, was launched from Ceres 19 several days before the attack. The second Orestes, *Ashbless*, launched eight days later. The *Lexington* was at full burn until the 10<sup>th</sup> day, at which point it flipped over and began to decelerate. When it hit Madhatter base, it was moving slowly enough to dock, and its marines were able to secure the base.

The raiders on Madhatter detected the *Lexington*'s drive flare two days before the ship docked, and

others – had integrated smoothly, but the breaches caused by the Cold War and World War III kept the other major powers (China, Russia, the United Islamic Nations and most of the Asian powers) from fully committing to the Alliance.

## **Earth Decays**

**'In protest at the Earth Alliance's illegal and immoral hegemony over the free nations of the world... we have detonated a nuclear device in the city of San Diego. The Western oppressors and their alliance...now reap the whirlwind.'**

### **— Anonymous statement broadcast on Worldnet**

By 2150, the Alliance was in crisis. In addition to the threat posed by the rebuilt Chinese and Russian militaries, large sections of the developing world and Middle East were chafing under the Alliance. More and more, the Alliance was being seen as an attempt by the old Western powers of the United States and Europe to preserve their control of world affairs. The old scourge of terrorism, dormant since the 2040s, reawoke with a vengeance.

Multiple terrorist groups took responsibility for the nuclear bomb that destroyed San Diego. It was most likely one of the groups sponsored by fringe elements in the United Islamic Nations, but the weapon used was an antique Chinese suitcase nuke. The atrocity at San Diego triggered a wave of smaller terrorist attacks, rebellions and insurgencies as well as sabre-rattling from the major powers. The EarthForce Army was deployed across the globe on peacekeeping missions, imposing what amounted to global martial law. It was the single largest anti-terror mission in history and as such, was doomed to fail from the start.

Both Russia and China refused to allow EA peacekeepers into their territories, and instead sent their own anti-terror forces into neighbouring states. In other countries, the peacekeepers were seen as invaders and local forces fought back against them, again using guerrilla warfare and terror tactics. The wars of the early 21<sup>st</sup> century had shown how astonishingly costly such anti-terror warfare could be; now the Earth Alliance was being forced into the same gauntlet.

As the decade ground on, the crisis worsened. Both Russia and China had formed their own heavily armed power blocs (Russia/Pakistan and China/Korea/India), with South America and the more successful parts of the African Bloc demanding the right to secede from the Alliance and the United Islamic Nation becoming progressively more isolationist.

By now, the EarthShield network that had ensured peace was decaying and obsolete. Both Russia and China now had a sufficient presence in space to destroy satellites and open a breach in the network, as well as high-speed, high-agility missiles that had an 80% chance of making it to a short-range target before being blasted. The militaries damaged by World War III had been rebuilt, but the Earth Alliance had failed to heal the wounds. The social chaos engendered by the discovery of telepathy earlier in the century exacerbated the strain.

World War IV was inevitable, and this time EarthForce would be on the frontline against the Russian Consortium and China. It would take a miracle to prevent war.

## First Contact

**'This is Captain Parker of the Earth Alliance Spaceship Dauntless. Alien vessel, identify yourself. Repeat, alien vessel, identify yourself.'**

### — First Contact with the Centauri

The Centauri vessel dropped out of hyperspace outside the orbit of Jupiter. It was a survey vessel of House Jaddo out scouting the previously uncharted star systems between the Centauri Republic and the Minbari Federation – as the Centauri's economy stagnated, the trade houses were looking to cut costs in their trade route with other (mostly former client/slave) species. The surveyor detected one of the Belt Alliance's cargo carriers as it decelerated en route to Saturn, and traced the automated carrier back to Io. There, it made first contact with the EAS *Dauntless*, a command ship on long patrol of the Jovian moons.

To the credit of the *Dauntless*' Captain, she was able to make peaceful contact with the Jaddo vessel. The language barrier was quickly overcome thanks to Centauri telepaths, although a human telepath was hastily shipped up from Io to provide independent confirmation (and psychic shielding) during the initial meetings. The Centauri professed their peaceful intentions and agreed to travel onto Earth to meet with the Earth Alliance leadership.

launched immediately. The *Lexington*'s fighters were launched on short intercept courses; they could not catch the Beta-Vs, but could herd them on a specific vector – away from the approaching *Ashbless*. The *Ashbless*, meanwhile, had maintained a high burn until only two days before, so it shot past Madhatter Base at roughly the same velocity as the fleeing raiders. It was able to deploy its *Apollo* fighters at this velocity, allowing them to take out the Beta-Vs easily.

While jump points and hyperspace, not to mention more powerful and efficient engines, have changed the nature of space warfare, the basic physics of velocity, acceleration and inertia should not be forgotten on a tactical level. It is possible, for example, to covertly approach a target by making a single high-power engine burn at a great distance, then coasting for days or weeks towards the target while running dark.

### Lessons from History #3

#### PEACEKEEPING IN THE AFRICAN BLOC – 2155

One of the missions that EarthForce is called upon to perform again and again is peacekeeping. Increasingly, wars are decided in space, but the aftermath of the war is felt planetside. Again and again, defeated factions choose to prolong the conflict by melting away into the civilian population and waging a guerrilla war against occupying forces. The Narn did it against the Centauri, the Pirate Kings did it on Janos VII, it was the tactic of choice for races attacked by the Dilgar – even EarthForce adopted it during the middle stages of the Earth-Minbari War. For all a race's superiority in space or technology, asymmetrical urban warfare cannot be easily won. The Minbari foot soldiers, for example, had body armour and personal weapons that were centuries in advance of those used by the Earth-loyal guerrillas, but were unable to leverage this technological advantage into victory.

Any peacekeeping or counter-insurgency missions are fraught with difficulties and dangers. While EarthForce has developed a set of best practices and approved mission plans to deal with such difficult circumstances, it is not always possible to put these plans into practice. As a general rule, the following conditions are desirable:

- 3 Contact-trained troops:** At least 20% of the troops in any given unit should have completed basic xenodiplomacy and cultural awareness, giving them a grounding in dealing with alien psychologies and beliefs. All troops should be fully briefed on local customs and politics.
- 3 Control of Information:** Electronic and informational warfare are key tools even in peacekeeping. The peacekeeper force must know what is going on. Tapping local com and data networks and using military-grade AIs to sweep for possible terrorist communications must be done immediately.
- 3 Slow, Methodical, Secure Advances:** The peacekeeping force must maintain a fully secure perimeter at all times. As the enemy is able to blend in with the civilian population, any and all movements are essentially advances into enemy-held territory. The safest option is to isolate and secure a region, then move on. Of course, the need to complete a mission as fast as possible or to move to counter atrocities and existing wars means that this condition is often ignored. In such cases, the ground troops must use whatever security technologies are available to protect themselves.
- 3 The Illusion of Invulnerability:** It is important that the terrorists be convinced they cannot inflict any damage of consequence on the peacekeeping force. Therefore, ground troops should be sent in wearing full tactical armour; heavy vehicles like *Bragi* transports should be used whenever possible instead of light hovercraft. Overwhelming force should be used if force is called for.
- 3 Supply from Space:** Insurgents prefer to attack the 'soft' targets of supply lines instead of the hard targets of an occupying force. Therefore, if possible, supply as much as possible from orbit using drop pods and shuttles.

During the African Bloc wars of the 2150s, EarthForce troops were rushed from one crisis to another. Troops barely knew what country they were fighting in or who their opponents and allies were; their heavy-handed approach alienated the very countries they were trying to



Captain Parker warned EarthForce Command of the approaching Centauri vessel, and an 'honour guard' of carriers and fighters were scrambled to meet the survey ship. Thankfully, the Centauri assumed that the guard was composed of purely ceremonial vessels and antiques, whereas it actually comprised the best ships that Earth had to defend itself. If the Centauri had been hostile, it is unlikely that the Navy could have destroyed even that scoutship, let alone the House Jaddo warships that would have surely followed.

The Alliance entered into a trade agreement with the Centauri, which would include the construction of a jumpgate in the Sol system. Some in EarthForce argued that Earth was not ready to enter the 'galactic community', as Earth's high population and lack of defences made it a tempting target for alien slavers. Their objections were overruled, and instead EarthForce was placed on a crash course to make itself ready for interstellar exploration and defence.

## Early Exploration & Aegis

### 'We've seen wonderful things...'

#### — First Report sent back to EarthForce Command

The Earth jumpgate was built in 2161, opening up the galaxy to humanity. Scouts had used Centauri hyperspace technology to travel out of the Sol system before that – the Alliance had purchased berth space on House Jaddo surveyor ships; so small teams of diplomats, xenobiologists and espionage experts had already made contact with numerous alien races. However, 2161 marked the beginning of the great human Diaspora, as colony vessels and corporate mining ships jumped out to all the neighbouring star systems like Proxima. These systems had jumpgates, but were otherwise unoccupied.

EarthForce went with the ships, of course. The Army sent whole regiments out to provide security for growing colonies (and even hired its troops out to corporate operations). This provided invaluable training in low- and high-gravity combat and survival on alien worlds.

The Navy lagged behind, at least initially; the old Orestes carriers were by now utterly outmoded. Hyperspace travel had utterly changed the nature of space travel and space warfare. An Orestes was designed to operate on long hauls out to Saturn and beyond, where the ship might be coasting on its inertia for weeks or more at a time. Instead, the new generation of EarthForce vessels would be designed for far shorter intra-system flights between jumpgate or jump point and planet. Furthermore, the Orestes hull was much too fragile to withstand the stresses of hyperspace.

EarthGov initiated the Aegis program in 2161, which was a concerted effort to make the Alliance – and especially EarthForce – ready for expansion into the galaxy. Improving the fleet was the first priority for Aegis. While researchers rushed to reverse-engineer Centauri technology (especially jump engines), the shipyards worked on a new class of hulls, called the *Oracle* design. The Centauri offered to sell ships to the Alliance, but the Alliance refused (a wise move, as other races who took that devil's bargain became swiftly dependant on the Centauri for replacement parts and maintenance).

What EarthForce did purchase, however, was weapons. Again, it was very fortunate that Earth made contact with the Centauri Republic in the days of its decline. A century before, the Centauri would never have sold advanced weapons to a lesser species. Even in the 2100s, they would not have sold weapons to former client races out of fear of revenge. They sold weapons to humanity because the Centauri needed the cash and were fairly confident that humanity would not risk turning those weapons on the Republic. In modern times, both Centauri and Narn have been willing to trade advanced weapons to pretty much anyone.

The Oracle vessels were fitted with new weapons such as particle beams. The first of the line, the EAS *Argo*, ushered in a new age of exploration. Over the next few decades, the Alliance would make contact with dozens of races.

Another product of Aegis was the Starfury program. The old Raptor fighters were scrapped to make way for a new design, called the *Aries*. These fighter-pods were not capable of fighting within an atmosphere, but were superlative in establishing space-superiority. Starfury research and design has continued up until the present day.

help protect. The relatively high death rate also eked away at the public support for EarthForce in the countries that had been the organisation's staunchest supporters.

Contrast this operation with the Liberation of the African Bloc in 2253.

#### *Lessons from History #4*

### **WHAT IF THE CENTAURI HAD BEEN HOSTILE? - 2160**

Earth was fortunate enough to be discovered by the Centauri when the 'Lion of the Galaxy' was growing old and tired. A century before, the Centauri would probably have conquered Earth. Even the survey vessel was heavily armed in comparison to an Earth carrier.

A Centauri attack on mid-22<sup>nd</sup> century Earth would have begun with a retreat, as the surveyor lacked the crew and weaponry to prosecute an attack. It would have captured the *Dauntless* and her crew before jumping to the nearest House Jaddo outpost. There, the crew would have been interrogated using mind-probes, telepathy and conventional tortures to extract as much information as possible about Earth's defences and governments.

Phase II would have begun with Centauri warships jumping in-system and heading straight for Earth. The only chance for EarthForce to damage the Centauri would have been with nuclear weapons. Therefore, the warships would have deployed a screen of fighters, who would have shot down any and all Earth missiles and vessels that came close to the warship group. Once in orbit, the Centauri would have jammed communications worldwide. They would have opened up a dialogue with the Earth Alliance government, offering them subservient places as planetary overseers. If EarthGov had capitulated at this point, the human race would have been offered a standard Centauri Indenture Contract, which would have specified how much of the planet's wealth was to be sent as tribute to the Republic and so on.

Any resistance on the part of Earth would have been met with mass driver bombardment. The Centauri would not have landed en masse, but would have blasted the planet from orbit until all resistance was broken. Control of space would have been paramount. Meanwhile, they

would have established a jumpgate as quickly as possible, to bring in reinforcements as well as a 'treasure fleet' of cargo vessels.

EarthForce would have responded by pulling the Navy back to Mars, the Moon and the Belt, while the Army tried to rally resistance and save as many people as possible on the ground. The Navy would have launched co-ordinated nuclear strikes against the orbiting bombardment forces, while also possibly attempting to capture or destroy the jumpgate.

In many ways, this 'what-if' scenario actually took place 90 years later, when the Minbari invaded. The highly advanced Minbari were as far ahead of EarthForce vessels as the Centauri were ahead of the little Delta-V and *Apollo* fighters faced by the survey vessel.

#### *Lessons from History #5*

#### **JUMP COMBAT 101 - 2161**

Hyperspace technology changed the doctrines of space combat completely. The long elegant manoeuvres of burn-and-coast and swinging around gravity wells gave way to much shorter-range, more frenetic engagements. There are three main sorts of hyperspatial encounters:

- ③ Jumpgates
- ③ Jump Points
- ③ Combat in Hyperspace

Jumpgates are fixed points in a system, which can be defended by space stations and fixed weapons emplacements. Galactic culture frowns on militarising jumpgates too much – they are not considered to be legal targets for most attacks, as the destruction of the jump network would plunge the whole galaxy into a dark age. However, every race has a massive military near its local jumpgate, allowing it to be fortified if necessary. The normal option during war is to switch off or scramble the jump beacon, effectively removing the gate from active use but not destroying it.

Jump points radically alter the battlefield, as enemy vessels can appear anywhere. Of course, the huge strain on a ship's power supply needed to open a vortex means that a jumping ship leaves itself vulnerable until it can recharge. Jump-in, jump-out quick strikes as well as jumping in

## **Proxima, the Birth of the New Fleet and the Koulani Incident**

**'Alien vessels are still incoming. They're firing again, sir.'**

**'Launch the 'furies, then give me a full burn for 30 seconds. Signal the aliens again, same message as before.'**

**'Furies away, sir.'**

**'Spinning up to full burn, sir.'**

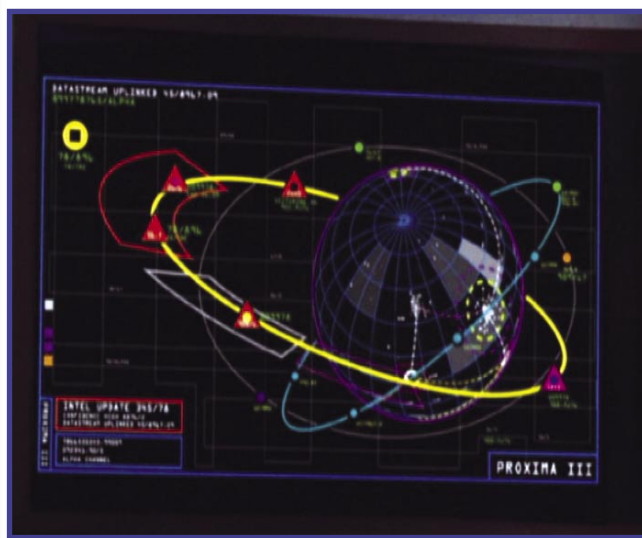
**'No response from alien vessels, sir.'**

**'All right... let's see what we've got.'**

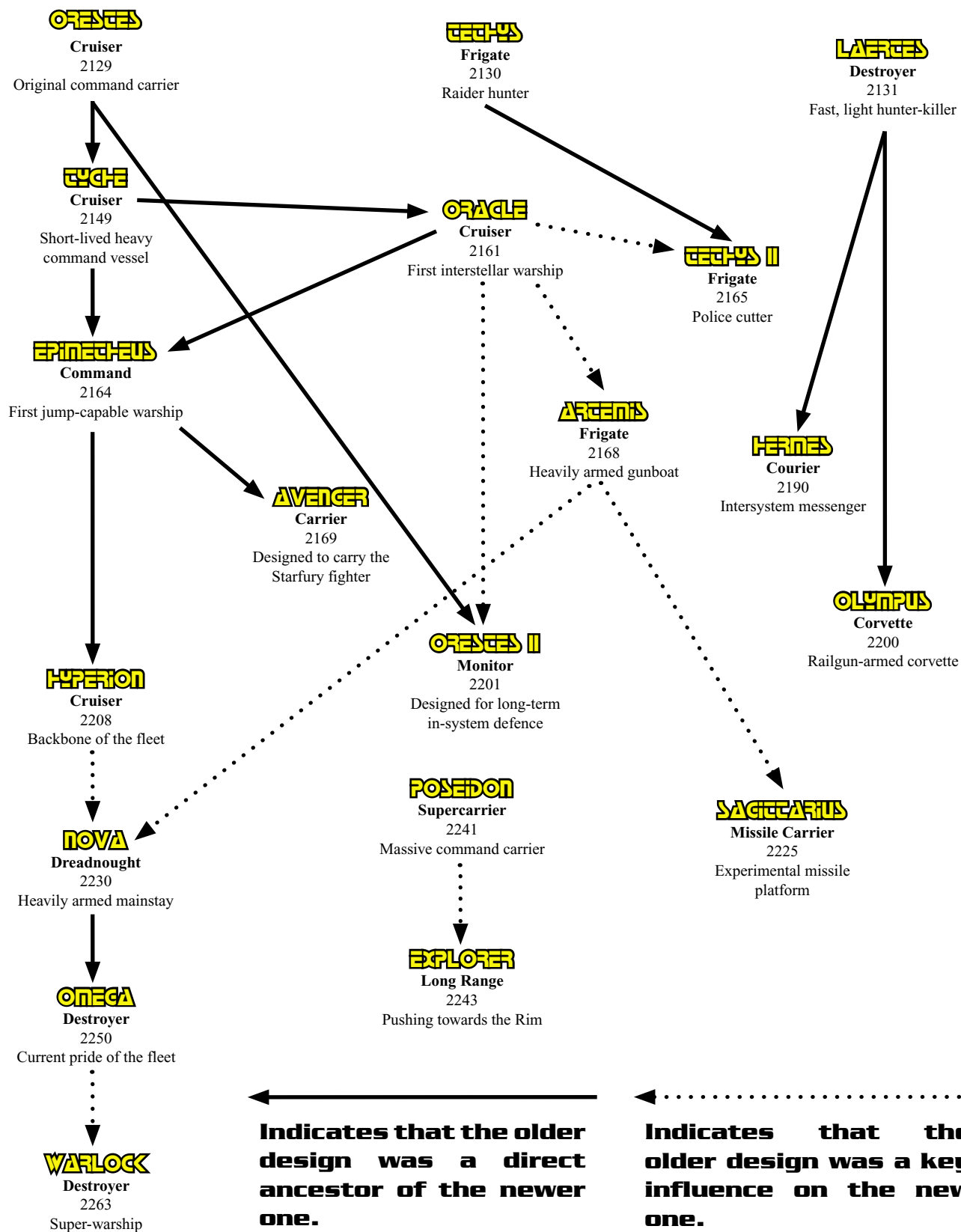
**— Bridge recording from EAS Asia**

By 2165, new designs were coming online. The most important and prestigious of these was the Epimetheus command cruiser, the first human vessel with its own jump engines. With these vessels, humanity could explore beyond the existing network of jump beacons and trade routes. It could also fight wars against other jump-capable races, an ability that would become critically important in years to come.

EarthForce's first battle in space came when the Koulani Directorate attacked Signet Station at Deneb. The station was defended by the EAS *Asia*, an Epimetheus-class cruiser. The Koulani vessels were only slightly superior to the Earth vessel, but outnumbered it and were able to



## Evolution of EarthForce Capital Ships



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behind enemy forces make a mockery of any fixed fleet deployments. Space combat went from being a slow dance of move and counter-move to a much faster-paced and fluid battlefield.

Combat in hyperspace is a rare event, as hyperspace is dangerously unstable and unpredictable. Sudden stresses can breach a ship's hull or cause a hyperspatial eddy that drags it far off course. Few races risk confrontations in hyperspace unless there are no other options.

Unlike most other races, humanity went into space without any knowledge of hyperspace. Most alien races made first contact before they left their homeworld, and so never learned to fight space battles that did not take the above encounter types into consideration. Human strategic thinking therefore seemed bizarre to many species.

From the earliest days of human hyperspace travel, the EarthForce leadership wanted a weapon to negate the tactical advantages of jump-capable ships. The Interdiction Device used to prevent the Minbari from jumping past the Line was the culmination of this research.

#### Lessons from History #6

#### **SIGNET STATION - 2165**

The Alliance established a base in the Deneb system to service the jumpgate there. Deneb is a key link in Earth's trade with the friendly Tokati species. However, Deneb was also a single jump away from the Koulani system, and the Koulani objected to human presence there. Rather than register a protest with EarthDome, however, they attacked the human base of Signet Station.

The EAS *Asia*, an Epimetheus-Alpha class warship was patrolling the space near Signet Station and the jumpgate when the gate was activated. Five Koulani vessels (all outdated version of the Sunclipper design) emerged and began firing immediately. The *Asia* broadcast a warning while scrambling its remaining Starfuries.

Within 30 seconds, it became apparent that Signet Station could not be saved. The opening Koulani salvo had caused massive structural damage throughout the base, and its hull was beginning to buckle. The station's crew rushed to the lifepods and space suits as the station collapsed. The

cripple the *Asia* and destroy the station. The situation was resolved diplomatically before EarthForce could jump reinforcements insystem, but the clash proved that while the basic design of the Epimetheus class and its smaller cousins was sound, the fleet needed to expand massively to match the established space fleets of the alien races.

The Aegis program ploughed billions of credits into the construction of new shipyards in orbit of Earth, Mars, Io and the vibrant new colony at Proxima.

The various ship designs were constantly upgraded; freed from the need to conform to laws of aerodynamics, ship architects designed simple, functional hulls that would be usable for decades and allowed for various components to be swapped in and out. This practice gave rise to the notoriously blocky and utilitarian ('flying brick') look of the EarthForce vessels – the hulls are designed for reusability and ease of reconstruction, not style.

The Epimetheus hull, for example, was reworked to incorporate the new interceptor weapons discovered by IPX. Older, pre-hyperspace designs were rebuilt with upgraded engines and power sources to fulfil new roles. Old Orestes hulls were taken out of mothballs, had their London LCV hangars replaced with weapons mounts, and flown to isolated colonies to serve as defensive monitors. The Tethys class was downgraded from a fighter to a police cutter, but still served a vital role in Alliance security. Still, EarthForce had yet to be truly tested in space.

#### **The Ch'lonas Encounter**

**'Towards the end, we actually got to know the Ch'lonas kinda well. We'd buzz them, they'd buzz us. We'd tag their supply transport with a tracking beam, they'd jam our radio freqs for a day. Hell, we even slung them a can containing Christmas pudding one year.'**

**Yeah, that caused a big diplomatic hoo-hah. Something about Ch'lonas hunting customs, and how we'd basically called them wimps by sending them food.'**

**— Interview with an EarthForce pilot stationed at Beta 7**

The Beta 7 system was targeted by the Aegis program due to its wealth of minerals, vital to the growing colonies. The Ch'lonas, a former slave race of the Centauri, also had an interest in the system. They monitored the construction of the Alliance mining stations and the activities of the *Avenger* carrier group assigned to monitor the system.

For the *Avenger*, this mission was essentially a shakedown cruise. The carrier had only been launched earlier that year, and for a vessel to be sent to the fringes of Alliance space so early in its life was a mark of how important the Beta 7 system was to Earth. The two Artemis-class frigates *Merrimack* and *Lincoln* accompanying the *Avenger* were almost as untried, although the Artemis-class had undergone considerably more testing.

The spark that started the Ch'lonas War was the construction of an Orion starbase in the Beta 7 system. The Ch'lonas considered this an act of aggression, as the base could be used as a staging post for strikes into their home system. They attacked in late 2169. Ch'lonas tactics of the era relied on sweeping attacks by their fighters and destroyers. Their task force arrived in the Beta 7 system and made straight for the starbase. The Ch'lonas launched their fighters (which were held clamped to the side of the destroyers, in a similar setup to the London/Orestes-I tandem used by pre-hyperspace Earth) when still 15,000 kilometres out from the Orion base.

The *Avenger* launched her Starfuries, which were able to engage the slower Ch'lonas fighters and hold them in a dogfight. The lack of fighter cover left the Ch'lonas destroyers vulnerable to a barrage of missile and railgun fire from the twin Artemis destroyers. While none of the Ch'lonas vessels were destroyed outright, they were all savaged by the barrage of fire. Incredibly, the Ch'lonas made another four passes – their destroyers would provide covering fire to their fighters as they withdrew from the dogfight, the force would sweep on again, the fighters would again fall victim to the intercepting Starfuries and the destroyers left vulnerable to the *Merrimack* and *Lincoln*.

The Ch'lonas force withdrew, abandoning their damaged fighters. The situation degenerated into a cold war, with the Ch'lonas rejecting any diplomatic overtures in favour of raiding Alliance trade lines and the Beta-7. They never managed to break Earth's hold on Beta 7, and eventually let the war peter out. By then, EarthForce intelligence had managed to establish listening posts and surveillance equipment within the Ch'lonas home system and knew exactly how vulnerable the alien race was.

Captain of the *Asia* ordered her Starfuries to engage the Koulani warships and to provide covering fire for her shuttles as they evacuated the base.

The *Asia* fired her thrusters and began to move towards Signet Station. It then fired a barrage of missiles towards the Koulani, which outpaced the Starfuries and exploded in front of the advancing alien warships. The missile detonations gave the *Asia* time to rotate 180 degrees, allowing her to fire her boresight and forward-facing weapons while still moving back towards the station.

Meanwhile, the Starfuries engaged the Koulani Sunclippers. The astonishing manoeuvrability and firepower of the little fighters caught the Koulani by surprise, and indeed one of the Koulani vessels panicked and managed to smash itself into one of the jumpgate's pylons. The Starfuries continued to buzz and distract the Koulani while the station's surviving crew were evacuated. The *Asia* then issued a recall order to the Starfuries and manoeuvred itself *behind* the disintegrating station.

The Koulani believed that the *Asia* was incapable of entering hyperspace without using a jumpgate, and they controlled the Deneb gate. They therefore waited to recharge their weapons as the Starfuries fled. The *Asia* opened a jump vortex and fled. This was a risky manoeuvre – not only was the vortex opened almost on top of both the ship and the ruins of the station, but also the *Aries*-type Starfuries of that era could not maintain hull integrity and life support in hyperspace for more than ten minutes. The *Asia* crew had to therefore retrieve their Starfuries within that brief window, while also securing the dozens of lifeboats from Signet Station.

The *Asia* was almost crippled by the attack. Signet Station was essentially lost within seconds of the Koulani arriving in the Deneb system, and almost 80% of its crew were killed in the attack. It was described in EarthForce reports as a 'mitigated disaster' – if the *Asia* had not put up such a tenacious fight and recovered so much of the Signet crew, then the Koulani might never have agreed to the diplomatic solution offered by the Alliance (the Deneb jumpgate beacon was shut down, and trade vessels bypassed Koulani space).

Tactically, the *Asia* demonstrated the strength of the Starfury design and the virtues of cover in space. The relatively short ranges involved in the encounter allowed for the Signet Station's wreckage to be used to block enemy fire. This tactic would not have worked against, say, a Centauri vessel armed with a matter cannon, which could have punched through the debris.

### *Lessons from History #7*

#### **SEGES IN SPACE - 2174**

The Ch'lonas attacks on Earth outposts during the decade from the Beta 7 incident in 2169 until the Ch'lonas treaty of 2181 gave EarthForce ample time to practise and study the art of defending stationary targets in space. While space is a three-dimensional battlefield, few encounters take full advantage of this fact – the vast majority of battles take place on the plane between the jumpgate and the primary planets of the system. Therefore, the most effective placement of fixed-emplacements is in a ring or semi-circle around the installation being defended. Weapons with longer ranges are placed further out, while short-range guns are placed at or near the installation. If the enemy flies up out of the plane of the ecliptic, then the delay caused by this deviation can be used to position defensive vessels. In space, an enemy can always bypass a stationary defensive weapon – the key is placing the weapons so that the time spent bypassing the weapon can be exploited by the defenders.

Take, for example, the Ch'lonas attack on the Gladstone Mining Base in 2174. EarthForce had installed two Prometheus Alpha-class defensive satellites flanking the base, which was located in the rich asteroid belt of Beta 7. By now, the Beta 7 jumpgate was heavily fortified against Ch'lonas attack, so the aliens had to open their own jump point using a capital ship. Their first pass was a surprise raid against the base; the Ch'lonas just charged straight in, where they suffered heavy damage from the Prometheus's. The attack force withdrew and reformed out of range of the satellite's particle beams before moving to a vector that would only expose them to particle fire from one satellite.

However, in the time it took their fleet to move to that vector, the *Merrimack* arrived on the scene and added its massive firepower to that of

## **Internal Strife and the New Raider Period**

**'The Centauri Republic is not a nation of bandits and raiders. We are not thieves and we are not criminals. It is unthinkable and disgraceful that any of my subjects should support such activity. We apologise unreservedly for this slight against our noble human friends... and rest assured, those who are responsible shall be punished.'**

### **— The Emperor of the Centauri Republic**

While the EarthForce Navy went from strength to strength patrolling the frontier, exploring the galaxy and defending Earth colonies from alien attack, the Army was proving less useful. The Alliance had yet to fight a land war against an alien race, despite the Army putting a vast amount of its funding into research and design of new vehicles and life-support gear to enable its troopers to fight in alien environments. The Army did get some experience in offworld combat through guarding the colonies and corporate stations, but the bulk of Army activities were in peacekeeping.

The explosive growth of 'Earth space' and the still-festering inequalities and resentments within the member countries caused numerous problems for EarthGov, and time and again they turned to the Army to restore order. Martian terrorists, separatist states, colonial rebellions – GROPOS were sent in to deal with all of them. There were numerous accusations and suggestions that the EarthForce Army should be reconfigured as a dedicated anti-terror force, and that the age of territorial land wars was over. This last statement was laughably untrue – there



were still numerous countries outside the Alliance on Earth itself, as well as any number of potentially hostile alien races that were capable of invading human-occupied worlds.

The Army successfully quelled many of these incidents, but the underlying problems would arise again and again, in revolts such as the 2212 Mars rebellion or the 2213 War of the Rising Star.

Meanwhile, the Navy was dealing with a massive outbreak of raider activity preying on the jump lanes to the Centauri Republic. EarthForce agents discovered that other Centauri houses had grown jealous of House Jaddo's wealth of trade with Earth, and were trying to sabotage the link between the two star empires. EarthForce responded by chasing the pirates and privateers back into Centauri space, even risking clashes with the Centauri military to bring down the raiders.

The New Raider period officially ended when the Centauri Emperor investigated the raiders, admitted that they were Centauri-sponsored mercenaries and pirates, and resolved the situation by cancelling the Jaddo's exclusive contract with the Alliance, instead opening up trade with the whole Centauri Republic.

The New Raider period did cause EarthForce to renovate and improve its defences. New ship variants were created, fully integrating alien technologies such as interceptors and particle beams into the fleet. The borders were reinforced, and with the construction of more bases and shipyards at Proxima, the fleet moved away from being an Earth-centric institution. This contrasts with the Army, which has traditionally maintained its ties to Earth itself; many of those who would join the Army can find equally challenging work on the frontier.

## The Army Goes In

**'The dome's breaching... there goes the atmo.'**

**'Everyone OK?'**

**'Suits are green across board.'**

**'Then move out. It's a long walk to Capital City.'**

The last two decades of the 22<sup>nd</sup> century and the first century of the 23<sup>rd</sup> were relatively peaceful, and corresponded with a massive reinforcement and expansion of the fleet. As the Alliance expanded into more colonies, it came in contact with more and more alien races. The Centauri had gone from a beneficent elder race to rivals and equals, and the Alliance was also aware of the expansionist Narn Regime pushing towards Earth-controlled space.

the satellites. The Ch'lonas managed to destroy one Prometheus, but lost their capital ship in the process. The *Merrimack* pulled back from the battlefield, forcing the Ch'lonas to engage the second Prometheus satellite that savaged them a second time.

The surviving Ch'lonas fled and had to wait two weeks before a second capital ship picked them up. Many committed suicide or were hunted down by the vengeful *Merrimack*.

## Lessons from History #8

### COMBINED ARMS IN THE CENTRAL AFRICAN BLOC - 2190

The troublesome Central African Bloc was a thorn in the side of EarthGov for centuries, up until the Liberation in 2250. The 2190 incident was sparked by the CAB's construction of a ground-based particle cannon. Under the terms of the Space Treaty of 2164, the only organisation with the right to place weapons in space was EarthForce, although the countries that were not members of the Alliance could request military aid and support from EarthForce if they needed orbital assets.

The construction of a particle weapon was seen as a threat to space traffic, although the CAB insisted that the cannon was there for 'defensive purposes'. After both sides traded resolutions and threats for a few months, EarthForce was given permission to take the cannon out.

The cannon was buried in the Atlas Mountains in Western Africa, and it was determined that a single barrage from space was unlikely to destroy the installation. If the cannon was attacked, it would fire back and EarthForce was ordered to avoid a shooting war with the CAB. A direct assault from space was therefore impossible.

Instead, EarthForce marines infiltrated the area using Skyknight assault VTOLs (precursors of the current Frigga design) and sabotaged the coolant tanks of the particle beam. The leakage of dangerous coolant forced the evacuation of the particle cannon base. As soon as the majority of the base staff were clear, a single missile was fired from an orbiting Artemis and guided in by the marines.

3

The precisely aimed missile destroyed the emitter of the particle beam, and caused secondary explosions that wrecked much of the weapon's internal systems. The raid was carried out with a minimum of casualties on either side; most of those killed either refused to leave their posts with the coolant leak was reported, or were security guards who encountered the marine team.

### *Lessons from History #9*

#### **DEAD AIR - 2212**

'Spaceships are terrible at knocking on doors', as one anonymous Army lieutenant put it. The usable power of the Fleet essentially stops at the atmosphere. Spaceships can only fight other spaceships; their only recourse for dealing with ground-based enemies is orbital bombardment, which is frowned on even when employed in the most limited fashion. To hold or retake a planet, ground troops are needed.

History

Getting thousands of ground troops from one planet to another is a logistical nightmare beyond anything experienced before space travel. The sheer *mass* of a regiment, not to mention the fact that a large proportion of that mass consists of living humans who need to be coddled with oxygen, heat and radiation shields makes transporting large numbers of troops very difficult. Attempts have been made to make the individual trooper better, faster, stronger and more capable, but technology can only go so far and some missions just call for lots of boots on the ground.

The other problem is getting the troops down to the planet surface. Assault shuttles and Condor troop transports are nowhere near as manoeuvrable as a Starfury or Delta fighter, making them easy targets for ground-based anti-aircraft fire. Furthermore, when dealing with weapons that can hit targets in low orbit, any drop is highly dangerous; a descending assault shuttle could be shot down by a laser beam fired from anywhere within a thousand-mile circle of its current location. There have been numerous cases where an aggressor has won the space battle and achieved orbital superiority, but has then been unable to take the planet as it cannot get its troops down to the ground in safety or in sufficient numbers.

The underlying stresses exploded again in 2212. Most of the colonies were, to a greater or lesser extent, pulling away from Earth. The old established colony worlds like Mars and Proxima now had their own identities, cultures and established economies, while the younger outlying colonies were mostly settled by separatists and culture-philosophes that wanted to leave Earth and its culture and government behind (such as the Israeli settlers of planet Jericho). The only colony worlds wholly loyal to Earth were the corporate planets, which had their workforces rotated every few years.

In 2212, Mars Colony erupted into open revolt. Underground elements managed to seize control of the life-support mechanisms and security of key domes, including the EarthForce dome outside Capital City. Initial reports claimed that the underground wanted a peaceful transition, but a splinter faction sabotaged the life support to the EarthForce dome, venting the air out into the chill Martian atmosphere. The EarthForce 12<sup>th</sup>, 19<sup>th</sup> and 42<sup>nd</sup> Infantry Divisions survived, having put on life-support gear immediately. The commander of the EarthForce unit, General Miller, contacted EarthDome and informed them of the situation and of his intention to reclaim Capital City and Mars' spaceport.

MarsFirst and other paramilitary organisations attempted to claim power across the planet. Several of the smaller domes joined with the revolutionary cause wholesale, but in others, the civil authorities fought back against the rebels. Miller's troops mostly joined the fighting in the streets and tunnels of Capital City, acting in support of Mars' police force. Initially, the rebellion was treated as civil unrest and terrorism, and so was primarily handled by civilian law enforcement and not the military. As the rebellion wore on over the next three weeks, however, it became apparent that the revolutionaries were considerably better organised and equipped than was initially suspected.

Miller drew most of his troops back to the spaceport and again updated Earth on the situation on-planet. By now, over two dozen EarthForce vessels were in orbit of Mars, and two more divisions of GROPOS were en route. However, it was almost certain that the revolutionaries were aware of this and had planned for it. Therefore, Miller signalled to the fleet using a code that the revolutionaries had broken. Trashpods equipped with IFF transponders matching infantry drop pods were launched from the EAS *Wellington*. The pods traced an elegant arc through the thin Martian atmosphere – until they were destroyed by a hail of fire from concealed missile and beam emplacements south of Capital City.

A small detachment of Assault Rangers from Miller's 12<sup>th</sup> Infantry had been lurking in the Martian desert for three weeks, staying out of sight of the civilian crawlers and flyers. Now, they homed in on the missile launch sites and destroyed them. The orbiting ships then launched their real Condor troop carriers, delivering thousands of GROPOS down to the Mars Spaceport. This massive influx of fresh troops easily turned the tide, and the Mars rebellion was quashed within days. There would be sporadic fighting in the outlying domes and on the high plateaus of Mars for years, but any chance of MarsFirst or other radical groups gaining control of Mars was destroyed by EarthForce.

The forceful response to the Martian rebellion killed any popular support for a similar revolution on Proxima. To reinforce this change in mood, a task force of nine ships and four divisions was sent on 'war games' near Proxima colony.

The separatist movements had been quelled for another generation, although this heavy-handed response from EarthForce did reinforce the impression that the Army was little more than a cudgel that forcibly preserved an aging and imbalanced Alliance. While this impression is partially justified, the problem was exacerbated by the growing gulf between EarthDome and the colonies; indeed, EarthForce tried several times to resolve situations peacefully, only to be overruled by EarthDome and forced to attack.

**The War of the Rising Star**  
**'Anyone crossing the border... will face the full wrath of EarthForce. Make that clear. And make sure we've got a lot of wrath to back up that statement.'**

**— From a staff briefing at Camp Howard, November 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2213**

The heaviest blow of the Martian rebellion actually fell on Earth; Martian assassins managed to critically injure President Kiyoshi of the Eastern Bloc while he was in the care of EarthForce. This threw the Earth Government into chaos, and marked the second time in 50 years that a major president had been assassinated when in office.

The War of the Rising Star was triggered by this assassination. A cabal of military officers within the Russian Consortium military became convinced that the Alliance was on the verge of collapse, and that they must

Troopers refer to the early minutes of a drop as 'dead air' – the time when you have no control over your destiny, and no thick hull armour or agile evasive moves to protect you. Minimising the amount of 'dead air' is the first priority for any drop operation. Tactics include:

- ③ Surgical orbital or air strikes on anti-aircraft guns
- ③ Using stealthy drop pods to deliver a small advance force first; this advance force takes out the anti-aircraft guns
- ③ Dropping into isolated regions out of range of planetary defences, then proceeding by land to the objective
- ③ Using countermeasures and sensor scramblers or inclement to hide a descent

During the Martian Rebellion, General Miller took the second option, and had his Assault Rangers destroy the Martian guns. This required the Rangers hiding in the desert for over three weeks, then crossing over 500 miles of terrain within nine hours to take out the guns before the Martians realised what had happened.

### *Lessons from History #10*

#### **THE HUMAN FACTOR - 2213**

There is more information available about any random human alive today than there is about Shakespeare or Napoleon or any other significant historical figure. Practically every action taken by a human is recorded on some computer somewhere. Given time, it is possible to extrapolate a detailed psychological profile of a person from data files alone.

EarthForce Intelligence's psychoanalysts have been able to prepare detailed profiles on individual enemy officers. Obviously, this can only be done when information is available, which had lead to EarthForce's extensive efforts to gather intelligence on the command structures of potentially hostile alien enemies. When these profiles are available, however, the results are devastating.

During the War of the Rising Sun, EarthForce knew just which enemy commanders to kill in order to change the prevailing mindset of both the Russian and Chinese armies. Taking out a particular commander can have a ripple effect; if no-one is there to strongly advocate for, say, an approach by sea, then the defender knows that it is considerably less likely to face sea-bourn assaults.

## Lessons from History #11

### THE BATTLE OF EPSILON INDI - 2219

The Battle of Epsilon Indi was the longest and biggest space battle fought by EarthForce up until the Dilgar War. As such, it was studied obsessively for over a decade by space-war theorists and students.

Day	Time	Event
1	1321	Earth trade vessel <i>Keyes</i> is attacked by Narn vessel <i>Sha'Hh</i> . The <i>Keyes</i> is crippled within two minutes.
1	1325	The Olympus-class <i>Teahen</i> receives the <i>Keyes</i> ' distress call and investigates.
1	1502	The <i>Teahen</i> comes upon the <i>Sha'Hh</i> looting cargo from the <i>Keyes</i> . A warning shot is fired, then the <i>Teahen</i> fires upon the larger <i>Sha'Hh</i> .
1	1507	The <i>Teahen</i> withdraws, having failed to noticeably damage the <i>Sha'Hh</i> . The Narn pursue.
1	1730	The <i>Teahen</i> rendezvouses with the <i>Cochise</i> and another Olympus. The <i>Sha'Hh</i> breaks off pursuit.
2	0128	Four Narn ships jump into the system and attack the defence satellite in orbit of Indi II.
2	0520	The <i>Barbarossa</i> arrives at Indi II.
2	0645	The Narn ships ambush the <i>Barbarossa</i> , emerging from behind the moon.
2	0656	The <i>Barbarossa</i> 's main engines fail.
2	0659	The <i>Barbarossa</i> 's main guns fail.
2	0700	The <i>Barbarossa</i> jumps out.
2	1024	The Narn detect the Olympus-class <i>Tenner</i> and gives chase. The <i>Tenner</i> leads the four Narn vessels away from Indi II.
2	1700	The <i>Midway</i> carrier enters the system, accompanied by two more Olympus-class corvettes. She meets with the <i>Cochise</i> and the <i>Teahen</i> .
2	2319	The <i>Tenner</i> sends a narrow-beam message to the <i>Cochise</i> , informing the task force of the location of the Narn fleet.
3	0433	The <i>Midway</i> detects the Narn fleet.
3	0449	The <i>Midway</i> launches fighters.



strike first to carve out their own empire. They drugged their commanding officer and used his influence to seize control of a large section of the army. They then tried to take over a stretch of the Ukraine.

Their movements drew the attention – and the wrath – of the Republic of China. The Chinese invaded, and both factions in the Russian Consortium army turned to fight them. EarthForce was sent in to put an end to the problem – permanently. The rivalry between the two great powers had to be ended.

EarthForce tanks and infantry swarmed onto the Russian steppes and began the job of demolishing both sides' will to fight. Intelligence had identified many of chief targets for this operation; hardliners and adventurers in both camps who kept pushing the two countries towards war. EarthForce's mission was to destroy the ability of these troublemakers to cause future incidents.

The decisive battle of the War of the Rising Star came in October, 2213, when EarthForce units engaged a Chinese tank column crossing the Russian border. The EarthForce tanks were equipped with long-range T85 gauss cannons, which were capable of punching through the enemy armour from well outside the maximum effective range of enemy fire. When the Chinese tried to retreat, another six companies of specially prepared tanks were dropped behind them using Condor transports. The whole column was reduced to scrap metal by the superior firepower and technology of EarthForce. Ironically, Kiyoshi finally died mere days after the end of the war started to take advantage of his death.

## The Narn War

**'The silhouette matches a Narn vessel, according to the data the Centauri gave us.'**

**'That data says the Narn ships are powered by burning babies. Let's hail them first, see who they really are.'**

EarthForce had been aware of the potential threat of the Narn Regime for years, thanks to warnings from the Centauri. First Contact was made in 2205, but the Narns dismissed humanity as allies of the Centauri and ignored most diplomatic overtures from Earth. Both powers ended up settling different sections of the Epsilon Indi system, and maintained a watchful eye on each other until 2219.

In May, 2219, a Narn patrol attacked an Earth cargo vessel. The Narn would later claim that it was an accident, but it was most likely ordered by the Kha'Ri as a test of Earth's defences. The Earth vessels in-system – the Hyperion-class *Cochise* and *Barbarossa*, four Olympus-class corvettes and the Avenger-class *Midway* – engaged the Narn vessels. The Battle of Epsilon Indi lasted eight days until the Narn retreated to their base at Epsilon Indi VI.

The Narn counter-attacked at Epsilon itself and at Eridani, but were unable to make significant gains in either system. EarthForce turned off the Epsilon Indi beacon, preventing the Narn from reinforcing the system through the jumpgate.

Mild hostilities continued for some time, but neither side wanted a war. Having satisfied themselves that Earth was not in a position to conquer Narn space easily, but was strong enough to hold the line against them, the Narn agreed to a peace treaty and turned back to their preferred activity of raiding the Centauri Republic. The Epsilon treaty of 2224 ended the war.



3	0453	The Olympus corvettes fire their railguns, engaging the Narn fleet in battle.
3	0501	The Narn vessel <i>K'ste</i> is destroyed.
3	0523	Missiles hit the <i>Cochise</i> , crippling it.
3	0525	The <i>Midway</i> 's starfuries are recalled to defend the immobile <i>Cochise</i> .
3	0601	The <i>Teahen</i> and another Olympus, the <i>Castile</i> , manage to catch the Narn vessel <i>Sha'Hh</i> in a crossfire. It is destroyed.
3	0620	The Narn close on the damaged <i>Cochise</i> and <i>Midway</i> .
3	0631	A Starfury strafing run destroys another Narn vessel.
3	0634	The damaged <i>Barbarossa</i> jumps back in. Although the vessel is so damaged that it cannot effectively fight, the appearance of another Hyperion demoralises the Narns, who retreat.

The obvious turning point is the return of the *Barbarossa* – with the advent of hyperspace and capital ships with their own jump engines, the battlefield can change almost instantly. The Narn went from being on the verge of wiping out the Earth ships to being outnumbered and outgunned in an instant – at least, they assumed they did. If their commander had waited until the *Barbarossa* had been scanned, then he could have stayed in the fight and won. Of course, if the *Barbarossa* had been a fresh warship, then that delay for scans could have given the EarthForce ships enough time to pound the Narn into scrap.

The real turning point, however, was the failure of the *Sha'Hh* to catch the *Teahen*. If the Narn had managed to destroy the smaller Olympus vessel outright, EarthForce would have been put on the defensive immediately and would likely have pulled back to defend the inner Indi worlds. Instead, the *Teahen* stayed in the fight and EarthForce instead formed a hunter-killer group centred on the *Cochise*, which inflicted the most damage on the Narn.

Forcing an opponent onto the defensive is a key tactic in ship-to-ship combat. The Narns failed to dictate the pace of the battle and so were defeated.

## The Balance of Galactic Power

Up until the Earth-Minbari War and contact with the Minbari Federation, the policy of EarthForce was to maintain the balance of power between the Narn and the Centauri. While those two races were locked in a cold war, Alliance space was relatively safe and secure – none of the League races could mount a significant threat to the Earth Alliance, and neither Narn nor Centauri could attack the Alliance without leaving themselves open to their rival's attack.

Now, with the Narn Regime almost destroyed and the Centauri isolated and embargoed, and the Minbari closely allied with Earth, there is no known race that can pose a significant threat to Earth. This situation must be closely monitored – a single super-power tends to turn lesser powers against it, out of fear of conquest. Diplomatic avenues such as the Interstellar Alliance must be fully utilised to prevent such a backlash.

mounting a serious threat to even a mid-ranking League race, let alone Earth. This analysis was obviously wrong, but the analysts lacked a vital piece of the puzzle to understanding the Dilgar War; the Dilgar sun was on the verge of going nova, so their entire population and economy had been adjusted to serve a single purpose - conquest.

In January of 2230, a Dilgar force attacked and destroyed the EAS *Persephone*, a Hyperion-class vessel exploring the uninhabited worlds along the League border. Politically, this was an attempt by the Dilgar to get the Alliance to sign a non-aggression pact – the Dilgar would apologise profusely, and offer generous reparations with a non-aggression treaty;

the Centauri had already accepted such a bribe – but the destruction of the *Persephone* proved to EarthForce that the Dilgar were a considerable threat.

## The Dilgar War

**'The Hyach did not act when they came for the Abbai. The Balosians did not act when they came for the Hyach. The Brakiri did not act when they came for the Balosians. Now, they come for the Markab. Will humanity act?'**

**— Ambassador Kalika of the Abbai, addressing the Earth Alliance senate**

The campaign against the Dilgar Imperium is still the largest operation ever undertaken by EarthForce outside Alliance space. It solidified the Alliance's status as one of the great powers of the known galaxy, and brought numerous technological advances into the possession of EarthForce's scientists.

It was also the bloodiest, most brutal campaign ever fought by EarthForce, piling only in comparison to the Battle of the Line and the latter stages of the Minbari war.

The Dilgar invaded various League worlds from 2228 onwards. Rumours of war were picked up by Intelligence agents, but the war was initially dismissed as just a minor skirmish among the League races. The Dilgar were considered to be a minor race, incapable of

From March to November 2230, EarthForce ran the Starguard Program, a set of military exercises and practice battles against simulated foes that matched the profile of the Dilgar. Intelligence gathering was stepped up. Spies tracked the Dilgar forces as they conquered world after world. In most encounters, the Dilgar tactics were similar: an overwhelming Dilgar armada jumped into the system and launched a swift and bloody war on the enemy, with the express purpose of gaining space superiority as quickly as possible. The Dilgar fought with incredible ferocity, exhibiting little care for their own lives. Damaged Dilgar vessels often rammed enemy ships. 'Fireships' (severely damaged Dilgar craft or captured alien vessels packed with nuclear bombs) were sent flying into enemy formations.

Once the Dilgar had wiped out the enemy ships, they scanned the planet below and evaluated it to determine if it was suitable for colonisation. Up until they found the ideal world – the Mitoc homeworld – they then moved on, leaving a small but heavily armed garrison force in orbit to prevent the defeated enemy from rebuilding.

In later 2231, the Dilgar attacked the Markab; one of Earth's trading partners and allies. The Earth senate ordered EarthForce to intervene. The largest Earth fleet ever assembled outside the Sol system jumped for Markab space in January 2232.

## Phase One: The Markab Campaign

The initial EarthForce attack consisted of no less than 12 task groups, each of which consisted of four Hyperion-class command vessels accompanied by Avenger carriers, Sagittarius missile boats and Olympus corvettes. A large reserve group of older ships, such as Artemis frigates and Epithmetheus command ships, followed one jump behind, ready to be called in to support any of the task groups.

The priority for the Markab Campaign was reinforcing the Markab's border with Earth and ensuring that no Earth system was invaded by the Dilgar. The first two targets were Markab itself and the colony world of Tiree. As per their usual tactics, the Dilgar had hit Markab with overwhelming force, hoping to cripple the Markab with a single crushing blow. The nine task groups assigned to bolster the defence of Markab soon found themselves overrun and outnumbered. The reserve fleet was called in, leaving the remaining three task groups at Tiree without support.

The battle for Markab was bloody. The Dilgar had pushed the Markab fleets back to the homeworld and had then occupied a nearby asteroid belt. Dilgar vessels using mass drivers were slinging rocks at the world below. Markab vessels were forced to choose between fighting off Dilgar attackers and deflecting falling rocks. If the Markab failed to stop the incoming asteroids, millions would die on the planet below, but this left them highly vulnerable to Dilgar attack.

Task Group Baker jumped in-system and secured the jumpgate; the rest of the task force then left hyperspace via the gate and headed to relieve Markab. When they were informed of the Dilgar presence in the asteroid belt, the task force split in two, sending four groups to Markab and another five to the belt. The Markab had been waiting for aid from Earth, and as soon as the siege was lifted, hundred of Markab fighters swarmed up from the planet below. The few surviving Markab capital ships also emerged from their lunar bases, and the Dilgar forces in orbit were cut to pieces.

The battle at the asteroid belt was considerably less successful. The Dilgar had entrenched themselves, seeding the asteroids with mines and gun emplacements. Task Force Echo was destroyed almost instantly, when a mine detonated as the Hyperions and Avengers were launching their fighters. There were also considerably more Dilgar vessels present than had been detected; at this point in the war, the Dilgar were willing to leave crews in cold, weightless conditions for weeks at a time just to ensure they were not detected.

The commander of the task group, Admiral Greaves, ordered the reserve force to jump in. This proved to be a disastrous mistake – the old-style jump engines on the Epimetheuses were nowhere near as accurate as those on the Hyperions. Instead of coming in through the gate, the reserve force tried to jump into the middle of the asteroid belt. The reserve force ended up scattered over two million kilometres of space, with numerous vessels emerging into debris fields. The battle was still won by EarthForce, but at an unacceptable cost.

Meanwhile, at Tiree, Task Groups Tango, Oscar and Zebra found themselves heavily outnumbered by Dilgar forces. Under the command of Admiral Hamato, Zebra was used to repeatedly draw Dilgar hunting parties off their patrol routes. The other groups would then destroy the Dilgar vessels, before all three fled to another part of the system. This sort of hit-and-run tactic made little impact on the Dilgar fleet as a whole – the invaders simply had too many ships – but it did tie them up in knots. Tiree's relief had to wait until the Markab fleet, fuelled by a thirst for vengeance and divine wrath, exploded out of the jumpgate and swept the Dilgar from the system.

The Dilgar retreated to the third Markab system, the barely habitable worlds orbiting the star Troth. The Markab pursued them, but the Dilgar swiftly reformed their forces and handed the Markab a bloody defeat. A second attack on Troth was co-ordinated with Admiral Greaves, and this time the Dilgar were forced to leave Markab space.

The first phase of the war was over.

Opinion was divided on what should be done next. Many in EarthGov believed that EarthForce should just fortify the border in case the Dilgar tried again, but that the threat was essentially gone and the Dilgar would now content themselves with consolidating their new empire. However, most were convinced that the Dilgar were a significant danger to the Alliance and that their power must be broken completely.

Admiral Hamato proposed what became known as the 'Liberation Chain Strategy' – a fleet that would travel from conquered world to conquered world, defeating the Dilgar at each planet and assimilating the strength of the conquered planet into the fleet. The Dilgar's blitzkrieg tactics meant that while they could effectively remove a race from the war at great speed, by smashing through defending fleets and capturing the starbases and repair facilities, they never completely destroyed the enemy's strength. The Hurr, for example, had been crippled by the Dilgar strike at the shipyards at Hurr'roga, which left the Hurr republic without anywhere to repair and rearm their

ships. However, there were still dozens of Hurr ships that could join the war, if they were offered space at, say, a Drazi shipyard.

On October 4<sup>th</sup>, 2232, the order to form the Earth Expeditionary Fleet was issued. The largest space fleet ever assembled, consisting of over 500 capital ships, launched under the command of Fleet Admiral Hamato.

### *Lessons from History #12*

#### **WHAT IF EARTH NEVER ENTERED THE DILGAR WAR - 2232**

While it is unlikely that Earth would ever have stayed out of the conflict – the groundswell of public opinion after the speech by the *Pyrotinia* envoys (a group of ambassadors and survivors from races conquered by the Dilgar, who travelled known space trying to gather support for a war against the invaders) ensured that – there were many in EarthGov who feared that the Earth Expeditionary Force would be a disastrously costly mistake. They argued that the Dilgar had already overextended their ability to maintain an empire, and could never threaten Earth space.

Indeed, the Dilgar supply lines were strained to the limit, and their fleet was almost exhausted. Furthermore, they had to move billions of the citizens from their doomed homeworld of Omelos to their new colony on Mitoc. Attacking the strong Earth Alliance would likely have led to the destruction of the Dilgar.

However, the Dilgar's rapid expansion would have brought them into contact with the Centauri. The Republic were already aware of the Dilgar Imperium, and many in the Centauri court were privately expressing their admiration for the ruthlessness of the Dilgar. Several races conquered by the Dilgar were former subjects of the Centauri. Intelligence suggested that there was a high chance that the Centauri would have allied with the Dilgar and turned them on the Narn. Dilgar numbers and ferocity coupled with Centauri technology could have been a devastating combination. The Narn would doubtless have been the first target of this alliance, but Earth would then have been pressured to join or submit.

## **Phase Two: The Earth Expeditionary Force**

The original intent was for the Expeditionary Force to make a series of quick raids on Dilgar-held worlds, freeing the conquered races and letting them drive the Dilgar from the local system while the fleet moved onwards. In practice, the old League ties and a desire for vengeance drove the freed races to join the Earth armada, and Hamato soon found himself leading what became known as the Liberation Navy, a loose coalition of ships from a dozen species, all united by the desire to defeat the Dilgar menace.

The Earth Expeditionary Force's (EEF) first engagement with the Dilgar was in the T'lad'tha system, a minor colony of the Descari. The Dilgar had tagged the Descari for conquest, but the defeat in the Markab domain had put the Descari invasion on hold. The Dilgar force at T'lad'tha was mostly composed of scoutships and raiders. It was heavily outnumbered and outgunned by the EEF.

Hamato ordered the fleet to encircle the Dilgar force. The new Nova-type starfuries raced ahead of the retreating Dilgar, blocking their retreat. Sagittarius missile carriers bombarded the Dilgar, crippling their engines. The few enemy ships that managed to jump to hyperspace were captured by a detachment of the new Nova-class destroyers, which were deployed in combat for the first time by the EEF. The captured Dilgar vessels were shipped back to Earth for analysis and reverse-engineering; Hamato was aware that this war would likely drag on for years, and that understanding the enemy was key to a quick victory. The Dilgar vessels captured during this and later encounters did give Earth access to new technologies, as well as a look at ships designed by a race that had been in space for a long period of time.

Earth's inexperience with long space campaigns would come to the fore during the Dilgar War. The Olympus and Artemis-class ships would both be heavily retrooled after the war, as their railgun armaments proved too dependant on ammunition to fight a prolonged war. The EEF learned about the difficulties of repairing vessels in space without using a shipyard, about new techniques for cannibalising existing vessels for spare parts, about dealing with prolonged exposure to both hyperspace and zero-gravity and so on. When the EEF returned to Earth space after the war, this accumulated knowledge was distributed throughout the fleet – the EEF essentially formed the heart of the post-war EarthForce. Between that triumphant return and the battle at T'lad'tha was over two years of hard campaigning.



After T'lad'tha, the fleet made an unsuccessful attempt to bring the Descari into the war. This was rejected by the Descari High Command, although they did provide vital intelligence that the Dilgar were transporting millions of foot troops from Omelos to conquered worlds. Admiral Hamato dispatched a small flotilla back to Earth space to escort 'as many GROPOS as we can put out here' back to the EEF. Meanwhile, the EEF jumped into the next target – Cascan.

The Cascori Commonwealth was considered the template for the EEF's mission. The Cascori fleet had suffered only minor losses, but was scattered and their homeworld was occupied by Dilgar forces. If any Cascori vessel approached the homeworld without permission, the Dilgar had warned, then biological weapons would be fired from orbit, killing billions. The EEF used captured Dilgar vessels from T'lad'tha to get a strike team close to the Dilgar satellites containing the bio-plagues. Marines then boarded the stations in a surprise attack, disabling the launchers, at the same time the fleet jumped in-system and attacked. A diversionary attack from the jumpgate divided the defending forces, leaving them vulnerable to the main attack – the bulk of the EEF opened their own jump vortices and appeared behind the Dilgar. The Nova teams – Nova destroyers and Nova Starfuries – demonstrated their unparalleled firepower by pounding the Dilgar ships into scrap without minutes of jumping in.

The Dilgar Third Punitive Armada was pacifying the Cascori colony of Zachai, and attacked two weeks after the EEF freed Cascan. This was the most brutal battle of the campaign so far – the Armada contained heavier Dilgar warships than had been encountered thus far, and the Earth vessels were running light on ammunition. Fortunately, the Cascori had managed to reassemble much of their fleet, and while their ships were no match for the Dilgar vessels, they did tip the balance of power towards Earth – especially when it transpired that the Cascori were willing to ram the Dilgar.

From Cascan, scouts were sent to the Mitoc system, where they discovered the bulk of the Dilgar fleet and a sizeable proportion of their population. The few scouts to make it back reported that Mitoc was a virtually unassailable fortress world. Admiral Hamato conferred with the Cascori and the newly arrived Markab fleets, who both informed him that Mitoc lacked the industrial base to support such a force. Hamato reasoned that the Dilgar must be supplying Mitoc from their established coreward colonies. He therefore ordered that the fleet head for the Ipsha Baronies instead of taking the jump route to Mitoc, in the hopes of breaking Mitoc's supply routes.

This decision was undoubtedly controversial – the Dilgar were engaged in a comprehensive program of genocide against the Mitocians, and not only did this leave the

Mitocians open to the Dilgar pogroms, it also stretched the EEF's own supply lines to breaking point. Still, the chances of the EEF conquering Mitoc in December of 2232 were slim.

The Ipsha Baronies were relatively lightly garrisoned by the Dilgar, who were concentrating on pushing spinward around the borders of the Narn regime and breaking the Drazi defences at Drathun, Latig and Zhabar. The EEF was again able to break the Dilgar hold on Ipsha and Elitria without too many losses. The third baronial colony, that of Eklor, was a much more troublesome proposition. The Dilgar dug in on the planet surface, using both conventional weapons and tailored mutagen weapons that did not affect Dilgar but caused other races to die horribly. The newly arrived GROPOS forces from Earth were sent straight into 'Eklor Hell'. The battles in the swamps of Eklor were indeed hellish; while the Dilgar were able to blend into the jungle, the human troops were forced to fight in heavy environment suits to protect them from Dilgar bioweapons. Most of the GROPOS' vehicles were useless in the swamps, but they were able to adapt Ipshan hovercraft to serve as light assault vehicles.

The combined fleet (which was beginning to call itself the Liberation Navy) of Earth, the Markab, Cascori, Ipshans and refugees from the Abbai, Balosians, Hyach and Brakiri now moved to liberate the Hyach worlds. Here, the

Dilgar demonstrated the first hints of their scorched earth policy; as they were driven from the colony of Yonag, they unleashed more genetically engineered plagues that wiped out almost all life on the colony. This actually proved to be the downfall of the garrison on Shri-Shaba, as the population panicked and rebelled, leaving the Liberation Navy with a divided Dilgar force to defeat.

The encirclement of Mitoc was completed in the spring offensive against the Brakiri worlds. The fleet took a circuitous route, jumping through Sector 83 to engage the Dilgar fleet at Zagros before retreating to the then-unclaimed system of Quadrant 7. They then attacked Ekalta colony. This long route had its drawbacks – the fleet's supplies were running horribly low. Even food was short, and an attempt to supplement the human troops' supplies with Hyachi food led to a spate of disease on board ships. Hamato had the affected crews quarantined on board the increasingly useless Artemis and Olympus vessels. The worst affected ships were ordered to head home through Narn space. Most made it home, although four vessels were captured by the Narn and held as prisoners until the end of the war.

The Dilgar now diverted forces from the Drazi frontier to hunt down the EEF. The battles at Ekalta and Brakos were the largest yet, with hundreds of ships fighting on both sides. The Dilgar had learned to counter many of the



Alliance's tactics and weapons, and their technological edge coupled with their near-suicidal ferocity made them an increasingly dangerous foe. Losses climbed and the morale of the fleet began to sink. Co-ordinating the Liberation Navy was also proving difficult, as few of the alien races were willing to follow Hamato's orders. Defeating the Dilgar would require precisely co-ordinated attacks, which were impossible with such a rag-tag force.

By late summer of 2232, Hamato convinced the Liberation Navy to concentrate on freeing the races spinward and anti-spinward of the original Dilgar colonies, like the Abbai and the Balosians, while the EEF concentrated on destroying the Dilgar fortress worlds. The Liberation Navy had swollen to a vast size, and was already drawing attention from the Dilgar high command. Hamato hit on a daring plan – Mitoc's supplies were running low, and the Dilgar ships there lacked the repair facilities to fully rearm themselves. The Dilgar were obviously gambling that they could assemble a re-supply fleet before the Liberation Navy hit Mitoc; the world was so heavily fortified that taking it quickly was impossible.

Admiral Hamato believed that it was possible to take Mitoc now.

### **Phase Three: The Fall of Mitoc**

The fortress world of Mitoc was surrounded by hundreds of orbital defence satellites and Dilgar vessels. Over two million of the Dilgar population had already been moved to the planet, with thousands more in orbital factories and in colony ships that had yet to land. The Mitoc jumpgate was surrounded with automated mines that identified enemy ships and latched onto them before detonating against the hull. The Mitoc species had been almost wiped out with a tailored plague; the few survivors were in internment camps where the Dilgar geneticists continued to experiment on them.

Admiral Hamato's strategy centred on the Dilgar need for hydrogen for their fusion reactors. There was no easy source of the substance in the Mitoc system, and the Dilgar had yet to build a processing plant that could convert the Mitocian oceans into hydrogen. The best source of usable hydrogen was a gas giant in the Krish system. While the Krish themselves had never been conquered by the Dilgar, the Dilgar did have a hydrogen processing station in orbit. The EEF's assault on Mitoc began with the taking of this station. The station crew were deliberately allowed to send out a distress call.

Over the next few weeks, the Dilgar made no less than 12 attempts to retake the system. Each time, they were forced to commit more ships and allowed to get slightly closer to the hydrogen tanks. Hamato's plan concentrated on bleeding the Dilgar dry of fuel. On the 13<sup>th</sup> attempt, the Dilgar were allowed to seize the hydrogen tanks – which had been rigged with explosives. Fortunately, the Dilgar did not have time to check the tanks before jumping back towards Mitoc, and the resulting explosion crippled a dozen capital ships that were crammed into the one spacedock in the system that was advanced enough to handle them.

The war for Mitoc had begun.

Again bypassing the jumpgate, the Expeditionary Force jumped in with the heavy Nova destroyers as a spearhead. Earth tactics centred on drawing the Dilgar away from Mitoc itself and its orbital guns. The Dilgar were loath to fall for this bait, but they lacked the fuel for a lengthy fight and lacked the missiles for a long-ranged slugging match. If they were to hold Mitoc, they had to use their greater numbers to destroy the attackers now.

The battle of Mitoc is the textbook use of long-range weapons and mass fleet manoeuvres. The Alliance vessels are arranged in doubled-layered formations; as the Dilgar advance, the lead formation retreats, while the rear formation provides covering fire. Once the lead formation is well past the line, it flips around and the other formation now pulls back, drawing the enemy further and further into the trap. If the enemy maintains a full burn, then they will become caught between the two formations; if they advance slowly, they will get picked apart by long-range weapons.

The Dilgar fell for the bait, and were handed a bloody defeat. Their commanders kept the fleet together and fell back to Mitoc, where they refused to come out from behind their protective rampart of defence satellites. The EEF was forced to slowly and methodically blast a hole in the grid that was large enough to send Condor assault craft through. This operation was as costly as the battle of Zachai, and this time there were few friendly alien ships to take the pressure off the Earth fleet. Over 20 Nova-class capital ships were destroyed, and over a quarter of the fleet was crippled or forced to retreat. The GROPOS then managed to fight their way to the planetside control centre and disable the defence grid.

Then, the Dilgar nuked the planet.

### *Lessons from History #13*

#### **MASS TROOP MOVEMENTS IN SPACE**

Contact with alien races has exposed humanity to a whole new spectrum of diseases. Space stations are especially rife with viruses; dozens of alien races crammed into a confined space, sharing air and water at the very least makes such places a breeding ground for mutations. Keeping a fighting body of troops in full health is exceedingly difficult. Modern inoculations and bacteriological counter-measures reduce the chance of infection, but while these solutions can protect traders and diplomats in controlled conditions, they are less effective when applied to a few thousand troops sitting in a fetid alien swamp.

Current army protocol calls for the use of biowarfare suits and food concentrate in any situation involving widespread contact with aliens during wartime. While difficult and costly, it does ensure an army is not wiped out by a stomach bug.

To this day, it is unsure if the nuclear firestorm that swept over Mitoc was a trap that went off too early, or some sort of suicidal gesture from the Dilgar. The blast killed the few remaining Mitoc as well as the millions of Dilgar colonists. Most of the GROPOS were also killed in the blast, although a few managed to hide in bunkers and merely suffered the after-effects of the bombs. The surviving Dilgar fleet fled; however, the EEF was in no shape to follow them.

The most damaged vessels were ordered to fall back to Earth space, while those who just needed basic repairs headed for Cascor or Markab. The remainder of the fleet rejoined the Liberation Navy, who were pushing through Drazi space.

#### **Phase Four: The Maelstrom**

The loss of Mitoc and the promised Dilgar was supposed to break the Imperium's will to fight. Earth analysts believed that the Dilgar would have to sue for peace, that continuing to fight would collapse the Dilgar economy. They did not know about the impending death of Omelos' sun; there could be no peace or surrender. The Dilgar ploughed all the dwindling resources of their empire into building another fleet of ships. A renewed assault took many of the worlds freed by the Liberation Navy and drove the alliance back.

The EEF, already divided into three sections, was scattered even more. Hamato's command group was ambushed by Dilgar hunter-killers and forced to jump out, leaving the combat-ready portion of the fleet behind. A series of Dilgar attacks resulted in the fleet being divided between a half-dozen systems. Even with the records of the various vessels involved, it is difficult to create a coherent picture of this phase of the war. The fleet fought a bloody retreat back across the Brakiri worlds. There were no huge battles, no grand schemes, just a series of small engagements and a bitter sleeplessness as crews faced attack at any moment. Morale plummeted once more, and the Liberation Navy began to fracture as different alien races forgot their hatred of the Dilgar and remembered their hatred of each other.

The infamous attack on Balos happened during the Maelstrom. The Dilgar forces were massing at Balos to attack the Drazi. Hamato used elements of the Free Balosian Navy to draw the Dilgar out, while the EEF waited to ambush the Dilgar forces as they had done at Mitoc. More units of GROPOS were ready to break through the gap in the defences and sow chaos on the planet below.

The Dilgar recognised Hamato's strategy and jumped out early in the fight. By then, the GROPOS had already launched and were en route to the planet. The Dilgar fleet returned with even greater numbers, forcing the EEF to retreat and trapping seven divisions on Balos. The repaired ships returning from the Cascori and Markab repair yards volunteered to go in and rescue the trapped soldiers, but Hamato forbade it. Instead, he contacted EarthForce Command and requested reinforcements.

The earliest fruits of the captured Dilgar technology had been new variants of support ships like the Cotton, but now EarthForce was ready to put new warship variants into play. The reinforcements sent by Earth included a flight of Hecates, new variants of the Olympus and Artemis without the crippling ammunition shortages, new fighter and carrier types, as well as another 20 Nova-class destroyers. This massive fleet was accompanied by the Second Expeditionary Army, composed of another 50 divisions of GROPOS backed up by tanks and heavy artillery. The true prizes of this second fleet, however, were a trio of Dionysus mid-range bases that gave the EEF repair facilities in the field.

These bases were towed to Brakos V, in the Brakiri system, and paid what the Brakiri referred to as a 'very nominal rent'. Hamato spent three months integrating his new assets into the EEF and gathering intelligence on the new Dilgar forces. The first priority had to be



rescuing the trapped soldiers on Balos, but EarthForce also wanted the EEF to deliver a final knockout blow to the Dilgar. The loss of Mitoc had embittered the already nigh-psychotic Dilgar species – if they were going to be wiped out, then they would take half the galaxy with them. Several occupied races suffered under Dilgar experimental programs as the Warleaders instituted new programs of organised genocide. Still, Hamato held back, waiting until his fleet was ready.

Soldiers referred to this period as the ‘eye of the maelstrom’, a calm between storms.

Finally, the Dilgar discovered the Earth base in the Brakiri system and launched a surprise raid. Their raiders were heavily outnumbered thanks to the new ships, and while they did manage to severely damage one of the Dionysus bases, they were wiped out without leaving any survivors.

The EEF jumped out within days of the raid, backtracking it along the jump routes to Balos. They had adopted the Dilgar blitzkrieg tactics, and were ready to put them in operation. Balos was the keystone for the Dilgar efforts against the Drazi and the spinward worlds, so taking Balos would collapse the entire Dilgar offensive. The

planet was as heavily defended as Mitoc had been, but this time Hamato had an ace in a literal hole – the GROPOS abandoned there four months earlier. The soldiers had managed to link up with the Balosian resistance in the vast network of tunnels beneath the planet’s surface, and emerged to sabotage Dilgar communications and command networks when the attack took place.

The EEF wiped out the Dilgar patrols, then pushed towards the planet. When the GROPOS took down the satellite defence grid, the fleet surged forward, dropping its Condors even as it engaged the Dilgar forces in orbit. A war raged above and below the atmosphere of Balos.

Balos fell at the end of November, 2232.

## Phase Five: The Siege of Omelos

By now, the Dilgar had been pushed back to their original borders – the Omelos system and their marginal colonies at Alaca and Tirrith (also known as Tithalis by the Drazi, who stubbornly clung to their own name for the system for decades). The fall of Balos allowed the Drazi fleets to pour out of their space and invade that of the Dilgar.

While the Drazi attacked Tirrith, the EEF and portions of the Liberation Navy attacked Alaca – or tried to. Alaca had been abandoned by the Dilgar; the planet had been stripped of its defences and nuked down to the bedrock. The Drazi found the same at the Tirrith system, and their invasion fleet immediately jumped onto Omelos itself – where they were summarily blasted into scrap by the entirety of the surviving Dilgar fleet. The Dilgar had pulled every ship and defensive weapon back to their home system. They also blew up their jumpgate.

The Liberation Navy joined with the EEF and planning began for an assault on Dilgar. Isolated pockets of Dilgar resistance on dozens of worlds were wiped out by GROPOS teams; it would be after 2236 before the last Dilgar holdouts were captured. Planning for the invasion of Omelos occupied the fleet for three weeks. This time, there could be no clever plans or bluffs, nor was there any chance of sending strike teams in to disable the defence grid as had been done at Mitoc and Balos. A direct frontal assault was the only viable option.

Military doctrine states that an attacker needs a greater than three-to-one advantage in firepower and troops to take a fortified position with acceptable losses. The Liberation Navy was slightly less than twice as big as the Dilgar fleet. The siege of Omelos promised to be incredibly bloody. In the hopes of minimising casualties, Hamato decided to lead the assault with the Nova destroyers. These vessels were the toughest and most powerful available to the EEF, and had had great success against even the heavier Dilgar ships earlier in the war.

In late 2232, the EEF jumped in.

The battle at Omelos has been described as the galaxy's largest dogfight. Dilgar scouts in hyperspace detected the approaching fleet, and signalled the location of the jump vortices to the defending ships. The EEF were attacked the moment they appeared in realspace; the Nova spearhead was scattered, leaving the rest of the fleet open to attack from the Dilgar dreadnoughts. While no plan survives contact with the enemy, the plan for the siege on Omelos collapsed in the first second of its execution.

Long-range fire from the Dilgar satellites wreaked heavy casualties on the EEF, forcing Hamato to order his ships to fire on Omelos itself. At that range, it was impossible to target only the satellites – missiles and particle beams struck the planet surface itself, inflicting mass casualties on the Dilgar civilians. The Dilgar responded by having their damaged ships ram opposing vessels. Casualty rates skyrocketed, especially when the other races started doing the same. There was no quarter, no mercy in the siege.

Admiral Hamato's flagship was rammed by the Dilgar, as they targeted the Novas with a hail of small merchant ships accelerated to high speed and loaded with bombs or worse – Dilgar genetic engineering had created a breed of Dilgar warrior that lived for only a few hours when 'activated', but were inhumanly fast, strong and capable of surviving exposure to vacuum. With Hamato's death, the leadership of the fleet fell to Vice Admiral Cotter, but her vessel's communications system was damaged, and co-ordination of the EEF collapsed.

A detachment of Liberation Navy ships broke through the Dilgar lines and began firing on the planet. Unlike the earlier attacks on the planet, these blasts were aimed directly at the Dilgar capitals and cities. Dilgar vessels broke away from the main battle to destroy this detachment; the lines of the Imperium's fleet collapsed as more and more ships changed course to defend Omelos itself.

The remnants of the Dilgar fleet fled 68 hours after the battle began, and they would be hunted down over the next four years. GROPOS units were sent to pacify the planet, but the care and overseeing of the defeated population was given over to the League of Non-Aligned Worlds (although human observers did say on to ensure the basic rights of the Dilgar were honoured). The EEF began the long voyage back to alliance space in July of 2233.

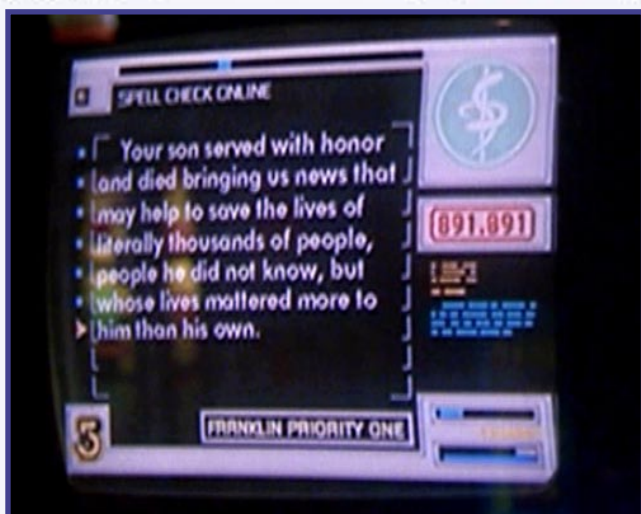
The war was over.

## Rebuilding

**'We have lost the man who led us into the void of space, into the fires of battle, into the heart of darkness itself - and whose shining spirit was the beacon that brought us home. We shall not see his like again in this generation.'**

### — Eulogy at the funeral of Fleet Admiral Hamato

The fleet returned to Earth space in 2233. It had been reduced to less than a third of its original strength. Hundreds of ships had been destroyed, while other still functional vessels had proved themselves inadequate to the demands of modern warfare. Still, the Navy had learned a great deal about space combat, while salvaged ships from the Dilgar and League fleets brought new technologies to EarthForce R&D. The EEF's crews were broken up



and reassigned all over the fleet, so the techniques learned during the long war were spread to the rest of EarthForce. A new generation of officers experienced in dealing with alien races and long-term space travel rose up, drawn from the veterans of the Dilgar War.

One of the major advances was the development of the Aurora-class Starfury, a redevelopment of the old Nova that incorporated Dilgar-designed stabilisers and combat software. The other great prize of the war was pulse cannon technology, which quickly became one of the primary weapons used by many Alliance designs.

Beyond mere technology, however, the Dilgar War had changed EarthForce forever. Earth had successfully intervened in the affairs of the galaxy, winning the respect of the League and putting themselves on a par with the two current great powers – the Narn and the Centauri. EarthGov's foreign policy began to change, becoming more open to more interventions and peacekeeping operations. New ship designs were tested in clashes with Drazi rebels, with raiders, during the hunt for the surviving Dilgar, and in dozens of minor police actions within and just outside the borders of the Alliance.

Spin-off technologies from the war and the reconstruction effort re-energised the sluggish Earth economy, which was then able to take advantage of the massive market offered by the League's rebuilding. EarthForce vessels were soon seen escorting massive trade convoys from Proxima and Earth.

While the Army had suffered only minor losses during the Dilgar War, command decided to re-equip the ground forces with a new generation of tanks and ground vehicles. Ground attacks during the Dilgar War had suffered terrible logistic problems; the Army was still using vehicles drawn from the vehicle pools of the various nation-states that

contributed troops, so different divisions used different and incompatible tank models. Shipping spare parts and supplies across tens of parsecs had proved extraordinary difficult during the war, so the Army switched over to using a single basis chassis on which different mission-specific turrets could be mounted.

## The New Frontier

**'We're fighting bugs! This is the moment I was born for!'**

**— Anonymous soldier during the battle of Ceti Gamma**

By 2237, EarthForce had largely rebuilt the Navy, and the pressures of population and industrial demand for supplies called for a new phase of exploration. The first prototypes of the mighty Explorer-class vessels were built, and several Hyperions and Novas were given over to the newly formed Explorer Corps. EarthForce signed a new contract with salvage corporations like IPX, getting first refusal on any military technology uncovered by their efforts.

EarthForce constructed a new network of hyperspace communications relays throughout the Alliance, linking distant outposts in near-real time communication with Earth. Logistics bases and defence satellites were constructed on dozens of worlds.

As EarthForce pushed out, they encountered races such as the Pak'ma'ra and Moradi, all of whom were cowed by the military might of the Alliance. The fleet seemed virtually invincible; with the Centauri in slow decline and the Narn locked in a fruitless cold war with their old oppressors, the Earth Alliance seemed poised for ascendancy over known space. By 2245, the Earth Alliance had pushed far beyond its original borders and had eclipsed the still-mighty Centauri republic as the pre-eminent military and economic power of the known galaxy.

The most notable clash of the period was the brief 'Bug War' of 2240, when the Gaim decided to test the Alliance's resolve. A surprise attack was launched on Ceti Gamma, and tens of thousands of Gaim warriors flooded onto the planet. GROPOS teams reinforced the colonial defences and the Gaim were beaten back. The aliens abandoned their defeated foot troops, and instead sent diplomats to sign a non-aggression pact with the Alliance. EarthForce intelligence suspect that the attack was a test that Earth had passed, although why the Gaim chose such a risky method to engage humanity remains a mystery for the xenopsychologists.

## The Minbari War

**‘Your mission is to patrol the systems spinwards of Regula, looking for any vessels, colonies, probes, stations or other installations belonging to the race called the Minbari. You are to examine any such installations found to determine the Minbari’s level of technology, and if possible make first contact with the Minbari and determine their attitude towards the Earth Alliance...’**

### — Orders given to the Battle Group Demosthenes

The Earth-Minbari War began in the Drala Toth system, then referred to by Earth as Gamma Omega. The incident that triggered the war has been analysed and discussed hundreds of thousands of times since then, especially in the wake of the bizarre ending of the war.

The Battle Group *Demosthenes*, consisting of two Hyperions (*Amundsen* and *Hyperion*) and the Nova-class *Prometheus* was on exploratory patrol beyond Vega. Part of their mission was making first contact with the Minbari. Intelligence reports on the Minbari were fragmentary and largely contradictory; the Centauri had warned that the Minbari were an ancient and very powerful race that should not be disturbed, while the few League races willing to speak described the Minbari as virtual demigods whose motives and technology defied comprehension. Captain Jankowski was briefed on this analysis, whose flawed conclusion was that the Minbari were likely a ‘paper tiger’, whose empire was in even greater decline than that of the Centauri and who were coasting on past glories and strengths.

On July 12<sup>th</sup>, 2245, the *Demosthenes* group detected a flotilla of alien ships at the edge of sensor range. Jankowski ordered the ships to change course to intercept and investigate the unidentified vessels. The advanced Minbari sensors detected the approach of the Earth vessels.

As the Earth vessels drew near, they were buffeted by a powerful wave of electromagnetic energy that scrambled sensor readings, crashed unshielded computer systems and disrupted the functioning of the jump engines. The few

functional sensors were able to detect that the Minbari had opened their gun ports, but could not determine whether or not the Minbari had charged their weapon systems.

Jankowski gave the order to fire, believing that the balance of probability suggested that the Minbari were hostile. There have been two separate inquiries into this incident; the first concluded that Jankowski’s judgement was flawed, but the second exonerated him and agreed that he acted in the best interests of his crew’s safety. The initial barrage severely damaged the largest of the Minbari vessels, disabling its drive systems and more of its weaponry.

The Minbari returned fire. The *Amundsen* was destroyed, and both the *Prometheus* and *Hyperion* were heavily damaged and forced to retreat into hyperspace. Their long-range communications systems had both been destroyed, so Jankowski ordered the two ships to split up in order to ensure that at least one made it back to warn the Alliance. The Minbari paused only briefly to gather an invasion fleet, and then began the chase.

## Phase One: the Fall of the Outer Colonies

The Minbari traced the fleeing vessels from Drala Toth. The *Hyperion* had retraced the route taken by the task force, jumping from Gamma Omega (Drala Toth) to Beta 4 to Quadrant 15 to Regula and then onto Vega. Meanwhile, the *Prometheus* had jumped into the uncharted system of Gamma Theta, which turned out to be the Minbari world of Tarellan. The *Prometheus* caught a glimpse of a ‘vast fleet’ – the Tarellan garrison force. Tarellan is the oldest extant Minbari colony, and is commensurately well defended. Jankowski assumed that the fleet was massing for an attack on Earth space, and jumped out again heading for the Jericho colony.

Minbari scout-ships probed the dangerous region of hyperspace between the Federation and the Earth Alliance, and discovered a small EarthForce base at Regula. This base had been established four months earlier – both the Centauri and the Alliance claimed Regular, and the base was there to back up the territorial claim. It was little more than a monitoring station, but was blasted to scrap by the Minbari. An EarthForce intelligence team investigated the ruins after the base stopped transmitting and concluded that the Minbari were willing to fire on planet-bound targets. Of course, by the time they made that report, the Minbari had already hit Vega and Jericho.

Jericho colony had a single EarthForce base and only a handful of ships. The Minbari fleet that jumped in consisted of a dozen Sharlin-class warships and accompanying

support vessels and fighters. The EarthForce vessels were outnumbered, but expected to buy enough time for the whole colony to be evacuated – after all, Jericho had a small and highly mobile population who could pull out in only a few hours. However, the battle lasted less than five minutes, as neither the EarthForce Hyperions nor their Starfuries could lock onto the Sharlins or Nials. The entire EarthForce battle group was destroyed without firing a single accurate shot, and almost all the colony ships that launched failed to reach the jumpgate.

The few ships that did make it out fled to Cyrus, where a larger EarthForce defence fleet was waiting. The Alliance also deactivated the Beta Durani beacon after the fleet had passed, to prevent the Minbari from locating the short jump route to Earth. The battle at Cyrus III was as unproductive and terrifying as the battle at Jericho, with the Alliance vessels being unable to significantly damage the Minbari cruisers.

The ground forces at Cyrus III met with more success; the mining colony had thousands of miles of underground tunnels, and the miners and army forces retreated into these, hiding from the Minbari warriors. The tunnel war on Cyrus would last until the Battle of the Line.

Meanwhile, the main Minbari attack fleet arrived at Vega. The *Hyperion* had reached the system three months before the Minbari, so the colony had had time to organise a sturdy defence. The commander of the defence force, Admiral Bohase, was aware of the Minbari's stealth technology and attempted to fight the battle in close quarters around the moons of Vega. The power of the Minbari Nial fighters was demonstrated in this encounter, as the Nials swept in, wiped out the fleet's Starfury defenders, then crippled the weapons systems of Bohase's Novas. By the time the Sharlins closed to weapons range, the Novas were toothless and unable to significantly damage the Minbari.

Sinzar was the next world to fall. The Minbari invaded in February of 2246. This time, they appeared to have considerably better intelligence about the nature of the colony there (Intelligence believes that the Centauri were sharing some data with the Minbari), and attempted to just cripple the ice mining station there instead of bombarding the agricultural colony. However, when the 3<sup>rd</sup> Battalion of the 16<sup>th</sup> Colonials took refuge in the equatorial farming colony, the Minbari began a largely indiscriminate bombardment of the planet.

Another six months would pass before the Minbari attacked another Earth colony. Some believed that the war was over, and that the Minbari were satisfied with the blood shed in their attacks on the outer colonies. In

### *Lessons from History #14*

#### **THE TUNNEL WARS - 2245**

The tunnels on Cyrus are one of the most infamous battlefields of the Earth Alliance, having been the site of bloody battles during both the Minbari invasion and the Canal Wars. The narrow confines of the tunnels meant that most fighting was undertaken by individual platoons or squads; most engagements involved no more than 20 fighters on either side.

However, the Tunnel Wars can also be accurately described as a series of massive engagements involving thousands of troops. The actions of hundreds of platoons were co-ordinated through electronic means. The location of every soldier on the battlefield can be tracked; everything they see and hear can be captured by helmet-mounted video cameras and microphones and fed into a virtual representation of the battlefield, overlaid onto a holographic map of the tunnel network.

This is not a one-way transaction; a GROPO in the tunnel could tag a Minbari target as particularly important or hostile, and this data would also be fed into the Matrix, building up as detailed a tactical analysis as possible and giving the officers the opinions of the troops on the ground. Despite advances in artificial intelligence and information gathering, there is still no analysis method superior to the trained soldier's reading of a tactical situation, nor is there a sensor better than the human being. Therefore, technological advancements in EarthForce have concentrated on preserving and enhancing the flow of human intelligence instead of replacing it.

### *Lessons from History #15*

#### **THE OZ PROTOCOL - HIDING EARTH - 2247**

Keeping the Minbari from locating the Sol system quickly became an overriding priority for EarthForce. The jump beacon network had to be shut down, otherwise the Minbari could just follow the beacons to the inhabited worlds and search each of them. By deactivating the beacons, the Minbari were forced to search every system by scanning hyperspace for the gravitational eddies caused by a stellar mass, jumping to realspace and slowly searching the system for signs of human habitation. Of course, the beacon network could not be deactivated completely without shutting

down all interstellar travel within the Alliance. Therefore, a system of pulsed beacons was introduced – the beacon at, say, Proxima, would be activated for a few seconds each day, and ships would use this to navigate for some time before holding position and waiting for the next burst. Navigation books were issued to Earth vessels, allowing them to calculate a bearing for any given gate based on their current location and currently active beacon.

The other races were asked not to reveal information on Earth to the Minbari; this was a largely redundant request, as the Minbari never bothered asking for directions.

The colonies' databases and books were searched for any record relating to the location of Earth, and these references were deleted. EarthForce ships were ordered not to retreat towards Earth if possible. For most of the war, EarthForce assumed that the target of the Minbari invasion was the homeworld itself. In truth, it was a war of genocide that would not have stopped with Earth's destruction, but the loss of Earth would have completely destroyed the Alliance.

truth, the reason for the delay was two-fold. Firstly, the Minbari scout force had headed rimwards from Jericho, prowling around the borders of Koulani space thanks to the deactivation of the Beta Durani beacon. Secondly, the Minbari offensive thus far had consisted of whatever ships the Minbari could muster on the spur of the moment. The new fleet being assembled under the flag of the *Drala Fi* (*Black Star*) was vastly more powerful, being composed of the best ships of the Warrior caste.

## Phase Two: The Trail of Tears

The next contact with the Minbari came at Cyrus once again. Believing the Minbari had left due to the lack of attacks in the last four months, a relief force was dispatched from Beta Durani. The relief force discovered a considerable Minbari presence in the system, including both space and ground elements. Before being engaged and destroyed, the relief force did determine that the Minbari were occupying but not colonising the system. It was a war of genocide, not conquest.

Martial law was declared across the Earth Alliance, and a new set of protocols was put in place. Jump beacons were

deactivated or scrambled; vessels were ordered to hold position in hyperspace for as long as possible between beacon pulses. The midrange colonies of Orion, Promixa and Beta 7 were heavily reinforced and the exploratory ships were recalled. Every shipyard was switched to turning out military vessels, and new designs like the Cyclops were rushed into production. Older vessels were taken out of mothballs and refitted with new weapons.

The Minbari were expected to hit Proxima next, but the first invasion of the second stage of the war came at Deneb. The EarthForce defenders were better equipped, but the Minbari fleet was much more powerful than before. The *Drala Fi* tore through the Deneb fleet with terrifying ease. Colony after colony was evacuated, with as many colonists being lost in hyperspace due to the beacon blackout as were killed by the Minbari. A draft was instituted on Earth, as ground forces had proved marginally more effective against the aggressors than the Navy.

While the Minbari continued their methodical assault, taking colony after colony, the renewed offensive also incorporated long-range strikes by small Minbari forces deep into Earth space. Many of these vicious sorties were led by the *Black Star*. The one victory against the Minbari came during as part of one of these sorties. The *Lexington*, a Hyperion-class ship, managed to seed an asteroid field with nuclear mines and lured the Minbari flagship in close. The resulting explosion crippled the *Black Star* and allowed the *Lexington* to finish it off. The trap was masterminded by a young commander named John Sheridan.

By August of 2247, the Minbari had taken every spinward Earth colony save Proxima, and had decimated the fleet assets stationed at Orion. While almost every colony still had Army forces dirtside fighting back against the invaders, no world had been liberated. Attempts to contact the other alien races for aid fell upon deaf ears; only the Narn responded, and then only with offers of antique Centauri weapons. The other races were terrified of retribution from the Minbari if they aided the Alliance.

On August 19<sup>th</sup>, Promixa colony reported numerous contacts jumping insystem. The defence of Proxima was heroic, well co-ordinated, as potent as EarthForce could muster – and utterly fruitless. The scattered remnants of the EarthForce fleet jumped out, heading corewards in a desperate attempt to lead the Minbari away from Earth. The Minbari never fell for the bait, and instead jumped out on a direct course for Sol.

They were coming for Earth.



### Phase Three: The Battle of the Line

If the Minbari had held to their previous pattern – jump in, conquer the planet, then install a full garrison force before moving on – then Earth would have had at least two months to prepare its defences while the Minbari pacified Proxima. Instead, they headed straight for Earth after smashing through the Proxima defences, leaving the planet and its ground forces utterly untouched.

Without the added time, the heavy defences planned for Earth would not be ready, nor would the planned evacuation fleet designed to rescue humanity's best and brightest. A desperate plan to defend Earth was conceived. For decades, EarthForce had been experimenting with a hyperspace interdicator, a device to block jump travel. A working prototype had been constructed, but it was incredibly demanding of electricity and its effects were uncertain – it functioned by churning hyperspace and creating an artificial distortion that blocked travel, but how effective this would be over a wide area had never been tested.

Still, it was the best shot Earth had. A line would be drawn around Earth, a line no Minbari ship would cross. Every human ship capable of carrying a gun would defend this line, and the interdicator would ensure the Minbari could not jump beyond it. If the line broke, what there was of the ark fleet would attempt to flee, but few held out any hope of this escape being allowed. If the line broke, the human race would be extinct within a decade.

The exact number of ships that stood at the Line is unknown; there were 12,655 EarthForce vessels, ranging in size from Auroras to the new Poseidon supercarriers. Accompanying them were ships and fighters from the Belt Alliance, Mars colony, the corporations, and even private vessels armed with basic lasers and missiles.

The Minbari fleet entered the Sol system near Io; whether they detected the effects of the hyperspace interdicator or just jumped in near the inactive jumpgate has never been determined. A small detachment consisting of thirty Sharlins headed for Io, while the rest of the fleet set course for Earth.

3

The Battle of the Line was a slaughter. The Line's ships did inflict some damage on the Minbari, as there were so *many* human vessels that the Minbari could not destroy them all before one of the Line ships got within ramming speed. However, it took hundreds of vessels to even get close to the Minbari. The casualty rate for the Battle of the Line ran at over 90%, and the Minbari kept coming.

And coming.

And coming.

...and then they just stopped.

### Why Did The Minbari Surrender?

The mystery of the surrender occupied EarthForce intelligence and xenopsychologists for decades. The damage inflicted by the Line on their assault force was relatively minor, so it was not because EarthForce had inflicted so much damage that the war was no longer worth fighting. The Minbari Federation had no other major ongoing conflicts, so they did not stop to divert troops to another war. The other races such as the Centauri or Narn did not put pressure on the Minbari, so the Minbari did not stop for fear of antagonising another power.

Some suggested that the Minbari had some religious or cultural aversion to killing, that they had done 'enough' and were now finished with war – but while that would explain the war ending, it did not explain the surrender. The Centauri and the other old races admitted that they had never heard of the Minbari surrendering under any circumstances, preferring death to dishonour or defeat. The only conceivable explanation for the surrender is that there were two or more political factions within the Minbari, and that the second faction took power from the first.

### After the War

**'This war is ended. We shall leave this region of space. We shall give you no more death.'**

#### — Initial translation of the Minbari surrender

The Minbari hailed Earth and offered their surrender. Confused, it took some time for Fleet Admiral Mazuk to accept this offer, but it soon transpired that the Minbari surrender was bizarrely genuine. The massive Minbari fleet remained in the Sol system just long enough for them to retrieve their fighters and rescue the crews of the few Earth vessels that were about to break apart, then they jumped out.

While intelligence desperately tried to discover *why* the Minbari had surrendered so abruptly, the rest of EarthForce turned to the twin massive tasks of rebuilding the fleet and re-securing the Alliance's borders. The Minbari retreated with great haste from their conquered worlds, and EarthForce had to scramble to get even a token fleet presence into the colonised systems before raiders, bandits and adventurous neighbours attacked. There were clashes with the Ch'lonas, Koulani and Drazi, while the Brakiri offered to purchase Ceti Gamma for a 'good price for such damaged goods'.

The war had been a disaster for EarthForce, although the extent of the losses were a carefully guarded secret from both the general population and alien governments. It was generally believed that roughly a third of the Navy had been destroyed or disabled; in terms of fighting ships, however, the losses were far greater. EarthForce would have been hard pressed to stop even a minor race in the years immediately following the war. Fortunately, the defeat of the Minbari swiftly passed into legend among the other races, and many suspected that EarthForce possessed some devastating new weapon that had so terrified the Minbari they had to give up. A psych ops operation codenamed BOOGEYMAN was responsible for planting evidence for such a superweapon for alien spies to find.

Earth's economy bounced back surprisingly quickly from the war, thanks to loans from the Centauri and a new demand for human-made products in the League worlds. EarthGov approved the largest peacetime military budget in history in 2248, and this budget was increased again each year until 2263. The bulk of this money was for a massive ship construction effort, centred on the new Omega-class design. The fleet had to be able to fight and win a war with the Minbari if the invaders ever came back. The surrender was seen by many as a stay of execution, a temporary reprieve instead of the permanent end to the Minbari threat.

By 2253, the fleet was nearly back to full strength in terms of the number of ships, although money alone could not



replace the loss of experienced commanders and officers. The average age of the fleet had decreased by just under four years, as even relatively senior positions were filled by young officers promoted up in the wake of the war.

## The Shadow War

**'The Babylon Project is our last, best hope for peace in this troubled galaxy...'**

**- President Luis Santiago**

The period from 2250 to 2261 marked a renewed involvement on EarthForce's part in the affairs of the galaxy. The exploration efforts redoubled as the fleet

searched for new inhabitable or resource-rich worlds. The Narn grew more adventurous and powerful, so more and more ships were deployed along the border of the Narn Regime. Raiders and bandits became a common problem on the frontier – there were a vast number of small armed ships and weapons floating around the black market in the wake of the war.

EarthForce was sent out to intervene in several conflicts during this period, such as the Sh'lassan civil war and the Denethi Haze Disaster. In each case, the priority was the security of Earth's borders, but EarthForce also brought peacekeeping troops and humanitarian aid to the crisis zones. The mere threat of EarthForce involvement was often enough to dissuade attackers; the Drazi attempt to annex the Pak'ma'ra colonies was stopped thanks to the presence of the *Hector* Battle Group in the system.

Other problems arose as a result of the war – in the panic and civil unrest caused by the Minbari attack, a totalitarian government had taken control of much of the African Bloc, and the Ground Forces were sent into liberate it. Unlike the quick strike of 60 years previously, the Liberation called for a full-scale invasion from all sides. To a degree, the Liberation was a test case for the Army's new weapons and armour, which all proved remarkable effective against the Bloc's outdated gear.

An even more interesting challenge came during the Canal Wars on Cyrus. An army of Cyrian separatists found a cache of Minbari weapons and vehicles left over from the occupation, and turned these weapons on EarthForce in an attempt to win independence for the colony. While the separatists were outnumbered and lacked the discipline of the Army troops, they did have a technological edge.

The Martian Food Riots of 2251 are the best known but also the least successful of the EarthForce operations during this period. Rioters protesting at the paucity of shipments from Earth provided cover for terrorist activity from Free Mars rebels, and the EarthForce response was perhaps heavy-handed. The breaching of the dome, however, cannot be blamed wholly on either the rioters or EarthForce.

There was no great defining conflict of this era, just a constant series of unexpected minor wars. Paranoia began to mount, and counter-intelligence and spy catching became a new priority for EarthForce.

## The Babylon Project

The Babylon Project was initiated in 2249 by President Santiago as a diplomatic endeavour to prevent 'misunderstandings' like the Minbari War from ever happening again. It was originally conceived as a military-built but civilian-run station, but the loss of the original station to terrorists proved that it needed a military presence. Furthermore, the Narn and Centauri both respected EarthForce's strength, while the League remembered EarthForce's actions during the Dilgar War, giving the organisation a certain diplomatic leverage.

Babylons 2 through 5 have been under the control of EarthForce and staffed by EarthForce officers. The Captain of Babylon 5 served on the Babylon 5 Security Council.

## The Civil War

**'This is not the voice of treason. These are your sons, your daughters, whose loyalties have never wavered - whose belief in this Alliance has forced us to take extraordinary means. For justice, for peace, for the future... we have come home.'**

**— Captain John Sheridan during the final assault on Earth**

Martial law was declared throughout the Earth Alliance in March, 2260, in response to rising tensions among the alien governments (notably the Narn and Centauri) and the appearance of a new and threatening alien race – the Shadows. EarthForce's attention was focussed on keeping the borders secure, leaving the Ministry of Peace to deal with internal affairs. This proved to be a terrible mistake, as Earth's government grew more corrupt and began illegal incarcerations of both humans and aliens.

A military coup was planned by senior officers in November of 2260, but telepaths working for the Nightwatch uncovered the conspiracy and removed the officers. EarthForce as a whole remained supportive of the Clarke regime until the civil war began. Organised resistance movements had been active on Promixa, Mars and Babylon 5, and these provided strongpoints for opposition of Clarke's regime to rally too. Allied alien



forces provided ships and support, but the core of the new Liberation Navy was composed of current and ex-EarthForce.

The new Navy struck quickly, liberating Vega, Orion and Proxima before a significant defence could be organised. The real battle took place in the Sol system, where the local defence forces were waiting on the old Line. An initial ambush inflicted significant damage on the Liberation Navy, but the main defence force was disabled without loss thanks to a clever stratagem used by Interstellar Alliance President Sheridan.

## The Future of EarthForce

With the suicide of President Clark and the relatively bloodless end of the Civil War, EarthForce was once again reunited in the service of the Earth Alliance as a whole. It has also begun to contribute to the new Interstellar Alliance, providing ships and manpower to joint peacekeeping and humanitarian efforts. The main shadows hanging over EarthForce are the ongoing trials and inquiries into criminal activities, human rights violations and crimes against humanity perpetrated for former EarthForce personnel, and the lingering divisions caused by the civil war.

In many ways, the current situation mirrors the problems faced by EarthForce at its foundation. A divided Earth military must be drawn together by forging a new and better force dedicated to the pursuit of peace.

### Spycatching

The destruction of Babylons 2 and 3 proved that counter-intelligence against alien-sponsored terrorism was now required. For the first century of human contact with aliens, there were so few aliens on Earth and the colonies that infiltration was impossible. Now, there was a sizeable population of non-humans throughout the Earth Alliance, many of which had access to sensitive sites and information. The destruction of Babylon 2 was traced back to a fusion reactor engineer who was brainwashed by a Hyach telepath.

Counter-intelligence against both human and alien influence was made the number one priority for EarthForce from 2258. Obviously, this was not an entirely positive development; Clarke's regime was founded on xenophobia and paranoia, and this attitude bled into EarthForce, poisoning the upper and middle ranks of officers.

# Organisation

**'The purpose of EarthForce is to defend the worlds and peoples of the Earth Alliance, to execute the orders of the President and the Senate, and to maintain itself in readiness to fight wars in space, on land, in the air, at sea and in any other theatre of operations that presents itself.'**

## — Section 12.1 of the Earth Alliance Constitution

EarthForce is perhaps the largest and most complex single organisation in Earth space. The fleet alone employs hundreds of thousands; the Army is much larger. Bases are located in every system from Kazomi to Beta 4, with every colonised world in the Alliance having at least some military presence. It incorporates all the functions of the old Army, Navy, Air Force and most of the intelligence gathering agencies of the old Earth militaries, and also controls the colonial militaries.

The commander-in-chief of EarthForce is the President of the Earth Alliance, but the actual commanders of the Force are the Joint Chiefs who report to the President.

## Office of the President of the Earth Alliance (POTEA)

The Commander in Chief is the only person with the authority to order EarthForce into war, although it is customary to back this decision up with a senate resolution. The President receives a daily briefing from the Joint

Chiefs, which updates the President on any significant military matters. The current status of any Fleet Groups or Army Groups that are in combat or at risk is given, as is a briefing on fleet movements and intelligence reports from the alien races. There is also a weekly-extended meeting with the chiefs.

The Presidential Arcology in Geneva as well as EarthForce One includes a fully equipped war room; during the Minbari War, the latter stages of the defence of Sol were co-ordinated from this chamber. While the President has the final authority in the use of EarthForce assets, few Presidents have any formal military training. Of the 30 previous presidents, only seven have been ex-military.

## Earth Alliance Senate

The Senate's chief involvement with EarthForce is the annual approval of EarthForce's budget and passing resolutions relating to military action. Of course, as EarthForce is such a high-profile component of the Alliance and its actions tend to be controversial, debates on military-related matters take up over 10% of the Senate's official sittings. The annual budgetary debates are notoriously lengthy and hard-fought. The entirety of EarthForce's public budget is approved in a single bill. As that budget is easily the largest expense shouldered by EarthGov, every colony with an income above the Minimum Viability Threshold must contribute towards the expenses of EarthForce. Currently, Mars, Luna, Io, Proxima III and Orion III all qualify.

## Senate Oversight Committees

The Senate Oversight Committees are committees formed to review and advise on various specialised topics. Military Oversight Committees are among the most powerful and influential ones, and are highly sought-after posts in government. Active Oversight Committees include committees on:

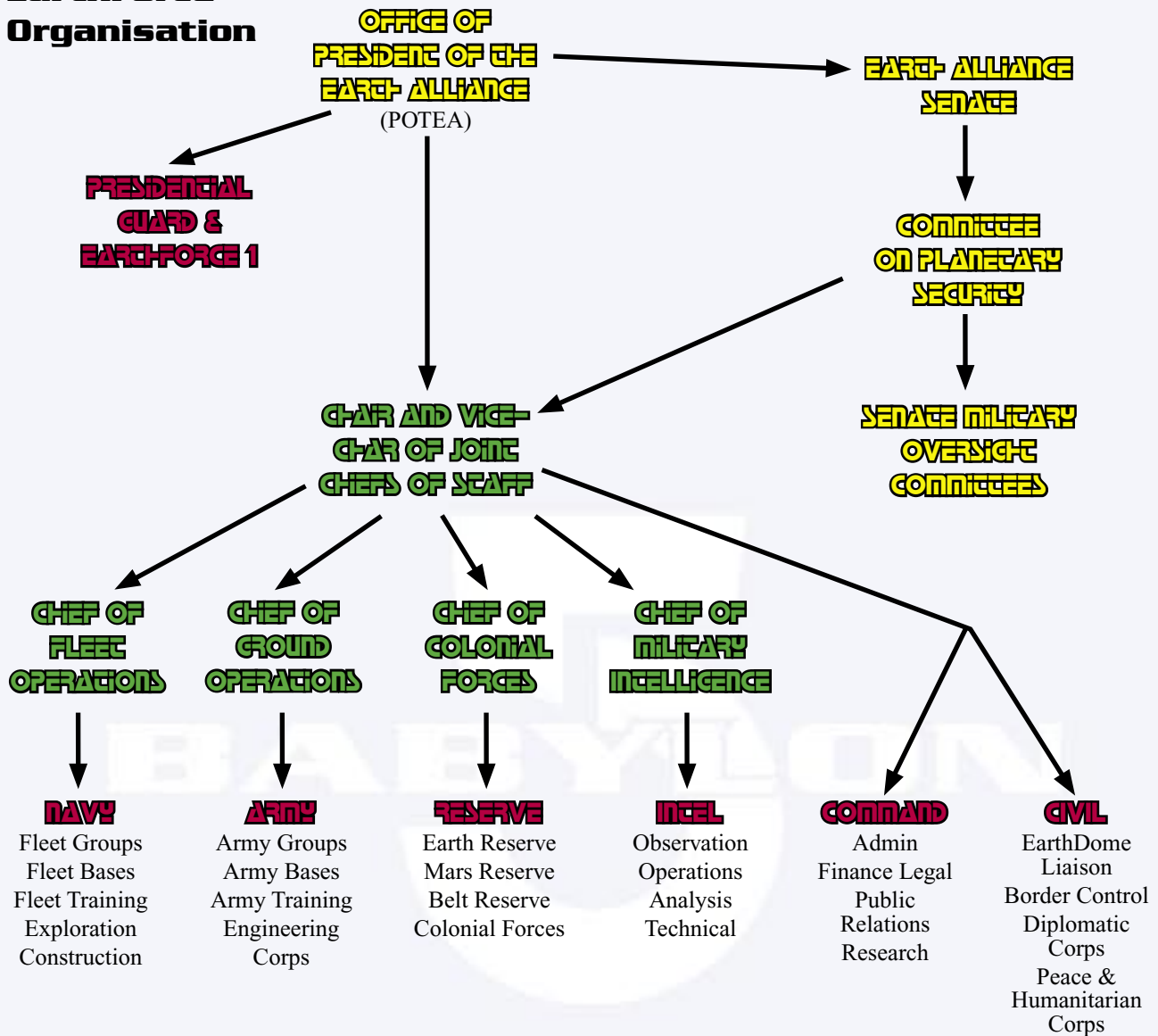
- 3 Babylon 5
- 3 Colonial Defence
- 3 Exploration, Mining and New Colonisation
- 3 Fleet Affairs
- 3 Fleet Construction and Purchasing
- 3 Hyperspace Travel and Jumpgate Construction

EarthForce officers can be called on to report or testify before the appropriate committee. While the committees rarely issue commands and are normally restricted to issuing advisory documents, they can make official resolutions through the Senate.

### Presidential Guard

The Presidential Guard consists of the crew of EarthForce One, the squadron of Starfuries assigned to defend it, and the bodyguards and ceremonial troops who accompany the President. All the Presidential Guard are elite troops who qualify for their position through a combination of perfect service records, excellent skills and unquestionable characters. A command in the Presidential Guard is often seen as the fast track to the higher echelons of command in either branch.

## EarthForce Organisation



*Note: The Senate Military Oversight Committees have influence over all Sections of EarthForce (especially Command and Civil). They have no responsibility for those areas, however, and rarely any direct control.*

### Office of the Joint Chiefs

The Joint Chiefs of Staff are the highest-ranking officers within EarthForce. The commander of EarthForce (third in command after the President and Vice-President) is the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs. Five other Chiefs also sit on the committee – the Vice-Chair, the Chief of the Navy, the Chief of the Army, the Chief of Military Intelligence and the Chief of Colonial Forces.

The Chair of the Joint Chiefs works closely with the President on shaping long-range EarthForce policy, especially in the fields of new weapons technologies

and colonisation. The Chair is also the final authority on EarthForce policy and regulations, and the various internal affairs and legal offices report directly to him.

The Vice-Chair's special areas of responsibility include training, recruitment, public relations and liaising with the Senate. EarthForce security policy dictates that the Chair and the Vice-Chair never travel together. As of 2263, both the Chair and Vice-Chair of EarthForce have resigned following the civil war. An acting chair, General Ryan, has been appointed until new Chairs can be selected from the ranks of the command.

## Acronyms

Like any military, EarthForce personnel throw a great number of acronyms around in the course of their duties. Practically every position, department and piece of equipment is referred to by at least one acronym or codename. Some of these are listed in brackets in each section, below.

The other four chiefs each oversee a particular aspect of EarthForce operations:

- ⑤ The Chief of Fleet Operations commands the navy and all its associated operations.
- ⑤ The Chief of Ground Operations is responsible for army deployments and management.
- ⑤ The Chief of Military Intelligence is responsible for espionage, counter-espionage, surveillance, security and special operations.
- ⑤ Finally, the Chief of Colonial Forces commands the planetary defences and army reserves of the various worlds of the Alliance.

## Roleplaying with the Joint Chiefs

Characters are unlikely to be dealing with the Joint Chiefs directly unless they are high-ranking EarthForce or Earth Alliance characters – they are removed from the day-to-day operations of EarthForce, so they should only show up in the rarest of circumstances. If, however, the climax of a plot arc involves a military action, or a court-martial or something similar, then bringing in one of the Joint Chiefs shows the players just how high the stakes are.

## Command Section

The Command Section of EarthForce is based almost completely on Earth, with only a few research stations being located on other worlds. Command is something of a misnomer – this section actually employs the largest number of civilians of any of the sections of EarthForce, as much of its duties consist of administration, research and similar duties.

EarthForce command is officially located in EarthDome at Lake Geneva, in the EF Arcology. Ever since the Minbari War, however, many command functions have been moved to a new orbital facility, Zeus Station. This massive orbital fortress is nearly three times the size of Babylon 4, and is a combined spacedock/shipyard and orbital weapons platform. It even has its own engines,

making it capable of moving from system to system via hyperspace, although it has never moved since its initial construction.

## Logistics (LogCmd)

The Command Branch logistics section faces the awesome task of co-ordinating all of EarthForce's assets, and getting them where they are needed. The sheer scale of this task is daunting; even those each division is designed to be as self-sufficient as possible. Logistics Command makes use of some of the most powerful computers in the Earth Alliance to track the various components and supplies used by EarthForce.

Logistics Command comes into its own when planning combined-arms operations. Getting all the supplies and equipment needed by a single Battle Group or Army into position is nightmarish enough, but can be accomplished by that Group's quartermasters. A combined-arms operation, however, brings multiple types of units together and so needs high-level co-ordination.

LogCmd is primarily located on Zeus Station.

## Shipping (ShipCmd)

EarthForce has its own fleet of cargo ships and shuttles, based around the old Cotton Tender-class ships. It also owns numerous conventional bulk cargo carriers, while aging Hyperions have been assigned for use as both escorts and cargo haulers. That said, EarthForce also has ongoing contracts with numerous civilian firms to supply outposts and colonial bases, and the Shipping section's efforts are normally concentrated on getting supplies out to vessels on the frontier or in war zones.

The vast majority of the Alliance's munitions plants and shipyards are in the Sol system, so most supply traffic goes from Sol out to the colonies. More conventional supplies such as food, water, basic life-support and some fuels can be obtained at colonies, but spare parts and specialised items must be brought from Sol.

Supplying vessels on long-range missions can be difficult. Explorer-class vessels, for example, must carry several years worth of supplies on board, and are re-supplied by Cotton Tenders that drop supply caches in outlying system. Some Cottens have to travel for months to reach their destinations, before dropping off a few thousand tons of equipment in orbit around some dead star, then spinning around and jumping back towards Earth once more.

ShipCmd is primarily located on Zeus Station, although it has offices and warehouses throughout the Alliance.

## Stores (StoCmd)

Stores Command is responsible for the warehousing and storage of supplies and equipment, from packages of meal bars to whole starships being mothballed. Many of the warehouses are actually orbital stations in high orbit – it is considerably easier to drop supplies back into a gravity well than it is to get them out of one in the first place, so wherever possible, supplies are manufactured in orbit and then towed to a ‘warehouse’ (a massive lattice of girders where cargo pods can be docked).

Stores is also responsible for the storage of weapons. These are kept in special depots ringed with defence satellites (for orbital depots) or in the heart of Army camps (for ground depots), and every weapon from PPG to pulse cannon is sprayed with a chemical key that allows it to be traced to a particular weapons depot in the event of theft. Security at these sites is extremely tight, following a spate of thefts during the Mars rebellion.

Stores also maintains several highly secure locations where sensitive items are kept. The locations of these sites are kept secret; most are in hollowed-out asteroids in obscure systems.

Stores is co-ordinated from Zeus Station, but major supply depots are located on Luna, Io, Proxima, Orion and Beta Durani. Weapons depots are located on Earth, Mars, Io, Proxima and Cyrus.

## Supplies & Purchasing (SupPurCmd)

‘He who sups with the devil should bring a long spoon’ goes the phrase, and the unfortunately-acronymed SupPurCmd is the section that deals with the various corporations that supplies EarthForce. Ever since the Dilgar War, much of the Earth economy has been driven by military spending, and companies like Lockheed-Hyatake, Edgars Industries, Red Sun Group, Takashi Technologies and IPX all have multi-billion credit contracts with EarthForce.

The recent difficulties with Clark’s presidency alienated some of these corporations and tainted others with the stigma of corruption. Senate investigations have revealed collusion and massive bribery scandals within Purchasing, so the whole department is undergoing a probe by Internal Affairs.

Supplies & Purchasing operates on a planetary scale (continental scale on Earth), taking advantage of the Force’s massive transport ability to get the more cost-effective deals. This approach to budgeting has occasionally thrown up some odd results, such as a regular supply of toilet rolls being shipped 40 million kilometres from Orion V to VII.

Supplies is based at EarthDome.

## Administration (AdCmd)

EarthForce Administration is a colossal bureaucracy, but it has taken much of the administrative burden off officers in the field. Links and computer systems now automatically handle much of the paperwork; for example, checking a shuttle out of a motor pool needs no forms to be filled out, but would automatically be logged by the station computer using the officer’s link. More than any army in history, EarthForce officers can concentrate on training, fighting and leading their troops instead of performing bureaucratic chores. They still complain about the amount of bureaucracy, and any vessel or base out of touch with the computer networks faces a torrent of forms to fill out.

Administration includes several key subsections that are highly important to the functioning of EarthForce.

### Roleplaying in Administration

Most of Administration’s duties are hardly likely to spark exciting adventures – ‘*Grey 17’s Consignment of Type 4 Screws Is Missing*’ is not exactly a thrilling mission. Characters can still be assigned to Administration duties, but their official duties will normally take a backseat during adventures.

Internal Affairs and the JAG are more interesting from a roleplaying perspective. One of the most important things in a game with a chain of command is keeping discipline and enforcing discipline; if player is flouting the chain of command, then hit the player with an Internal Affairs investigation. Characters assigned to Internal Affairs or the JAG would have to investigate situations within EarthForce while keeping the reputation of the force from being sullied.

## Accounting

The Accounting Section is run by the Paymaster General of the Force. Pay scales for EarthForce soldiers are on page 76. Like Supplies & Purchasing, the Accounting Section is under investigation after the end of the Clark regime, as several million credits have vanished from EarthForce’s books (billions of credits vanish annually, but these are swallowed up by Black Projects and secret departments, not fraud).

The Accounting department is located at EarthDome.

## Archives (ArcCmd)

The Archives section maintains all of EarthForce’s records. No files are ever deleted deliberately; the Archives section has virtually infinite storage space at its disposal, although battle damage and sabotage has corrupted some

## Command Section Organisation

### OFFICE OF THE JOINT CHIEFS

**LOGISTICS**

**ADMINISTRATION**

**RESEARCH**

**SURGEON  
GENERAL**

Supplies & Purchasing

Judge Advocate General

Medical ↔ Medical

Shipping

Public Relations

Weaponry

Stores

Recruitment

Electronics

Accounting

Hyperspatial

Archives

Gravitics

Internal Affairs

Psychology

files. Retrieving information from Archives is quite time-consuming, as the Artificial Intelligences that search the Archives are increasingly temperamental and are constantly being reprogrammed by the Archives staff.

Every EarthForce member's record is contained in encrypted form on their link, dog tags or implants. This record contains the soldier's training, postings, qualifications, medical and psychological evaluations and commander's comments and notes. All of this data, save the medical records, is automatically locked before battle, to prevent enemy agents decoding the record in the event of capture.

ArcCmd is located on Zeus Station and at the EarthForce Datacore in Colorado.

### Public Relations (PubRCmd)

EarthForce is committed to maintaining good relations with the public. The press office fields queries from ISN and the other news corporations, as well as organising for embedded journalists to be sent on certain high-profile missions. This department also deals with complaints and lawsuits against EarthForce, and dispatches troubleshooters and lawyers to deal with problems off Earth.

Ever since the Dilgar War, EarthForce has enjoyed a great deal of support from the general population of the Alliance, and while tensions are running high ever since the civil war, it is hoped that the PR department can resolve these difficulties and maintain the reputation of the armed forces.

Public Relations works in concert with Recruitment to run EarthForce's recruiting drives. See page 80 for recruitment benefits.

PubRCmd is located at EarthDome.

### Recruitment (RecCmd)

EarthForce rarely has a problem with recruitment – the pay scales are good, the prestige associated with the role is high, and there is a tradition of service in many families and cultures across the Alliance. Recruitment offices and advertisements can be seen in every city and colony.

Recruitment is located at EarthDome.

### Internal Affairs (EFIACMD)

Internal Affairs agents investigate criminal activity and disciplinary problems within EarthForce. It is not a counter-intelligence section, but is closer to a form of military police. The two do work closely together, and many officers believe that Internal Affairs is nothing but a puppet of the Intelligence branch. Internal Affairs agents have considerable discretionary powers when it comes to investigating their cases, and are able to demand full co-operation from even high-ranking officers. IA officers are trained to be the equal of the best civilian law enforcement agents, with a full knowledge of forensics and other investigative techniques. See page 102 for rules on disciplinary actions and investigations.

Internal Affairs is split between Zeus Station and EarthDome – it was moved down the well in 2259.

## Judge Advocate General (JAG)

The JAG's office provides legal counsel and advice to military staff and officers. This not only covers civil cases, but also gives advice to officers in the field – the legal consequences of war have become just as important as any other. This is especially true for vessels dealing with the corporate-run colonies; there were numerous high profile and massively costly cases where corporations sued EarthForce for damaging expensive equipment or sites.

JAG officers also run the military courts. The JAG offices are located in EarthDome.

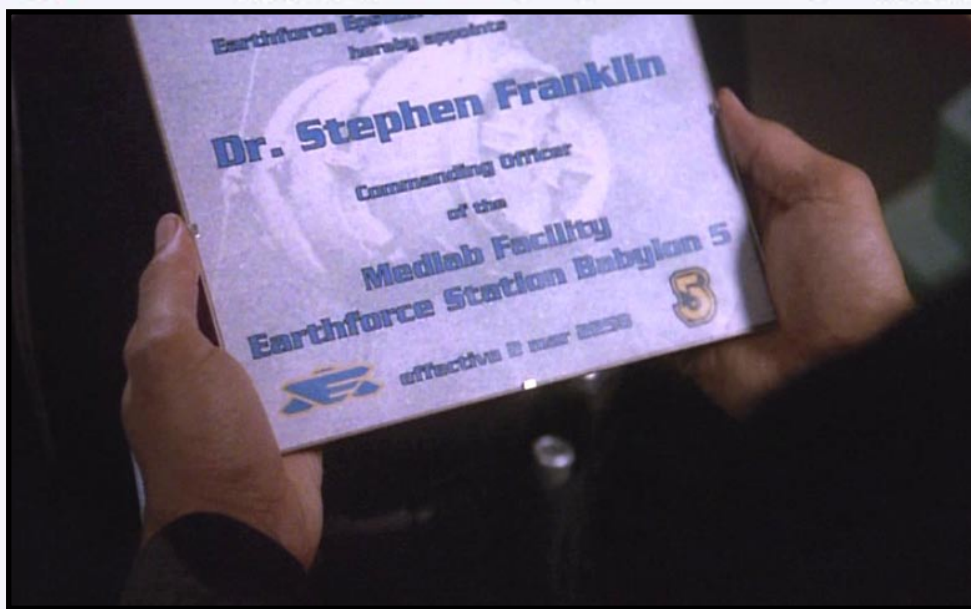
## Research (Earth Force Science, EFSci)

EarthForce is at the forefront of research in multiple fields of technology, although some of this research is carried out in concert with private companies. Currently, EarthForce research concentrates on a few key technologies, mostly aimed at countering the massive advantage the Minbari have over the other races. That said, Research operates dozens of special projects in numerous different fields, from genetic engineering to psychology to time field manipulation.

## Medical (EFMED)

EarthForce's medical research is centred on the following topics:

- ③ **Space Medicine:** Centred in the Joli Medical Orbital around Earth, space medicine concentrates on the effects of prolonged space and hyperspatial travel on humans. While the long-term problems of weightlessness have largely been dealt with (through a combination of rotational gravity, regular exercise regimes and drugs), the problems arising from having hundreds of humans crammed into a spinning metal tube for months at a time and exposed to all sorts of exotic alien diseases and bacteria are manifold. Space Medicine works on new viral shields and broad-spectrum immunisations. Experiments in using nanotechnological shields to block exposure to infections are also underway.



- ③ **Genetic and Surgical Enhancement:** Experiments in creating supersoldiers or synthetic organs have been largely ineffective (although several corporations have continued this research). Combat drugs have been somewhat more useful, although EarthForce has largely discontinued this practice due to problems with dependencies and withdrawals. Experiments are currently focussing on improved low-cost bionic enhancements as opposed to the expensive full-organ replacements used in the past. This research is focussed mainly on special operations troops, and it is unlikely that the average GROPOS soldier will be surgically enhanced anytime soon.

- ③ **Regeneration:** The lethality of modern weaponry has outstripped most forms of body armour. The vast majority of hits are lethal. However, secondary blasts, shrapnel and other injuries can bring a soldier to the brink of death, but leave him in still marginally alive. Experiments in regeneration technology, in stimulating and enhancing the body's natural ability to heal itself, are being carried out in the Reed Army Medical Centre on Earth and in other laboratories across the Alliance. Ideally, this technology will remove the need for clumsy bionics and allow injured personnel to be fully restored even when they have lost limbs or organs.

- ③ **Combat Medicine:** Stabilising a critically wounded soldier in the heat of battle is a challenge for the best medic. Speed is of the essence here. From the invention of wound glue in the Vietnam War to slap patches during World War III, every development in combat medicine has focussed on faster and

faster methods. Currently, efforts are centring on integrating medical systems into battle armour, so that a soldier shot while wearing battle armour would have wound sealants and stimulants injected automatically, or a pilot would be treated with Nullrad when his flight suit detects a high-level of radiation.

5 **Xenobiology:** Studying the capabilities and weaknesses of potentially hostile species is a necessary part of modern warfare. The Dilgar had biological weapons designed to incapacitate or kill any of the species in the League of Non-Aligned Worlds as well as humanity; during the Minbari War, a similar weapon could have turned the tide and prevented the Federation from occupying Alliance worlds. The Xenobiological Laboratories are located on Orion VII. All of the commonly encountered species have had their DNA sequenced (and flash-clones have been grown to study anatomy and physiology), so the race is on to gain information on more exotic species. For decades, finding information on the Vorlons was the highest priority for Xenobiology.

5 **Organic Technology:** The hunt for organic technology has consumed EarthForce's research division ever since the first samples were discovered. Organic healing devices could couple the benefits of bionics and natural physiology. The body could be re-engineered to restore itself or adapted to inhospitable conditions. Living ships could be grown in space, not built; living weapons could provide their own power.

### Experimental Medical Techniques

Basic EarthForce medicine is described in the *Babylon 5 Roleplaying Game* and *Earth Alliance Fact Book*. The techniques described above will not be widely used for years, if ever. Still, characters suffering from critical medical problems may be saved by an experimental treatment.

**Regeneration:** Regen therapy heals five hit points per level per day and can cure injuries that cannot be treated by other means. Characters who have lost organs can have them restored using regen therapy, although this does require careful medical attention (Medicine, DC30). Limbs can also be restored, although synthetic bones must be inserted for the new flesh to grow around.

**Combat Medicine:** New armour constructed with built-in medical treatments has the following effects:

- 5 +4 bonus to Fortitude saving throws against radiation or poison.
- 5 +4 bonus to stabilisation checks.
- 5 Automatically attempts to apply first aid to the character. The suit has an effective Medicine score of +5; giving it a 50/50 chance of restoring 1d6 hit points to the character when injured. The suit can only apply first aid once before its internal systems are exhausted.

Combat Medicine technology can be applied to any full-body armour.

### Weapons Research (EF5Sci, Weapons)

Closing the gap between Minbari and human weapons technologies has been the great challenge of the modern era. In terms of sheer destructive power, the gap has largely been closed – while the offensive power of an Omega-class ship is still less than the devastating neutron lasers of a Sharlin Warcruiser, the two forces are considerably closer to par than they were before the war.

EarthForce's chief advantage is in defensive technologies such as the interceptors and defensive particle beams. This, coupled with advances in targeting technology, should be effective enough to get an Earth vessel within range of a Minbari Warcruiser and give it a shot with its full weapons complement. Current projects include:

- 5 **Particle Interceptors:** The next generation of interceptors will use streams of high-energy particles to block incoming fire. The magnetic jackets used to contain pulse cannon blasts can also be used to absorb and block EM beams, while the particle burst itself can destroy incoming missiles, fighters and other projectiles. Currently, particle interceptors are much too energy-intensive to be used on anything other than space stations, but five or six generations of the technology should make it efficient enough to be used on ships.
- 5 **Nova Pulse Cannons:** Heavier and heavier pulse cannons are the current obsession of the fleet generals. The pulse cannons are the most effective general-purpose weapons available to EarthForce, and bigger ones make bigger dents in enemy ships. The nova pulse cannon is the biggest weapon used by EarthForce since the spinal laser used briefly in the Dilgar War. Nova pulses have been described as 'binary propellant on a quantum level' – binary propellant is the method used for basic firearms, where two chemicals are mixed to create a violently



explosive reaction. The nova pulse uses two particle accelerators instead of the one used by current models. The particle streams are both injected into the same magnetic jacket, where they interact violently – so violently, in fact, that the blast would destroy the cannon assembly if the jacket was not fired out within milliseconds of the particle streams joining.

5

**Smart Missiles:** After the initial encounter between the *Prometheus* and the Minbari, the most effective method for EarthForce vessels to damage the Minbari was to ram the enemy ships. The Minbari's stealth technology prevented weapons from locking on, their virtually impenetrable hulls dissipated most energy weapons harmlessly, but they could not stop a Starfury from ramming at high speed – well, they could blow it out of the sky, but even a Sharlin was hard pressed to shoot down an entire squadron. The new missile design is based on the Thunderbolt Starfury design; it is essentially a robot spacecraft with a high-yield short-range nuclear device at its core. The smart missile is launched from a standard Cobra bay like a Starfury, but is capable of much higher acceleration and turning than a conventional fighter as it does not need to compensate for the effects of g-force on an organic pilot. The smart missile flies at an enemy capital ship, executing a pre-programmed series of evasive manoeuvres before closing-in, exploding on impact with the hull. Unfortunately, the smart missile seems destined never to become the lethal anti-Minbari weapon that its designers hoped for; like all EarthForce equipment, it is unable to lock onto a

target protected by Minbari stealth technology – somewhere along the line, it appears that it was forgotten that the desperate but effective ramming manoeuvre relied on the human pilot looking out of the window and guiding his craft manually to the target. However, there are high hopes that the robotic bomb will be useful against other races.

The majority of weapons research is done on Earth and Mars, for security reason – Earth is the heartland of the Alliance and therefore the best

protected, while Mars is close enough to Earth to gain the benefit of Earth's resources, but its harsh environment keeps idle curiosity-seekers at bay. The main labs are on Zeus Station and on several islands in the central Pacific.

### New Weapons

New weapons make an excellent plot device; a stolen prototype cannon turns, say, a petty raider into a match for a Nova-class dreadnought. Many of Earth's weapons have also come from alien races – the spinal laser from the Hyach, interceptors from ruins and so on. Stealing a neutron laser or other alien super-weapon would be a high priority for weapons division.

One nasty trick to play on players: give their ship a new, experimental weapon system, fresh from the laboratories. They fire it for the first time – and the distinctive scream of a Shadow energy beam explodes out of their ship... Can they control this Shadow technology?

For more on this sort of research, see Black Projects on page 111.

### Electronics (EFSci, Elec)

Electronics research has had one mission ever since the Minbari War – break the Minbari stealth technology. Even during the war, they had some success on this, as new shielding meant that Earth vessels were no longer virtually crippled just by Minbari communications and sensor probes. However, EarthForce vessels were still unable to get weapons locks on enemy ships.

Attempts to pierce Minbari jamming using conventional sensors have failed, so electronics research has focussed on:

- ⑤ **Hyperspatial Sensors:** If the Minbari's stealth technology cannot be beaten in realspace, then perhaps EarthForce can take an alternate approach. Hyperspatial sensors work on the principle that masses in realspace create echoes in hyperspace. Normally, only stellar masses create discernable distortions in hyperspace (allowing a ship to know when it is near a star even if there is no jumpgate beacon in that star's system), but researchers at Io have been experimenting with scanning nearby sections of hyperspace for micro-distortions caused by jump engines. Hyperspatial sensors of this type are no good at spotting a distant vessel, but may allow EarthForce ships to gain full weapons locks by augmenting their normal tactical data with hyperspatial senses.

Hyperspatial sensors give a +5 effective bonus to a ship's Sensor rating, but only for detecting other vessels with Jump Point Engines. The VISITOR software has a chance of enhancing a ship's Sensors, but it can also misinterpret data and be fooled. Each round, roll 1d6 on the following table:

**VISITOR bonus**

Roll	Sensor Modifier
1	-4
2	-2
3	+0
4	+2
5	+4
6	+6

Having AIs running ships is firmly in the region of literal plot device...

- ⑤ **Image Recognition:** The naked eye is of little use in ship-to-ship engagements, although firing using 'iron sights' is still used in emergencies. Real-time analysis of visual data had languished for decades, but now it is coming back into its own. The EarthForce Artificial Intelligence Centre in Connecticut has developed VISITOR (VISual Instantaneous Targeting of Ordinance), a software system that swiftly scans digital images and is capable of working out a firing solution based on light and radiation reflecting off the hull of the enemy vessel. VISITOR's chief weakness is that it can be fooled by curious reflective properties in an enemy vessel's hull. Obtaining samples of a Sharlin hull has had EarthForce agents scouring scrapyards across known space.

⑤

**Artificial Intelligence:** While VISITOR targeting will be ready for installation on EarthForce vessels by 2265, the AI research being carried out at EFAIS is more long ranging. Simple artificial intelligences have been used to manage ship and station functions before, but these systems were basically variant interfaces. The new generation of AIs would actually make command decisions, choosing targets and plotting manoeuvres. The AI would be able to replace any bridge officer – theoretically, even the Captain. This would be a stepping-stone to robotic vessels. As maintenance bots become more advanced, they will be able to make repairs that currently require human intervention. Eventually, it should be possible to construct a battleship without a human crew – and removing the need for life support would free up a vast amount of space for weapons and armour.

## Hyperspatial Research (EFSci, Vortex)

Jump engine research has continued unabated since the initial purchase of the technology from the Centauri. Modern jump engines are many times smaller and more efficient than the clunky original designs. Most hyperspace research is carried out at Io. EarthForce's jump technology is nowhere near as refined and efficient as that of the Minbari or Centauri, but humanity is one of the only races whose hyperspace technology is moving forward in new directions as opposed to being static.

⑤

**Hyperspace Interdiction:** The original hyperspace interdicator used at the Battle of the Line required a stellar mass to churn hyperspace and block jump points from forming. The next generation will be work on a planetary scale, preventing jump points from being established within ten planetary radii. The chief problem is still power consumption, but EarthForce expects to be able to deploy interditors at every major colony within 20 years.

⑤

**Slingshot Jump:** Hyperspace vortices create powerful graviton pulses; vessels have been destroyed by jump points opening on top of them. The powerful energies of hyperspace spill over destructively into realspace. Attempts to rework this as weapon have so far been unsuccessful – jumping right on top of an enemy ship is just as risky for the jumping vessel as it is for the enemy. The slingshot jump is a new technique that requires special focussing emitters to be added to the jump engine. When the vortex forms, the graviton pulse would be directed to basically suck the ship in, accelerating it at high speed into hyperspace. Properly used, a slingshot jump could decrease travel times by up to 20%.

Research into hyperspace is fraught with difficulties; it is a science that is centuries ahead of its time, as every race's jump engines are descended from the Vorlon-built jumpgates. Accidents can result in space stations being sucked into the furthest reaches of hyperspace, or portals being opened to bizarre third dimensions of reality filled with tentacled horrors.

## Gravatics (EFSci, Grav)

Both the Narn and humanity are lagging behind the other races in this key field. The Centauri and Minbari have mastered the art of synthetic gravity generation; even the League races have quirky versions of this technology (the Abbai with their gravity shields, the Brakiri with their gravity beams and lances and so on). Synthetic gravity has massive advantages when it comes to ship design, such as removing the need for rotational sections and being able to manipulate a ship's inertia. EarthForce has tried multiple times to purchase or steal gravatics off other races, but all these attempts have failed. Research is continuing, primarily at the Kerensky Shipyards in Earth Orbit.

- 5 **Synthetic Gravity:** Artificial gravity research has concentrated on reverse-engineering the few damaged gravity generators that EarthForce has managed to retrieve, with little success. The most promising team of researchers were killed in an accident in 2254, when an experimental gravity rig undergoing testing at an orbital laboratory overloaded and produced a gravity field of over 30-gs, crushing the researchers and causing the laboratory to implode. No other team has managed to replicate the work of the lost team, even though the conditions of the experiments have been identical.

The solution ultimately came from elsewhere. The Interstellar Alliance promised Minbari gravitational technology to EarthForce, and the Warlock-class destroyers are the first EarthForce ships equipped with synthetic gravity. Refitting of older designs with gravity generators proves difficult, as the generators must be installed throughout the ship and hull.

- 5 **Inertia Control:** An offshoot of gravatics, inertia control systems have been in use on Earth vessels since the development of the first ships with rotating sections.

These rotating sections have a massive inertia; trying to manoeuvre with such spinning sections would tear a ship apart. Inertia control systems reduce the effective inertia of the vessel by just enough to permit manoeuvring. Without such a technology, a warship would have to stop its spinning section, manoeuvre and then spin up again when it was on its next vector.

- 5 **Force Fields:** The ultimate expression of gravatics is not mere artificial gravity or inertia control – it is the projection of graviton-based fields out from the vessel, to produce force shields, tractor fields and force beams. Experiments in all of these fields are underway, although results are less than promising.

## Psychology (EFSci, Psych)

EarthForce attaches a great deal of importance to psychological and psychosocial research, including xenopsychology. This section has come under investigation in the post-Clark era, with accusations of EarthForce personnel being involved in propaganda, disinformation and rewriting history to exaggerate the threat of aliens. In truth, most such psych operations are carried out by the 'practical' agents in EarthForce Intelligence as opposed to the theoretical researchers here.

- 5 **Theory of Command:** This field of research is centred at the Officer Training College at Sandhurst in England. It is the theory of command and loyalty in the abstract, without direct reference to any particular branch of service or army, but instead focusses on how officers can inspire loyalty and competence, how to ensure smooth and accurate communication up and down the chain of command and so on.



5 **Psychopressured Warfare:** Psychopressure warfare is the strategic equivalent of hitting pressure points in martial arts. Taking out key sites like communications networks, command centres, bridges, spaceports and so on is a tactic dating back millennia; psychopressure warfare incorporates a mathematical model of enemy cultural, political and economics into the selection of targets. Psychopressured warfare would permit a commander to choose whether he wants to break an enemy's will to fight, or to drive them into a frenzy to overexert themselves, or to divert them into a particular course of action.

5 **Xenopsychology:** Understanding alien motivations is obviously important in diplomacy and warfare. The cryptically bizarre and inconclusive end to the Minbari War gave renewed importance to xenopsychological research. The xenopsych research centre was initially located on the Babylon stations, but after Babylon 4's disappearance, the replacement team was moved to the trade hub of Proxima.

## Surgeon General's Office (SGO)

The Surgeon General is the head of medicine within EarthForce. All the military hospitals and medlabs are under the control of this section. EarthForce has at least one fully equipped medbay on every capital ship and space station, and maintains some of the most advanced medical facilities for the treatment of injured soldiers on Earth, Mars, Io, Proxima and Deneb.

## Civil Section

The Civil branch of EarthForce was formed as the service found itself more and more being the public face of EarthGov on the frontier. Officers were trained as diplomats and negotiators. As the Civil branch grew, it absorbed many of the bureaucratic and administrative functions of other branches such as border and customs control. The Civil branch is still not an official branch on a par with the Fleet or Army, but organisationally it is treated as a separate entity.

### EarthDome Liaison

The Liaison Office is responsible for translating EarthGov policy into military objectives. While major Fleet or Army deployments go through the Office of the Joint Chiefs, the Liaison Office handles smaller uses of EarthForce assets, such a single ship being used to escort dignitaries and diplomats. Unsurprisingly, the Liaison Office is based in Geneva.

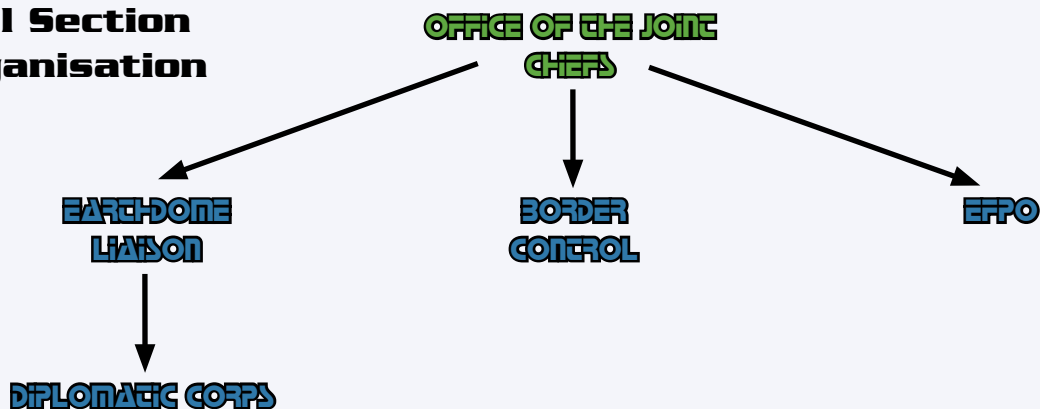
### Border Control (EFBC)

Border Control actually has relatively little to do with patrolling the borders of Earth space; this section's duties revolve around customs and checkpoints. All Alliance citizens are guaranteed freedom of movement throughout Earth space, although they must present valid travelcards at customs checks.

### EA Travel Cards

Travel cards are temporary attachments to a citizen's passport, which contain details on the traveller's journey and any waypoints he passes through. A traveller going

## Civil Section Organisation



from Earth to Babylon 5 would have their travel card scanned at Io, Proxima and Babylon 5. Each waypoint would be logged on the card. The traveller's passport contains full biographic and medical files on the traveller, although these are progressively encrypted – any customs official would be able to retrieve a traveller's name and port of origin, but more details would require higher authorisation to access.

## EarthForce Post Office (EFPO)

EarthForce has its own internal postal system, carrying physical mail and parcels to soldiers posted offworld. EFPO postage costs three credits per jump for small packages, although there are strict mass limits and larger objects cost considerably more.

## Diplomatic Corps

The Diplomatic Corps are the first contact and negotiation specialists of EarthForce, described as a cross between ambassadors and planetary hostage negotiators. While EarthGov handles most diplomatic contacts, EarthForce officials are there on the frontier and often have to speak for the Alliance. More and more authority to speak for the Alliance has been handed over to the Corps.

Babylon 5, for example, was primarily within the sphere of influence of the Diplomatic Corps, although its senior officers were mostly Fleet.

## Roleplaying in The Diplomatic Corps

The Diplomacy Corps makes an excellent base for adventures – one character could be the EarthForce diplomat, while the other Player Characters are his staff/bodyguards/pilots/investigators and so on. The team goes from world to world at the behest of EarthForce command, dealing with situations diplomatically before they degenerate into full-scale war. An EarthForce ship accidentally rams a Centauri fighter; Drazi renegades kidnap colonists from Beta 9; the crew of the EAS *Tycho* become infected by an alien fungal spore, become insanely paranoid and have to be talked down... any of these situations would call for diplomatic troubleshooters.

## EarthForce Navy

The fleet is without a doubt the pride of the Earth Alliance. The first sight most aliens see of humanity is the massive, blocky vessels of the fleet; commanding one of Earth's mighty warships is the highest ambition of many young officers. The EarthForce navy is the best-equipped and most technologically advanced fighting force in history, the ultimate line of defence against alien aggression.

Control of space is the ultimate goal of modern warfare, and the Navy is EarthForce's ultimate weapon in this war.

## Chief of Naval Operations (CNO)

The Chief of the Navy is the third ranking of the joint chiefs, after the Chair and Vice-Chair. In practice, the Navy Chief is second only to the Chair of the Joint Chiefs in terms of political sway, which has traditionally given the Navy the lion's share of funding, choice recruits, prestige and influence. Naval Command is located on Zeus Station in Earth Orbit.

The Chief of the Navy is always a four-star admiral and is the highest ranking military office in the Navy. Below the CNO, the Navy is divided into four or more active fleets and several support branches, referred to as Fleet Operations and Shore Operations respectively.

## Survey (EFNSS)

The EarthForce Naval Stellar Survey section is responsible for mapping the galaxy. It works closely with the Exploratory Fleet and is considered to be in the chain of command between the Exploratory Fleet Command and the CNO during peacetime. EFNSS also has close ties to EarthForce Intelligence, as it receives the reports from those Captains and officers who have come into contact with alien races. EFNSS also has close relations with the corporations and Earth Force Ministry of Commerce, as it is this section that maps new jump routes and secures new trading lines.

## Spacewatch (EFNSW)

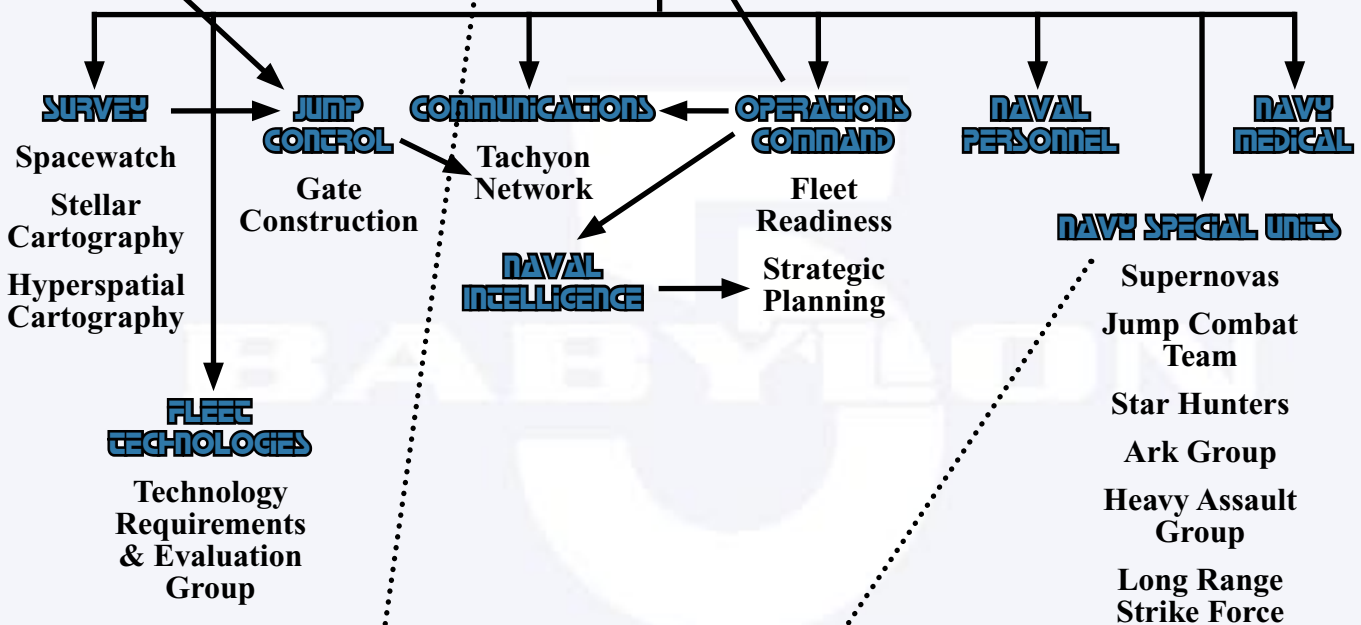
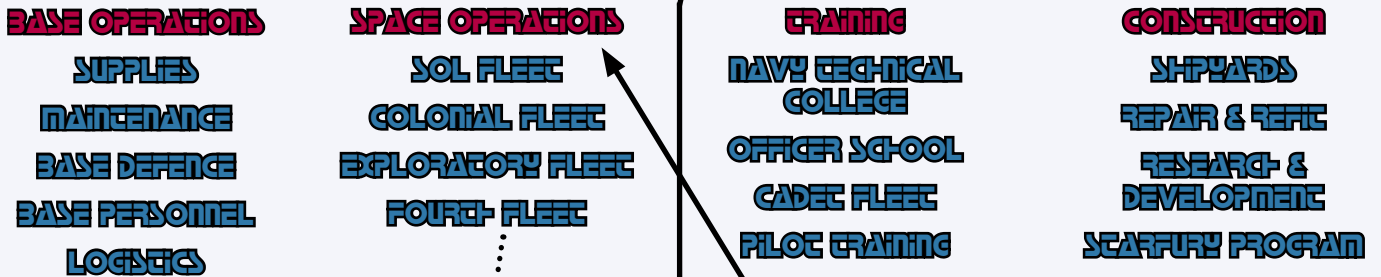
Spacewatch is the network of listening posts, long-range probes, telescopes, hyperspace beacons and other data gathering systems that are EarthForce's electronic eyes and ears. Spacewatch actually dates back to early efforts to detect Earth-crossing asteroids in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, but has evolved to become an important part of naval intelligence. It still has a scientific mission, but EFNSW is as likely to be looking for alien warships as it is to be searching the heavens for dead pulsars or cosmic rays. EFNSW is based in Australia on Earth.

## Stellar Cartography (EFNSC)

'Stellar' is perhaps a misnomer – all the stars within reach of humanity's ships have long since been mapped. EFNSC is more interested in what is around those stars, and works to map planetary systems and asteroid belts. Topographical maps are made by the Army's Ordnance Survey section, which works closely with EFNSC, but anything above

# Navy Section Organisation

## CHEF OF THE NAVY



## FLEET TECHNOLOGIES

Technology Requirements & Evaluation Group

## FLEET COMMAND

Note: Each Fleet (Sol, Fourth, Exploratory, Colonial) is partially autonomous and organised along the following lines:

## SPECIAL OPERATIONS

### BATTLE GROUP

Capital Ships  
 Fighter Squadrons  
 Escort  
 Fire Support  
 Logistic Support  
 Marines  
 C3 Centre

### FLEET RESERVE

the atmosphere falls into EFNSC's sphere of interest. The Stellar Cartography section is based on Mars.

## Hyperspatial Cartography (EFNHC)

Initially, it was believed that hyperspace was a dimension that was constantly in flux, with no permanent features other than the gravitational gradient caused by realspace bodies. It has been discovered, however, that there are currents, storms, eddies and other semi-permanent phenomenon in hyperspace. In fact, it rather resembles a conventional ocean in its behaviour. EFNHC's job is producing accurate hyperspatial charts for both civilian and military use. EFNHC is located at the Mount Jove base at Io.

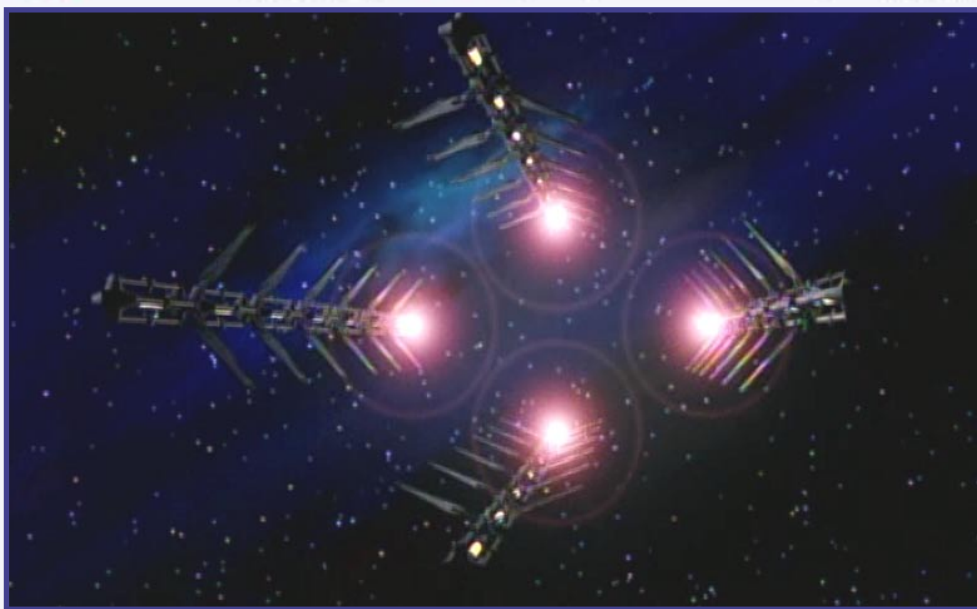
## Life in Hyperspace

There is a lot more to hyperspace than first appears. It is not just a short cut through normal space; it is a universe in its own right. The Vorlons and Shadows had the ability to fold hyperspace (the Vorlon Planet Killer was built in such a fold) and could have hidden whole worlds away there. The *Excalibur* discovered an alien race (the Fen) *living* in hyperspace. There could be whole invisible empires out there, in the space between reality. If anyone runs across them, it will be the EFNHC explorers.

## Jump Control (EFJC)

Jump Control is responsible for jumpgate security and defence. Only a few jumpgates have dedicated defence forces – the gates at Io and Proxima are exceptions – so normally defence is handed over to the Base Defence for that system. EFJC is also responsible for the beacon network that makes hyperspace travel possible, as well as determining which jump routes may be used by civilian or military traffic.

EFJC publishes daily hyperspatial shipping forecasts for each sector of space, giving details on current travel conditions and warning about dangerous phenomena. Jump Control is located at Mount Jove on Io.



## Gate Construction (EFJCM)

Jumpgate Construction and Maintenance section builds and repairs jumpgates. Few jumpgates are actually constructed in place; more often, they are dropped off by Explorer-class vessels. However, as jumpgate technology is refined, older jumpgates must be shut down and recycled for the precious Quantum-40 they contain.

## Communications (EFNTC)

EarthForce Naval Communications maintains the fleet's electronic communications and computer networks. Its chief responsibility is the tachyon network that allows for real-time communication between Earth and the various colonies and outposts, but it also manages conventional radio and laser relays and satellites. Communications is based on Zeus station.

## Tachyon Network (EFTachyon)

The development of tachyonic communication rendered the old courier ships obsolete and turned the colonies from isolated outposts into neighbours of old Earth. Without tachyonic communication, the Alliance would almost surely fracture. The tachyon network is under Naval control, although it is also used extensively for civilian purposes such as ISN. EarthGov intends to build a parallel tachyon network for purely civilian use, but the massive cost and power requirements of interstellar tachyon bursts means this investment keeps getting pushed back. Again, the tachyon network is controlled from Mount Jove.

## The Voice of the Resistance

Commander Ivanova used the Great Machine on Epsilon 3 to broadcast her messages, bypassing the Clark-controlled tachyon network. The tachyon network is made up of automated relays built on or near jumpgates. Starships also carry tachyon relays, but these are relatively short-ranged and cannot be used to transmit over interstellar distances. A vessel outside the range of the Alliance's tachyon network cannot establish real-time communications until it moves back in range (or somehow manages to gain access to an alien grid).

## Naval Operations Command (NOC)

NOC is responsible for the mid-level command and co-ordination of the fleet, especially joint-fleet operations and combined arms operations. All fleet movements are logged and support is assigned from this operations centre.

## Fleet Readiness Assessment (FRAOC)

Fleet Readiness assesses the ability and combat readiness of the Navy. It runs wargames, test officers, runs simulations of battles and studies past engagements. The FRAOC (Fleet Readiness Assessment Operations Command) is the ultimate determiner – apart from the battlefield itself, of course – of how effective the EarthForce Navy is. The FRAOC receives regular updates on enemy forces from EarthForce Intelligence and adapts Navy tactics and deployments to compensate, as well as advising the Fleet Technologies and Requirements Group.

## Strategic Planning Office (NSPO)

The Naval Strategic Planning Office translates long-term projections of conflicts and developing situations into fleet movements. The vast distances and long travel times involved in interstellar war require careful planning. During the Dilgar War, almost all of the Alliance ships were clumped together in a single fleet, hitting a single target at a time, but the Minbari proved that it is possible to co-ordinate multiple simultaneous assaults over light-years of space. The NSPO's purpose is to give EarthForce the same level of co-ordination.

## Naval Intelligence (ONI)

The Office of Naval Intelligence is the Navy's own specialised spy network. While theoretically the old divisions between Army, Navy and Intelligence have been dissolved and the whole EarthForce acts as a single entity,

all three commands prefer to have a little redundancy. ONI agents are experts at dealing with alien espionage and counter-espionage, as they have the most experience with offworld operations.

## Naval Personnel (NPslO)

The Personnel Office, based in Florida, administers Naval personnel of all ranks and assignments.

## Navy Medical Command (NMed)

Navy Medical Command reports to the Surgeon General's Office, but specialises in the medlab facilities on ships and satellite bases, as well as the treatment of space-related injuries and maladies, notably radiation burns, zero-gravity bone wastage, high-gravity skeletal stresses and so on.

## Fleet Technologies (FTech)

This catchall department covers specialised research and design for Naval vessels and bases. It works closely with the various military corporations in sourcing and developing new classes of ship. Fleet Technologies also provides updated technical briefings and training, and has the final call on the deployment of new technologies and weapons to the field.

## Fleet Technology Requirements and Evaluation Group (FTREG)

The awkwardly named FTREG are the test pilots of the Navy, working with experimental weapons and prototypes. They have several test hulls available to them – mistreated Olympus- and Nova-class vessels who have had their weapons torn out and replaced dozens of times. FTREG evaluates new designs from the various corporations and tests the integration of new weapons systems into existing designs.

## Top 'fury

The Advanced Starfury Handling School is an interesting setting for a game. You have advanced military hardware, rampaging egos and passions, vast amounts of cash (the next generation of Starfury is worth billions of credits to weapons manufacturers) and combat all within a relatively confined area. If a group of characters are accepted into the school, they could become embroiled in a plot to kill off or subvert that year's class. A particular weapons company wants to gain control of the candidates for the Starfury testing program, to ensure they can influence the choice of weapons for the new Thunderbolts... and the Player Characters are among their targets.

## Navy Special Units (NTU)

Like the Army (see page 65), the Navy has a number of elite special-purpose combat units. These are the best of the best. They are under the direct command of the CNO, but are attached to the various Fleets for operational purposes.

### Supernovas

The Supernovas are an elite squadron of Starfuries, piloted by the best pilots in EarthForce. Every member of the Supernovas is an ace dogfighter, with spatial awareness, reflexes and g-force tolerances better than 99.9% of humanity. The Supernovas have mastered dog fighting, capital ship attacks, hyperspace combat and close quarters manoeuvring. As part of the initial test for membership, the prospective Supernova has to fight or dodge six opposing Starfuries and hit a target within the superstructure of an Orion base.

The Supernova pilots are famed for the arrogance and over-confidence, but they more that have the skills to back up their bluster.

### Long Range Strike Force (LRSF)

The Long Range Strike Force is a battle group designed to take self-sufficiency to new heights. Their ships have been refitted to rely primarily on energy weapons, while their life-support systems and hydroponics bays allow the vessels to recycle their air for much longer periods. The LRSF is capable of acting without re-supply from the Alliance for up to five years. The LRSF's expected mission profile is operating behind enemy lines for long periods of time – in a second war with the Minbari, for example, the LRSF would be deployed to hit targets along



the Protectorate border, forcing the Minbari to allocate a disproportionate number of ships to hunting the LRSF.

LRSF officers tend to be... quirky, as they spend months locked in close quarters with each other.

### Heavy Assault Group (HAG)

The HAG is composed entirely of Omegas and Novas – primarily the latter – although it is accompanied by Army Condors and breaching pods. The HAG is the hammer of the Navy, deployed to crack the hardest targets. The HAG's ships have been reinforced with heavier armour and weapons, making them unwieldy and slow but massively powerful. The HAG's techniques and tactics are being integrated into the new Warlock designs.

### Ark Group

The Ark Group is one of the more obscure parts of EarthForce, but a potentially vital one. After the near-extinction of humanity during the Minbari invasion, the Senate ordered that the military prepare an escape option in case another overwhelming alien force attacked. The Ark Group consists of a three colony ships together with a military escort that maintains constant readiness at Earth. In the event of an unstoppable invasion, the Senate and the best of humanity would be evacuated to the Ark Group, which would then jump for the nearest friendly space.

### Jump Combat Team (JCT)

Combat in hyperspace is fraught with difficulties – the currents and eddies make it difficult to maintain formations, the volatile nature of the space interferes with energy weapons, and the dimension also makes it difficult to estimate

### Alpha-1 is Hit!

The Minbari accidentally blast Sinclair's Starfury out of space and so they never discover that he has a Minbari soul. They complete their extinction of humanity but the Ark Group jumps out in time. The Player Characters are crew on board the Ark Group as this rag-tag, fugitive fleet jumps through the galaxy, looking for a place to hide from the Minbari warships sent to hunt them down.

This sort of adventure could even be run as a what-if or dream sequence in a regular campaign if the characters are messing around with alien technologies like the Great Machine on Epsilon III or an Apocalypse Box.

range. Furthermore, it is easy to disrupt the signal from a jump beacon, dooming a ship to being lost in hyperspace without hope of rescue. Few navies are willing to engage in combat in hyperspace, any more than an air force would fly in a hurricane. The JCT, however, are trained to fight in hyperspace. They are seen as borderline crazy by the rest of the fleet, but are undeniably effective.

### Star Hunters

The Star Hunters were formed after the destruction of the *Black Star* during the Earth-Minbari War with the intent of replicating that victory. While the original Star Hunter team never equalled Sheridan's success, the team has since been reformed into a Headhunter task force, designed to hunt down and destroy enemy command ships. The Star Hunters are a favoured unit of many of the admirals in EarthForce, and have funding and choice officers allocated to them.

## Fleet Base Operational (FBO)

Fleet Base Operations controls all of EarthForce's space stations and naval planetside bases such as spaceports, landing fields, proving grounds, observation posts and so on. Most of these orbital assets are Orion-class starbases and Dionysus mid-range outposts, although there are much larger custom-built stations at Earth, Proxima and Epsilon Eridani.

Planetary defences are under the control of the Colonial Forces, not the Navy, although the Navy does of course have its own Bellerophon and Prometheus Defence Satellites. The difference is that Colonial orbital assets are permanently attached to a colony, whereas Naval assets could theoretically be moved. Moving an Orion starbase is a massive undertaking, of course, so the Navy generally prefers to build new stations instead of moving older ones. Dionysus bases are specifically designed for ease of transport, and so are moved along behind the front lines in wartime.

The establishment of a starbase is a hugely significant gesture – a starbase offers repair and refit facilities to military craft, can handle huge amount of cargo and traffic, and essentially lays claim to a whole system. Deploying an Orion station in orbit is a clear sign to alien governments that the Earth Alliance considers the world below a holding.

Stations are also defensive bulwarks, mounting considerably more firepower than most battleships.

## Base Operations Adventures

Babylon 5, especially in Seasons 1, 2 and 5, is basically 'base operations – the series'. True, the Babylon station is a vast and complex place that is beyond the scope of most campaigns, but the basic ideas can be used. A base is a stationary place, so the campaign will centre on continuing local issues instead of the 'planet of the week' syndrome of ship-based games. See the Campaigns chapter, page 117.

## Base Maintenance (FBMaint)

This technical group maintains all systems on board EarthForce naval bases. Base maintenance is generally looked down on by the other technical sections, being dismissed as the equivalent of 'janitorial work', compared to the more glamorous and challenging duties of damage control onboard a fighting ship or being on the cutting edge of technology at the shipyards.

## Base Supplies (FBSup)

Only the largest military stations (such as Zeus or the Babylon series) are large enough to have internal habitats – an Orion, for example, has only a small hydroponics bay that is mainly used for oxygen recycling and produces little food. Other stations have to be constantly re-supplied with food, water and other needful supplies. In situations where a base cannot be supplied on a regular basis, then extra hydroponics and storage bays can be swapped in, replacing cargo, cobra or weapons bays. For example, the Orion station orbiting Orion III gets weekly supply runs from the planet below, while the Orion station at Vega has been refitted to be self-sufficient for up to six months.

## Base Defence (FBDef)

Satellite bases can mount much larger weapons, such as starbase missile racks and heavy pulse cannons. Immobile installations like Orions can also carry heavier armour, as their great mass does not need to be moved from place to place. The normal tactics for taking starbases, then, shy away from direct assault and focus on boarding actions or siege warfare. Base Defence officers are trained in repelling boarders and running blockades.

All stations have at least one squadron of Starfuries attached to it, under the command of Base Defence.

Base Defence also controls EarthForce's few ground-based weapons. While other races such as the Hyach have mastered the art of battling orbiting ships from planetside, most human-built weapons lack the range. EarthForce does have defensive batteries buried in the moons of many colonies, however – the lower lunar gravity and lack of interposing atmosphere coupled with the armour of a few billion tons of moon-rock makes these emplacement useful firing platforms.

Base Defence's troops are drawn from the Orbital Assault section of the Army.

## Base Personnel (FBPsl)

The personnel section of Fleet Base Operations administers assignments, promotions, pay and all other personnel-related issues relating to Shore Operations.

## Logistics (FBLog)

The Logistics section co-ordinates re-supply runs and storage with FBSup, but is also responsible for traffic control in association with Jump Control and Border Control. Military traffic takes precedence over civilian traffic throughout the Alliance, and civilian or corporate orbital bases much defer to military bases on all orbital traffic and jumpgate control.

## Fleet Space Operations (FSO)

The FSO controls all fleet operations – any military ships and fighters in space fall under its control. The Navy is divided into four fleets, each of which has their own sub-command.

- ③ The **Sol Fleet** is headquartered at Earth, and has responsibility for operations in the Sol system and all systems coreward of Sol. These operations are primarily the defence and patrolling of those systems, watching the border, escorting traffic, keeping the jump routes clear of raiders and so on. The Sol fleet has the abbreviation FS.
- ③ The **Colonial Fleet** is headquartered at Earth, and controls the systems rimward of Sol. Its duties are identical to those of the Sol Fleet, although the Colonial Fleet has much more experience with dealing with harsh conditions. There is a traditional rivalry between the Sol and Colonial Fleets. The Colonial fleet has the abbreviation FC.
- ③ The **Exploratory Fleet** is considerably smaller than the previous two fleets, and consists of the Explorer Corps and the other ships operating out on the Rim of known space. The Exploratory Fleet also

## Common Battle Group Configurations

**Combat Group:** Omega-class Destroyer, 3 Hyperion-class Cruisers, 2 Olympus Corvettes, 1 Cotton Tender

**Assault Group:** 2 Nova-class Dreadnoughts, 2 Hyperion-class Cruisers, 1 Avenger Carrier, 1 Cotton Tender

**Exploration Group:** One Explorer-class Survey Ship, one Omega-class Destroyer, 2 Hyperion-class Cruisers, 2 Olympus Corvettes

**Carrier Group:** One Poseidon super-carrier, one Nova Dreadnought, 2 Hyperion Cruisers or Olympus Corvettes

includes first-contact specialist diplomatic ships and deep space probes. The Exploratory Fleet is currently headquartered at Deneb. It works with the Survey Section during peacetime. The Exploratory fleet has the abbreviation FE.

- ③ The **Fourth Fleet** is deliberately named in a neutral fashion, as 'the fleet that is ready to jump into combat at a moment's notice' might raise hackles in the Centauri court. The Fourth Fleet maintains constant combat-readiness, and is the primary offensive tool of the Alliance if war becomes necessary. The Fourth Fleet is stationed at Proxima, and bears the acronym EEF (Earth Expeditionary Force, dating back to the Dilgar War).

Each fleet is organised in the same way – there is a Fleet Command that reports to the FSO. Below Fleet Command, the Fleet is divided into a Special Operations Group, a Fleet Reserve and a number of Battle Groups.

## Fleet Command (FC)

Fleet Command is headed by a three-star admiral, and directs the operations of the fleet as a whole. It is responsible for allocating ships to battle groups, assigning missions and objectives and all command-level decisions. Fleet Command is normally located on a space station or other command post, although specially equipped Omegas or Poseidons can serve as mobile bases.

## Fleet Reserve (FRsv)

Each of the four fleets has a reserve of older vessels, training and science vessels and other ships that are not fighting ships of the line, but can be called in to reinforce a position if necessary. The reserve is augmented by a few modern ships that are still undergoing shakedown or testing. The Fleet Reserve is rarely used in combat,

but is regularly used in patrolling the inner systems for raiders or smugglers. While the Fleet Reserve is divided into Battle Groups when operating as part of the Reserve, these battle groups are broken up and individual ships are attached to existing fleet battle groups.

## Special Operations (FSpecOps)

Fleet Special Operations Command consists of any special units assigned by Navy Special Units to the Fleet, as well as any Battle Groups that are specifically assigned to FSpecOps as carriers or support. As the Special Units are normally assigned by a mission-by-mission basis, they are attached to the fleet command structure at this point instead of being integrated into Battle Groups in a more conventional fashion.

## Battle Group (Battle Group Name or BG #)

Battle Groups are teams of ships, normally organised around a single carrier or capital ship. A Battle Group is designed to be self-sufficient and to be able to undertake and complete any common type of mission. The Group's member vessels are chosen to compensate for each other's weaknesses. While Battle Groups are something of an ad-hoc structure (groups can be dissolved and reformed at the whim of Fleet Command, and few Battle Groups last more than a few months), most include the following components.

A Battle Group is normally centred around a capital ship like an Omega or Poseidon; in cases where the group contains multiple capital ships, one ship is designated the command vessel and the Battle Group Commander is located there.

## Battle Group Command, Communications and Control Centre (C3)

The group's C3 command is located on board the command vessel. C3 handles communications and data sharing for the battle group as a whole and makes sure the Battle Group Commander knows exactly where each ship in the group is and what it is doing. C3 is often abbreviated to Control.

## Capital Ships

Capital Ships are vessels like the Omega, Nova, Poseidon (or even a Hyperion in a pinch) that are the mainstays of the defensive line. Capital ships are the strong centre of the Battle Group, defending the command post and co-ordinating the rest of the group's activities. In battle, the capital ships engage other capital ships once the fighters have stripped them of their weapons.

## Escorts

Escort vessels are ship and fighter hunters, designed to protect the capital ships against enemy escorts and fighters. In the EarthForce navy, the Olympus is the usual escort design, although the Hyperion is slowly being downgraded to this level.

## Fire Support

Fire Support ships engage from long range. The Sagittarius Missile Carrier and the Nova fall into this category. Fire Support ships deal as much damage from range as possible, then follow the fighter wings and capital ships in.

## Logistic Support

Logistic vessels like the Tenders stay out of battle, as they can contribute little. Normally, the Tenders stay in hyperspace and only jump in once the system has been secured.

## Marines

Troops assigned to the Battle Group from the Army are referred to as marines while operating as part of a Navy Battle Group (the Navy no longer has its own soldier corps). Often, a marine detachment stays attached to a particular ship or battle group for its entire tour of duty.

## Fighter Squadrons

While the fighter squadrons are attached to their mother ship's command structure, they are also considered a separate asset within the Battle Group and so have their own section within the Group's table of organisation.

### Fleet Chain of Command

Fleet Command (Admiral, 3 Stars)

V

Battle Group Commander (Captain of Capital Ship or Rear Admiral)

V

Ship Captain (Captain)

V

Escort/Support Captains (Commanders)

## Training

The Naval Training Command operates out of Luna – the Moon is close enough to Earth to draw on the homeworld's vast population, but inhospitable and far enough out of the gravity well to impress on new recruits the challenge of space. A stint on Luna is required for all cadets, but the real training goes on down the well on Earth or in deep space. The Navy is considering opening a second training complex on one of the colony worlds, but none of the colonies yet have the population to justify such a move.

The head of the Training section is a three-star admiral.

New enlisted recruits go to the Navy Technical College, which has branches in Florida, France and China. Officer cadets attend the officer school, which has sections on Luna, San Francisco and England.

## Navy Technical College (NTC)

The Navy Technical College trains enlisted personnel in whatever technical field they are best suited for. Specialisations include:

- Weapons
- Ion Engines
- Jump Engines
- Reactors
- Electronics
- Computers
- Sensor Systems
- Shuttles and Starfury Operations
- Communications
- Damage Control
- Life Support

Enlisted personnel sign up for a three, six, or nine-year period of duty. Training courses at the NTC last six months or one year, although further training is given while on duty. Technicians are trained to the highest standards, and these skills are transferable to the civilian sector. EarthForce gives extra benefits to those who sign on for longer periods.

Note that final decisions on where a new recruit goes are made at the RecCmd level, so a citizen who signs up in hopes of seeing the galaxy on board an Explorer might find himself scrubbing latrines as a GROPO.

## Officer School (NOS)

The Naval Officer School trains the next generation of Captains for EarthForce. Training takes three years, plus a probationary year in the cadet fleet. Cadets are trained in leadership, tactics, history and diplomacy as well as a chosen technical field. Officers must serve for at least nine years; most are in the Navy for life.

## Cadet Fleet

The Cadet Fleet is made up of the ships attached to the Naval Training Command. Most of the NTC's ships are antiques dating back to the earliest days of the fleet, although it does have a single Hyperion, the *Telemachus*.

## Pilot Training

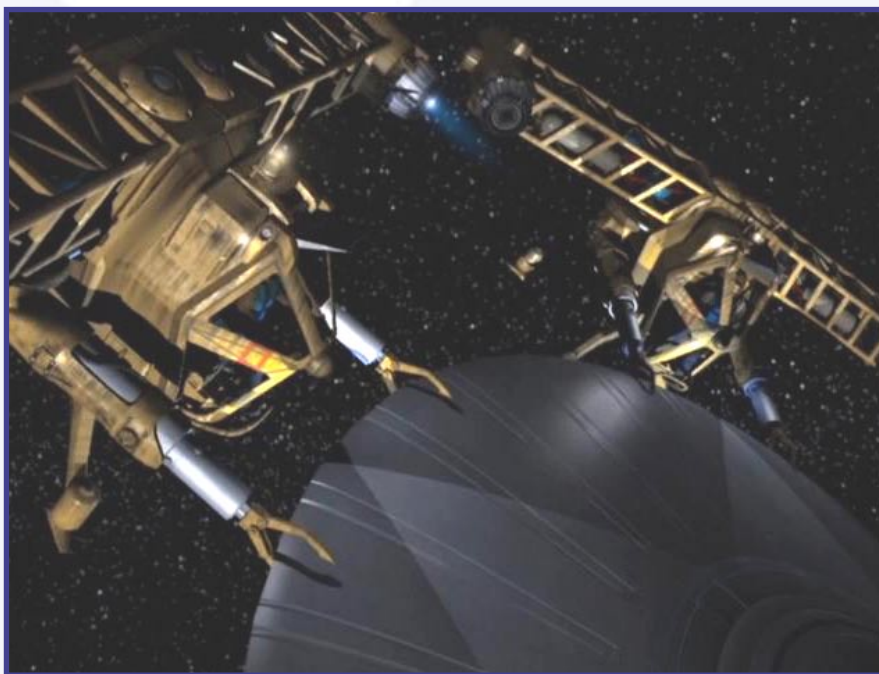
The Starfury Program's Basic Training is operated from Io. While Starfury pilots undergo basic training at the NOS, they transfer to the Starfury Program for further training in the art of flying the temperamental but lethal machines.

## Construction

The majority of EarthForce's construction work is done by the corporations, although it does maintain its own construction yards for doing full-scale refits of ships and building secret projects.

## Shipyards

The Naval Shipyards in orbit of Earth, Mars, Io and Proxima are essentially massive frameworks that can handle the disassembly of a warship in zero gravity.



There are also four secret shipyards and bases beyond Earth space where the work on the Warlock, Cronos and other advanced designs is being carried out.

## Starfury Program

The Starfury Program is one of the last functional parts of the old AEGIS program, but its bureaucracy is so entrenched and its results so successful that the Program has managed to retain its own identity and budget instead of being incorporated into Fleet Technologies. The Starfury Program deals separately with the military corporations and has its own criteria for evaluating the new designs. The Advanced Starfury Handling School is also run by the program – only the best ‘fury pilots are taken by the Advanced School. They go on to field-testing the next generation of Starfuries or move onto the Supernovas.

Starfuries are constructed by whichever corporation won the contract for the current generation (for the Nova-types, it is Mitchell-Hyundyne Aerospace of Callisto). EarthForce does maintain its own Starfury production facilities, mainly to have a constant supply of spare parts.

## Repair & Refit

The real purpose of the construction section is the EarthForce Repair & Refit teams. These are based at the various bases (the specialised Chiron Repair Platforms, the Orion and Dionysus Naval Bases, and the massive stations). Every vessel is checked out and repaired after a mission or patrol; most EarthForce vessels spend four months out of every twelve in one dock or another.

## Research & Development

Naval Construction R&D works with the general EarthForce Research branch on new ship designs and technologies. There has been growing tension between EarthGov and the corporations, so not every technological advance is shared with the corporations. Often, the corporation designs are several years behind secret EarthForce technology; the ships and fighters produced by the industrial contractors are then refitted with this new technology.

## EarthForce Army

The Earth Ground Operations Force is generally seen as the less popular section of the military – the Fleet has all the glamour and the funding, while the Army must make do with what scraps it is given. Certainly, given EarthForce’s primarily defensive and exploratory role, and given that the Army has rarely faced the challenge it was originally formed for (retaking a conquered colony,

or taking an inhabited world from a hostile force), it is perhaps understandable that the Army has always been second-best in the minds of the general population.

However, the higher echelons of EarthForce are slightly weighted towards the Army, as there are simply more high-ranking generals than there are admirals. While the Navy still takes the lion’s share of funding for new equipment and weapons research, the Army is dictating more and more of EarthForce policy. The Alliance’s growing influence in the galaxy (post-Dilgar War) resulted in more and more military interventions and peacekeeping operations, which allowed the Army to prove itself on dozens of alien battlegrounds.

## Chief of the Army (CGO)

The Chief of Ground Operations is the commander of all EarthForce ground forces, and sits on the Joint Chiefs. The CGO is always a four-star general.

Below the CGO, the Army is divided into Support, Orbital Assault and a number of Army Groups. These Army Groups change depending on current deployments; as of 2263, there are three Earth Armies, a Proxima Army, First and Second Colonial Armies and four Task or Expeditionary Forces that are organised as Armies.

## Army Command (EFA Command)

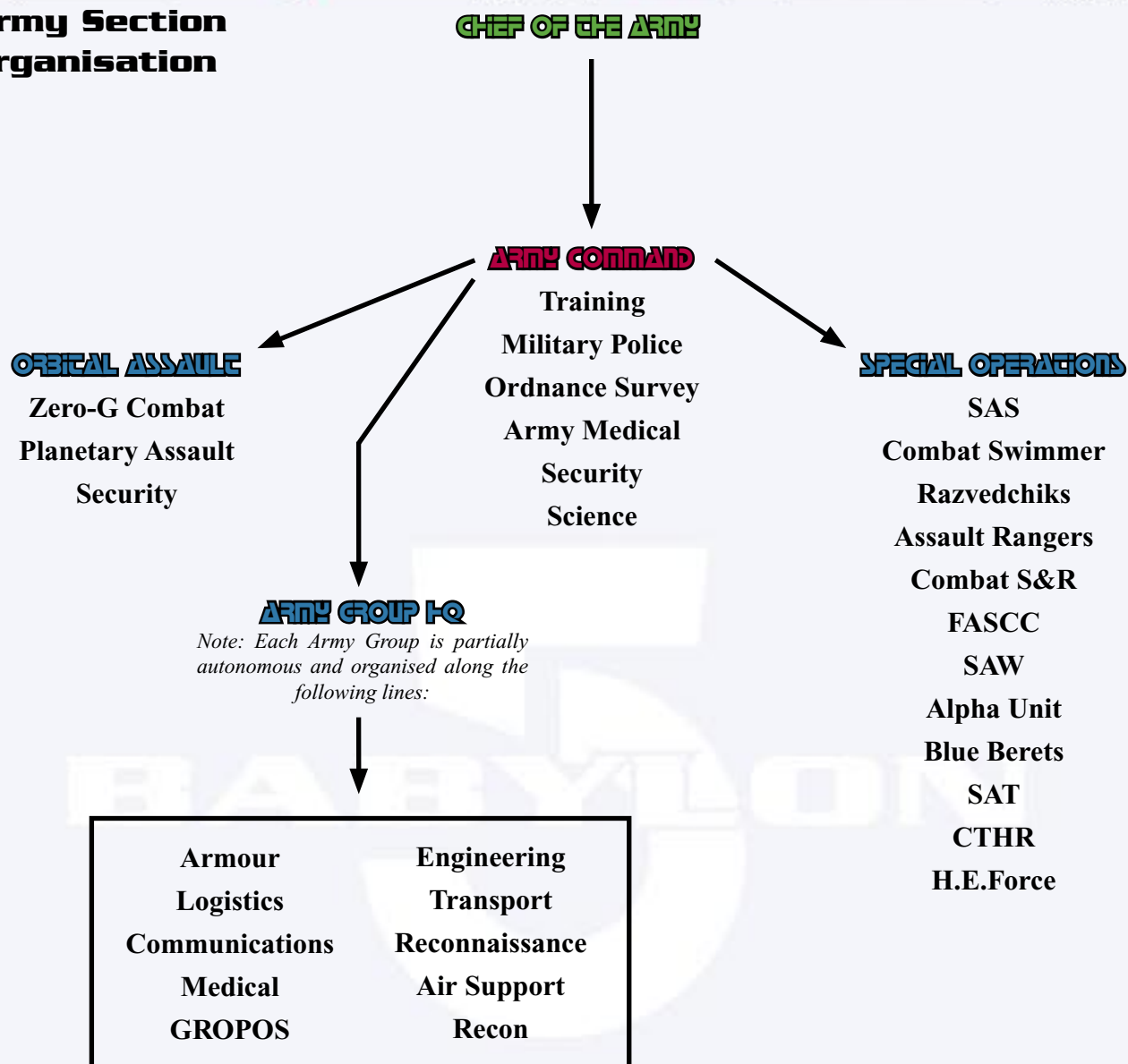
EFA Command is located on Earth, in a specially built fortress city on the Baltic coast called Nova Riga. EFA Command is the ground-based equivalent of Zeus Station – indeed, the two have a constant microwave link, allowing their computers to function as a single system. Most of the EFA Command is underground; the mountains around Nova Riga are catacombed with vaults and passageways that are buried deep enough to survive a direct hit from a mass driver.

## Training (EATC)

EarthForce Army Training Command oversees the training of both enlisted men and officers. Enlisted troops are trained at any one of two dozen training commands across the Alliance. Troops enlist for three, six or nine years and are trained in a technical specialisation or special field of combat.

Officers are trained at the West Point complex in Nebraska. Officer training takes four years, after which the officer is obliged to serve for another ten, although most make lifetime careers out of the Army.

## Army Section Organisation



### Ordnance Survey (EFOS)

The Ordnance Survey group is responsible for mapping the planets of the galaxy. The Navy's Survey Section actually finds the planets, but the EFOS' radar and holography satellites then scan the planetary surface and produce detailed maps. Modern maps contain more than just geographic features; electronically integrated into their data is information on political and cultural groups, communications and power lines, stochastic weather models and so on. The EFOS is a general-purpose spy network just as much as it is a cartography section.

### Security

The Security Section is responsible for the safety and security of all Army bases. This includes physical security (patrols, razorwire fences, sonic screamers), but also electronic security.

### Military Police (MPs)

The Military Police are the Army's police force, responsible for enforcing the law on bases and in camps, as well as tracking down deserters and enforcing discipline at times. They work in concert with Internal Affairs.

## Army Medical (EFAMed)

The Army Medical Command co-ordinates the efforts of the Medical section in each Army Group. It also operates the various military hospitals.

## Science (EFASci)

The Science section focuses on research and development of new technologies and weapons, but has also made great strides in researching new medical treatments and life support techniques. The Army's bases on alien worlds does give it a unique opportunity to study different ecosystems, biologies and conditions.



## Orbital Assault (OA)

As so much of EarthForce's operations take place in space, Orbital Assault has risen from being a small group of specially trained troops into a vital third branch of the Army. Orbital Assault is charged with the defence of EarthForce's spacebourn assets and with carrying out combat in zero gravity. OA is sometimes erroneously referred to as the Marine Corps, as these are the soldiers most often seen on Naval vessels.

Orbital Assault is based on Zeus Station.

## Zero-G Combat Troops (ZGCT)

ZGC troops are trained for combat on board space vessels. The ZGCTs are the troops in the breaching pods who board enemy ships, or who walk across the outer hull of a space vessel to plant explosives on a pulse cannon. The ZGCTs are the elite forces of Orbital Assault.

## Planetary Assault

The planetary assault section is the leading edge of any Army attack on a planet below. While all troops are ready to deploy from Condor troop transports, the Planetary Assault units can be fired in coffin-sized drop pods from a standard cobra bay. Even tanks and support vehicles can be dropped from orbit in this fashion. Planetary Assault goes in first; the regular army groups follow them in.

## Station Security

The Security section of Orbital Assault provides security for the various starbases and space stations controlled by the Navy. These troops are augmented by civilian law enforcement agencies, and work in concert with Border Control at the various spaceports.

## Army Group Headquarters (HQ)

The Headquarters of each Army Group is commanded by a Brigadier General or higher. HQ is the co-ordination centre for the divisions in the group. HQ commands a number of subsections – depending on the size of the Army Group, each of these could be a full division or bigger, or as small as a company.

## Transport (T)

Transport assets are normally Condor troop transport ships, Magni heavy lifter VTOLs, and a host of smaller vehicles, mostly shuttles and hovercraft. Every division is designed to be as mobile as possible; static emplacements are for the Colonial Forces. A Transport section should be capable of moving the whole division within 72 hours.

## Armour (A)

Ever since the Dilgar War, the Army has relied on the increasing aged Asgard chassis for virtually all of its tanks and heavy armoured vehicles. Designs like a Thor, Loki, Hel or Odin tank all use the same tracks and body, differing only by the purpose-specific turret, weapons systems and added electronics. This allows the number of spare parts required to be kept to a minimum. All Armour assets of EarthForce are environmentally sealed, allowing them to be used in non-breathable atmospheres and rendering them proof against biological and chemical attacks.

## Communications (C)

Army Communications use directional microwaves and lasers to transfer information, with basic radio as a backup. Security is maintained thanks to a scrambler chip that automatically encodes all transmissions. The

scrambler key is changed regularly and must be manually updated (although, say, a platoon commander can update the communications keys of his entire platoon at once as long as all their links are within a short range).

The Army uses Rainbow Mobile Communications Satellites, which are supercompact satellites that can be launched using a shuttle and give coverage over a 10,000 kilometre area.

## Recon (R)

Recon uses Vidar spyplanes, Sleipnir scout vehicles and Frigga VTOLs to scout ahead of the army. Ideally, drones and satellite imaging can also be used to locate enemy forces and defences, but the army can only rely on orbital assets if it has space superiority.

## Engineering (E)

The Engineering Army Corps is responsible for construction of bases, fortifications, spaceports, bridges and other facilities, as well as maintaining or demolishing such structures. Most structures used by the Army are preprogrammed meshes of smart plastics and plasti-crete, which are essentially solid inflatable buildings that build themselves when activated.

## Medical (M)

EarthForce Army Medical operates from MASH shuttles. These are light shuttles with a specially equipped medical bay, designed to stabilise soldiers and ready them for fast evacuation to the more elaborate medical facilities in the support vessels above. Each of the treatment bays on the MASH shuttle is self-contained and can be detached – for example, if there are seven soldiers who need immediate evacuation, but there are another five bays being used for less critical work, then those six bays can be removed from the shuttle easily. The shuttle takes off and brings the critically injured out, while the remaining five bays remain below to offer treatment to the less critical wounded.

## Air Support (AS)

The Army has a virtual monopoly on sub-orbital combat machines. Orbital fighters like the Starfury are under the Navy's control, but the Army has exclusive access to the fearsome Valkyrie Gunship and Heimdall Fighter-Bomber. The concept of an 'air force' with a distinct identity separate from Air Support for ground operations has long since been lost. However, with the development of the new Thunderbolt Starfury with its ability to operate in atmosphere, the Army's supremacy in atmospheric warfare may come under review.

## Army Organisation

The basic tiers of the Army are as follows:

- Platoon (12 men/4 vehicles)
- Company (3 platoons/40 men/12 vehicles)
- Battalion (4 companies/150 men/48 vehicles)
- Division (3 battalions/450 men/144 vehicles)
- Regiment (Division and Support elements)

An **Army** is a planetary deployment, composed of whatever assets are required to carry out that Army's mission. An **Army Group** is a loose association of divisions that share a particular fort or assignment area. EarthForce's divisions are considerably smaller than the divisions in 21<sup>st</sup> century armies (a US Army division might be up to 100 times bigger). This shrinkage came about because of the Navy and EarthGov's insistence that basic army organisation be determined by how many troops can fit on a troop transport ship. A Hyperion, for example, can transport one regiment of the above size.

Army Groups fulfil much of the same purposes as old-style divisions on an organisational level, although divisions can be moved from group to group easily.

EarthForce also uses the Task Force, which is a combined operation between one or more Army Groups and naval Battle Groups.

## Logistics (L)

As every division should be capable of fighting and moving on its own, the Logistics section that provides support and supplies is as streamlined as possible. Equipment is standardised wherever possible and provided in pre-packaged format as kits. The Centauri have dismissively referred to EarthForce as the 'tinker-toy army' (technically, they referred to it as a 'Faslshiri army', but the meaning is the same) due to the use of standardised, interchangeable components whenever possible.

## GROPOS (G)

The heart and soul – and fighting arm – of EarthForce are the GROPOS infantry. GROPOS – 'GROund POunderS' – was originally a dismissive nickname given to the infantry by the Navy, but it has stuck and has even been adopted as an official name. GROPOS infantry are the toughest, meanest and most heavily armed foot troops ever fielded by humanity. See page 107 for GROPO equipment.

## Special Operations (EASpecOps)

The Special Operations Units are fully described in the *Earth Alliance Factbook* on page 155. Shorter descriptions are given below.

## Special Assault Service (SAS)

The best known of the SpecOps teams, the Special Assault Service are commandoes who can be dropped far behind enemy lines to complete the most difficult of missions. They are experts in reconnaissance, sabotage, infiltration and long-term covert training of indigenous peoples. They have access to the most advanced equipment, including changeling nets and black light suits.

## Combat Swimmer Flotillas (CSF)

The 'Killer Whales' are the nautical version of the SAS, designed to operate in planetary oceans. They use MK7 wetsuits, which can crack oxygen from seawater for up to two weeks. They also use Piranha submarines and Minnow drive vehicles.

## Razvedchiks (FCRU)

The Razvedchiks (Forward Combat Recon Unit) are the elite recon units of Special Operations, equipped with the best in stealth and surveillance gear.

## Assault Rangers (CAS)

The Assault Rangers are an elite strike force that are the leading edge of most GROPOS operations. They have their own Condor assault ships, and can be on any planet in the Alliance within days. They are equipped for a full suborbital drop of all their gear, including armour.

## Combat Search and Rescue (CSR)

The CSR specialise in retrieving downed pilots and other stranded personnel. Every CSR operative is trained as a trauma medic, and the team can be dropped into the most hostile terrain and still make pickup. The CSR are undoubtedly the most honoured branch of Army SpecOps in the Navy, as many downed Starfury pilots owe the CSR their lives.

## Forward Air and Space Combat Control (FASCC)

The FASCC are SpecOps' interface with the Navy and conventional Air Support assets. FASCC teams arrange for air strikes and Starfury interdictions. The FASCC give SpecOps units full access to command functions even in the midst of a firefight far behind enemy lines.



## Special Air Wings (SAW)

The Special Air Wings are the best pilots in the Ground Forces. They can bring a Valkyrie Gunship or Frigga Transport anywhere on a planet to deliver a company of SAS or Assault Ranger. The SAWs can fly through a hail of enemy fire or the most nightmarish storms, and get their troops there safely.

## Alpha Unit

Alpha Unit is technically part of the Psi Corps Military Department; it is a unit of telepaths trained in Special Forces techniques. As the Corps values its telepaths considerably more highly than it values mundanes, the Corps only gives permission to deploy Alpha Unit in the most extreme of circumstances. The Alpha Unit teams are all in telepathic contact with each other; the squad literally moves as a single entity.

## Blue Berets

The Blue Berets do not exist. True, the Russian Consortium and several other militaries and intelligence services once employed telepaths, but that was over a century ago, before the Psi Corps was founded. Of course, now the Psi Corps controls and regulates all telepaths and ensures they are protected and not used in any military operations. There is no unit of rogue telepaths, nor are there descendants of those original military telepaths who have never found their way into a Corps testing centre.

The Blue Berets are maintained as an emergency counter against Psi Corps – there are those in EarthForce who know how powerful and how influential the Corps has become and how the Army might one day be called upon to secure Teetown or the Mars dome or another Corps stronghold. The Blue Berets are EarthForce's ace in the hole in the event of a war against telepaths.

## Special Action Teams (SATs)

The Special Action Teams are even more secret than the Blue Berets. They are made up of ex-SAS officers, and only recruit new members when an SAT member is killed. The SATs are the Earth equivalent of Thenta Makur assassins; unstoppable special forces capable of accomplishing any mission.

## Counter-Terrorism/Hostage Rescue Regiment (CTHR)

The CTHR are an elite team with members drawn from the ranks of the other SpecOps forces. Stopping terrorism has been a priority for EarthForce since even before the attack on San Diego – the CTHR has the best troops and equipment to get this job done. They can storm a space

station crowded with Free Mars terrorists and bring the ambassadors out alive while leaving a hundred terrorists dead or incapacitated in their wake.

## Hostile Environment Forces (HEF)

While all GROPOS units are trained in using sealed environment suits (see page 107), the HEF forces take this a step forward. They are trained to fight in conditions that push the limits of human life-support technology. HEF troops are ready to fight on high-gravity worlds, on planets with toxic atmospheres, on worlds that burn or freeze with extremes of temperature. Most of the common alien races, such as the Centauri, Narn, Minbari, Drazi and so on have broadly similar environmental requirements to humanity, so the HEF can move through terrain and establish outposts where enemies fear to tread.

## Roleplaying Special Operations Characters

Player characters need to be able to make their own decisions, which is not usually an option for foot troops. In a game where, say, one Player Character is a platoon commander and the others are his troops, then the lower-ranking Player Characters have very little say in important decisions. There is little scope for individual action. Special Operations has a little more leeway, and so are often a better choice for campaigns.

## EarthForce Intelligence

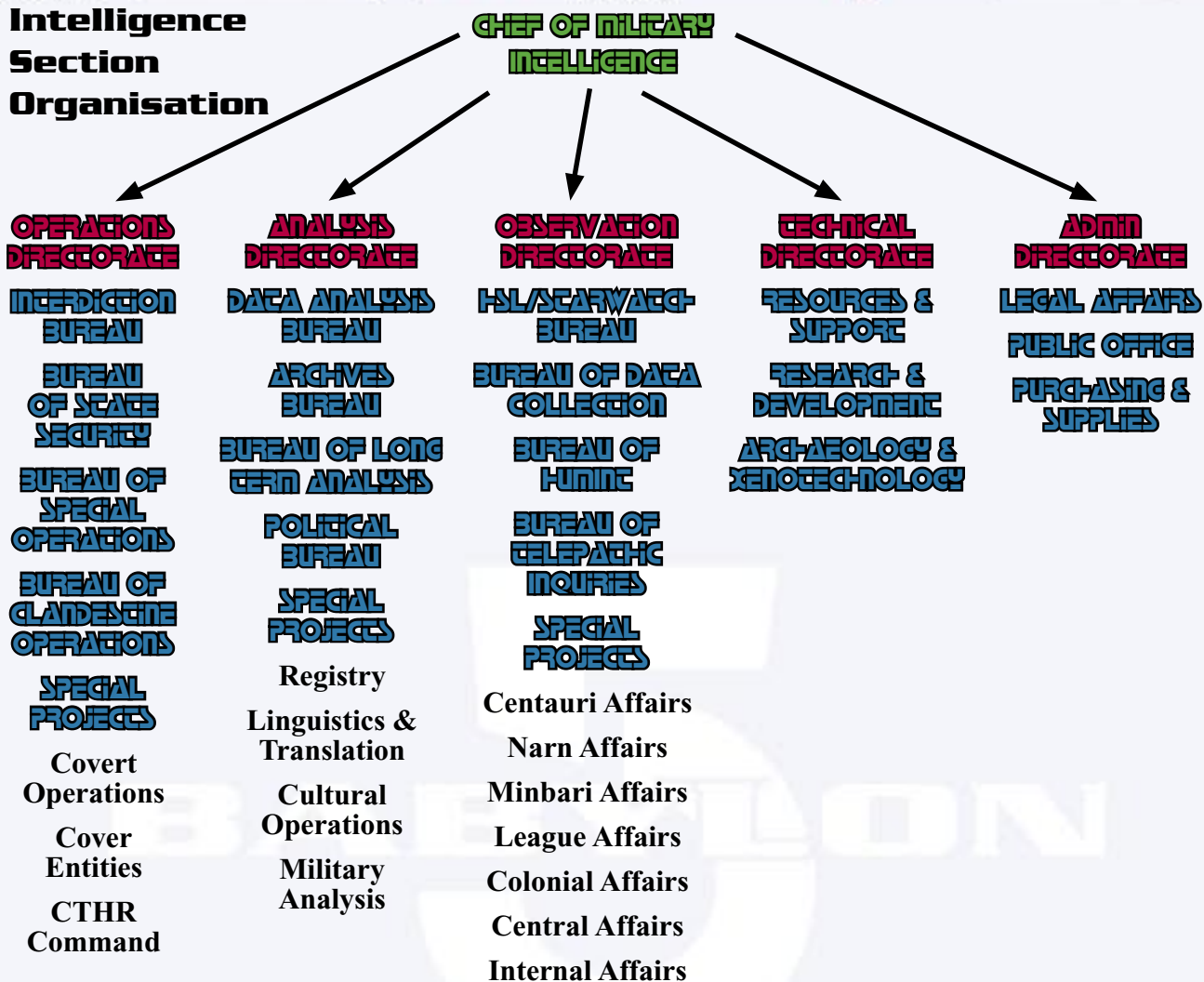
EarthForce Military Intelligence is a massively powerful and influential organisation. It has moved far beyond its original mandate of providing strategic intelligence to the other armed forces, and has absorbed many of the responsibilities of civilian intelligence agencies – it now monitors events within the Alliance as well as foreign powers, and works against terrorism and sedition as well as military threats.

Organisationally, Intelligence is the third main branch of EarthForce, after the Navy and Army. It is divided into 12 Bureaus and five Divisions. The head of EarthForce Intelligence is always referred to as E.

## Chief of Military Intelligence (CMI, or 'E')

The Chief holds the rank of a four-star Admiral or General (O12). Unlike the leaders of the other branches who are invariably public figures, the head of Intelligence is kept shrouded in secrecy. Only a handful of people know who the current E is. The Chief and much of Intelligence's

## Intelligence Section Organisation



*Special Projects Note:* Each of the three main divisions runs several Special Projects. Each Special Project operates as a cross-bureau entity, but has authority almost on a par with the head of a bureau. For example, at the weekly command meeting of the Observation Division, the Director of Observations would meet with the four bureau heads and also all the project co-ordinators for the Observations projects. The Special Projects are, however, temporary if long-lasting structures that are formed and dissolved as the needs of EFI change.

Each Directorate is headed by a Director, while the Bureaus are headed by Assistant Directors. The various special projects are headed by Co-ordinators.

operations are based in London, although Intelligence also has its own space station, called the Watchtower, and offices all over the Alliance.

## Observation Directorate (EFObDir)

Observation Directorate's role is gathering information. Undercover operations have changed greatly since first contact. It is almost impossible to infiltrate human agents into alien societies – few are open enough to allow humans into even the middle echelons of their governments, industries or militaries, and surgical disguises or changeling nets are of limited effectiveness. Human intelligence – the gathering of information using undercover operatives – has been greatly limited, although there are plenty of aliens who are willing to sell information to EFI in exchange for the hardest credit in known space.

Observation Directorate's stated goal is to gather data on threats facing the Alliance from both within and without. It is considerably better at identifying internal threats than external ones – the only government that EFObDir has had any success in infiltrating agents into is that of the Centauri Republic, and the Centauri have been playing the great game of pawns and agents for centuries longer than EFI, so it is uncertain who is playing who in that case.

## HSL/Starwatch Bureau

The HSLs are Hyperspace Listening Posts, run in conjunction with the Spacewatch Section of the Navy. The listening posts scan for tachyon transmissions and the wakes caused by jump points, in the hopes of gathering information about enemy movements. HSL Posts have been established on dozens of worlds. Most are automated, but a trained sensor operator has proven more effective than the best AIs at intuiting the different between the normal churn of hyperspace and the passage of a ship. Therefore, certain key HLPs are manned.

Starwatch is the bland name given to EFI's fleet. Intelligence has a number of vessels attached to it, some of which are Tethys cutters and Shadowcloak escorts, but most are augmented cargo ships and shuttles. The fleet skulks around the borders of Earth and alien space, observing movement and making contact with useful sources of information. The Starwatch fleet is not a significant military force, but is virtually omnipresent – an EFI agent is rarely more than a jump or two away from help.

Starwatch itself is based at the Watchtower, while the HLP network is co-ordinated from the Spacewatch base at Woomera.

## Bureau of Human Intelligence (HumInt)

The Human Intelligence section is the 'classic' spy section of EFI – these are the people in trench coats and dark glasses meeting earnestly in parks and cafes. HumInt spends over 30% of its budget on bribes to informants and spies. About four-fifths of its efforts are concentrated on the Alliance itself. During the Clark regime, HumInt's main targets within the Alliance were:

- 3 Mars Separatists and Terrorists
- 3 Proxima Separatists and Terrorists
- 3 Dissidents and Home Terrorists
- 3 Alien Infiltrators
- 3 Babylon 5 Separatists and Terrorists

Human Intelligence has also tried to infiltrate various alien governments, but the lack of success resulted in these operations being transferred over to the nation-specific projects.

## Bureau of Data Collection (DataCol)

Data Collection is closely associated, unsurprisingly, with the Bureau of Data Analysis. Together, the two represent the single largest concentration of computing power in EarthGov. Data Collection's role is gathering information electronically – Com taps, intercepted tachyon transmissions, monitoring programs on the computer networks, hacking into Centauri or Narn computers and so on. Practically every message sent in the Earth Alliance can potentially be monitored by DataCol, while the technicians have had far more luck compromising alien computer networks than their colleagues in HumInt have had in compromising alien societies. The Minbari computers have proved to be an insurmountable challenge/holy grail for DataCol – after ten years of work and several nervous breakdowns, DataCol has yet to figure out the basic principles on which their crystalline devices even work.

Like HumInt, DataCol spends a great deal of effort intercepting and monitoring traffic within the Alliance, although it does allocate a slightly greater amount of funding and effort to the alien governments.

## Bureau of Telepathic Inquiries (TPI)

When telepaths were first discovered, the intelligence agencies of the world snapped up as many as they could. Telepathy had the potential to completely revolutionise espionage – and as the only thing that could effectively block a telepath was another telepath, control of the new breed was of vital importance. A telepath bureau was established with almost unseemly haste. It bloomed for a brief time, accomplishing more in a few months than whole divisions had done in years. The last secrets of rival Terran powers were swiftly scanned and stolen by EFI telepaths.



Then the Metahuman Regulatory Authority (which became the Psi Corps) took control the military telepaths, and the Bureau of Telepathy shrank and atrophied, becoming nothing more than an official liaison between the Corps and EFI that had to beg for telepathic aid. During the latter days of the last century, however, the Telepathic Inquiries Bureau enjoyed a new renaissance as the Corps became actively interested in providing intelligence services. Initially, this Corps were only brought in to help with one of the alien affairs projects, but the rules about authorised scans of humans by Corps telepaths can be relaxed if there is a pressing security need. This does require authorisation from a senior judge, the Senate, the President or E himself.

More and more of EFI's operations have been taken over by the Psi Corps, especially on Earth. President Clark was especially willing to permit scans to hunt down terrorists. Between 2255 and 2260, the involvement of TPI Bureau and the Psi Corps in Observation and Operations activities rose by over 300%.

President Luchenko has put a temporary hold on all TPI Bureau activities while investigations into the relationship between Psi Corps and the more questionable aspects of the Clark government are investigated.

## Observation Special Projects

The Directorate operates several special projects, each of which oversees a particular geopolitical region and is responsible for orchestrating the gathering of data within that region.

**Centaury Affairs** is the oldest established of the alien projects. The Centaury are – or were – relatively open to human involvement in Centaury society, giving the Project

relatively free reign to gather information. However, the Centaury are also much, much more experienced in this sort of espionage and double-bluff work, and it is believed that most of EFI's files on the Centaury are heavily biased in favour of Houses Jaddo and Urza thanks to Centaury Affairs agents being fed disinformation.

**Narn Affairs** was just getting comfortable when the Narn-Centaury War hit. There are relatively few humans allowed on Narn, and many Narn have an unfortunate loyalty to the Kha'Ri (from an intelligence perspective), so EFI was reduced to bribing dissidents and inserting what agents it could on Narn colony worlds and trade hubs. Electronic and telepathic methods had much more success. With the virtual destruction of the Narn Regime during the war, it is hoped that Narn Affairs will be able to extend its depth of intelligence gathering within Narn – although there is not much left worth spying on.

**Minbari Affairs** has extensive files on the Minbari – very large and empty ones. The Minbari culture has proved completely opaque, their computer systems impenetrable, and they have numerous telepaths to block Psi Corps scans. They rarely trade with races outside their Protectorate, and even then conduct negotiations using a highly formalised ritual that gives no openings for outsiders to inquire about Minbari politics or current affairs. The Earth Alliance was not even permitted an embassy on Minbar until 2258 – and even then, the handpicked staff of aides and diplomats chosen by Observations was turned back at the border, and only a single ambassador was allowed enter the Federation.

Now that the Minbari are becoming more open after the war, it may be possible to gather more information on them – but some in the Minbari Affairs privately believe that the other races are right, and that the Alliance and EFI should just leave the Minbari alone.

**League Affairs** is a busy hive of smaller offices. It has extensive contacts within the Brakiri, Drazi, Abbai and – until recently – the Hyach, but races like the Gaim and Vree have defied most forms of Observation. League Affairs is seen by many as a lame duck of a department, but the observers and analysts there are incredibly overworked. There are less than a dozen people assigned to the Grome, for example, but they are still asked to produce detailed sociological/biological/political/military reports on the race even though a Grome has not been seen by any humans in the last 20 years.

**Colonial Affairs:** The Colonial Affairs section covers Observation of all human colonies outside the Sol system, except Proxima. Proxima was transferred to Central by President Clark. Colonial Affairs' remit specifies that it look for signs of dissent and secessionist movements among the settled colonists, but it also monitors the various corporate colonies and mining outposts. Colonial Affairs budget is generous in terms of the number of people it has to monitor, but pathetically inadequate in terms of space and travel.

**Central Affairs:** Central Affairs monitors the Sol and Proximan systems. It is by far the largest of the Special Projects, and had attention and funding lavished on it by President Clark. Its original brief was to monitor for signs of alien espionage attempts, but has been expanded to deal with terrorists, dissidents, traitors, alien sympathisers and political opponents. Much of Central Affairs leadership was arrested following the fall of Clark.

**Internal Affairs:** Internal Affairs monitors EarthForce itself for signs of treason. It was a relatively small project, although it was massively expanded during the Civil War as EFI frantically tried to stem the flow of defectors to Babylon 5 and Proxima.

## Operations Directorate (EFOpsDir)

Operation is the 'active' section of Intelligence, undertaking short or medium-term missions to deal with specific problems. OpsDir has its own special forces and also makes extensive use of the Army's Special Operations Units. OpsDir is based at the Watchtower.



All the Operations Bureaus are considerably smaller than their counterparts in Observation or Analysis, but are invariably made up of the most elite operatives available. A highly trained and skilled Operations agent can do more for EarthForce than a whole division of GROPOS.

## Interdiction Bureau (IDict)

Interdictions Bureau are the troubleshooters of EFI, responsible for maintaining security of the Alliance and its informational gathering efforts. They work with Internal Affairs to locate traitors and spies, but it is the Interdiction Bureau that actually secures the enemy agents. Interdiction is also responsible for bugsweeping and electronic security, co-ordinating Special Unit raids on enemy communications assets and so on. If the Bureau of Special Operations is EFI's sword, then Interdiction is its shields. The IDict unofficial motto is '*smert' shpionam*' – 'death to spies'.

## Bureau of State Security (StateSec)

The Bureau of State Security is responsible for the safety of the President, Vice-President, Senate and other key Alliance officials, as well as any visiting alien dignitaries. StateSec was stripped down and rebuilt from the ground up after the death of President Santiago, and is likely to be similar rebuilt after Clark. StateSec is notoriously unlucky – no less than three Presidents have been assassinated in the last century (Robinson, Kiyoshi, Santiago) while in StateSec's care.

StateSec is also responsible for the Presidential Guard aboard EarthForce One and Two.

## Bureau of Special Operations (SpecOps)

Special Ops Bureau is the most militaristic (if that term can be meaningfully applied to a section of a military organisation) of the bureaus. Its purpose is to design and carry out covert and special operations for long-term strategic or informational goals. Special Operations agents roam far beyond enemy lines, capturing key documents or sabotaging enemy intelligence assets. During the Minbari War, for example, three SpecOps units attempted to capture and steal a Sharlin, and managed to get on board the *Ciel Umar* at Tarellen.

EFI SpecialOps works with the Army Special Ops and the Naval Special Operations detachments within each Battle Group to co-ordinate unconventional attacks on enemy assets.

## Bureau of Clandestine Operations (ClandOps)

The Clandestine Operations Bureau specialises in undercover and psychological operations. Most of its operations are short-term ones, but it has a few deep cover agents that have been in position within enemy organisations and foreign powers for years or even decades. ClandOps personnel keep to themselves, and the reports back from this bureau are notoriously sketchy. No one, not even the Operations Director himself is wholly aware of what ClandOps are currently up to.

## Operations Special Projects

**Covert Operations:** Another in the seeming infinity of Special Operations divisions (a legacy of the Army's second-class standing within EarthForce), Covert Operations is responsible for Intelligence's long term 'off-the-grid' activities, such as the establishment and maintenance of secret research facilities and HLPs. Covert Ops also handles long-term Special Operations, like secret expeditions to retrieve alien technology or artefacts too inaccessible or dangerous for IPX to retrieve.

**Cover Entities:** This bizarrely-named section maintains the EFI's false-front companies and corporations. Haverson Shipping, New Frontier Investments, SVI and Cobra Transit are all owned and operated by EFI, along with dozens of other smaller organisations.

**CTHR Command:** CTHR Command works against domestic terrorism throughout the Earth Alliance. It works with the CTHR regiment and civilian law enforcement agencies, as well as the Colonial defence forces.

## Analysis Directorate (EFAnDir)

The Analysis Directorate takes the wealth of information gathered by Observation and processes it. EFI produces a constant stream of updates, giving the government and other military branches up-to-date reports on current foreign and domestic matters, especially fleet and army movements, political events, potential flashpoints and trends.

EFAnDir is based in France.

## Data Analysis Bureau (EFADDA)

ADDA is the analysis counterpart of DataCol, crunching vast amounts of gathered information. Billions of conversations and messages are scanned by AIs for keywords and phrases. Economic reports are analysed for trends and evidence of military activity; increased purchase of spoo in a certain district might indicate increased overtime in a Centauri engineering works that produces heavy laser parts, implying a new phase of Centauri ship construction. Data Analysis' AIs are among the most advanced in the Alliance.

## Archives Bureau (Arc)

'EFI never forgets' claim the Archives Department. The Archives section – its main computers buried deep in an old coalmine – maintains copies of everything that passes through DataCol and ADDA. Massive files are maintained on practically every topic. Rumours insist Archives collect files on every human in the Alliance, copying credit trails and intercepted transmissions into the computer's virtually infinite storage space. In truth, Archives only stores information that its AIs believe will be useful in the future as well as official EFI records. There are all sorts of strange files in the archives, waiting to be discovered.

In addition to the electronic archives, the Bureau maintains museums and warehouses of alien technology, recovered weapons, souvenirs of past missions and so on.

## Political Bureau (PB)

The Political Bureau's role is to repackage the products of the Data Analysis and Long Term Projections bureaus for use by the civilian government. The bureau also serves as an interface between EarthGov and the rest of EarthForce Intelligence. During the Clark presidency, the Political Bureau was placed under the control of the Ministry of Peace (Minipax), but since that ministry has been dissolved, the bureau is currently in a state of flux.

## Long Term Projections Bureau (LTP)

Long Term Projections is exactly that – contemplating the fate of the galaxy over the next five, ten, fifteen, twenty or even fifty years. These projections are rarely accurate – Earth simply does not know enough about the galaxy to predict future events with confidence, and known space has changed completely since the start of the Babylon Project – but they do serve as a useful guide for Alliance policy. During the Clark regime, LTP was augmented with precognitives from Psi Corps, but this practice has been largely discontinued.

## Analysis Special Projects

**Registry** is the bland name given to the ambitious plan to log information on every human in the Earth Alliance, including DNA samples and psychometric data. Registry is currently on hold following an executive order from President Luchenko, but the files still exist.

The **Linguistics & Translation** project recruits translators who can speak alien languages. Computer translation often misses subtleties of contextual meaning that human pick up on – and EFI is all about subtlety.

The related **Cultural Operations** is seen as a joke by many within EFI, as the operatives here spend their time studying what is sometimes termed ‘fluff’ – social mores, entertainment programs, trivia and so on. Cultural Operations trains deep cover agents in *savoir faire*, in blending in. Knowing how to serve breen might make the difference between an agent recognising a Centauri agent using a changeling net or not.

**Military Analysis**, in contrast, is the most hard-nosed section of Analysis. It works to feed information to the Navy, Army and Operations about actual military targets and conditions.

## Technical Directorate (EFTechDir)

The technical directorate’s role is support of the other directorates. Analysis and the Bureau of Data Collection requires the most support from Technical; most of the technicians here are computer engineers, but there are a few who work in the far more interesting fields of espionage and counter-espionage. TechDir does have laboratories where highly funded mad scientists work on new gadgets for spies and SpecOps troops.

## Research & Development (TechR&D)

Technical Research and Development’s main focus is on computing technologies, especially Artificial Intelligence. While basic, ‘dumb’ AIs can appear sentient, they lack any true creativity or insight and are basically just well-written and capricious interfaces. A ‘smart’ AI would be capable of learning in a meaningful fashion.

Tech R&D has an absurdly huge budget, but most of this is channelled off to the Black Projects – see page 111.

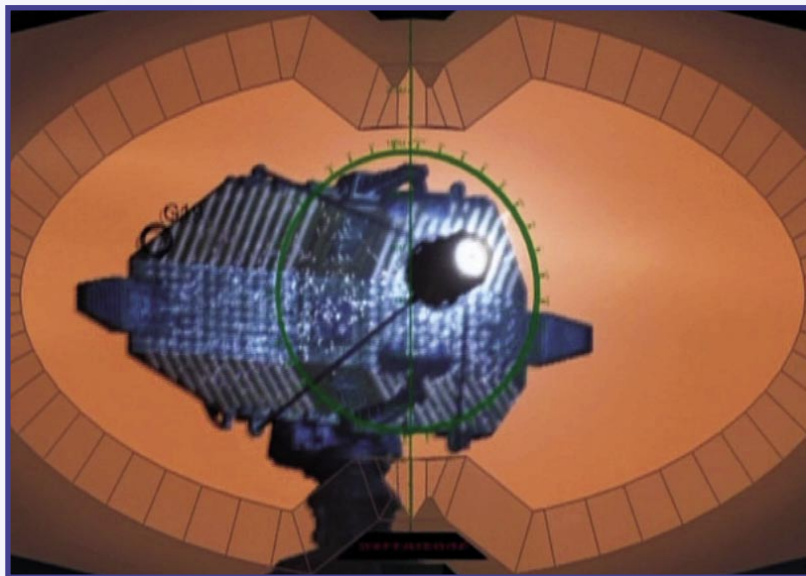
## Archaeology & Xenotechnology (ArcXen)

Interplanetary Expeditions is not the only human organisation interested in the legacy of elder alien races. EFI believes the key to human security may lie in the ruins of some abandoned world. The recent Shadow-Vorlon War reinforced this belief; if the last spasm of the Ancients as they departed this galaxy forever could cause so much chaos and change, then a *permanent* grasp on organic technology or another super weapon would certainly shift the balance of power in the galaxy.

Most of ArcXen’s work goes straight into the Black Projects, although the existence of the section is common knowledge within EFI.

## Resources & Support (ResSup)

Resources & Support maintains EFI’s assets, such as bases, computer networks and the Starwatch fleet.



## Administrative Directorate (EFAdminDir)

Administration is based at EarthDome in Geneva. Administration of the various intelligence directorates can be a deeply frustrating role, as often clerks are not cleared to know what the department they are dealing with actually does.

## Legal Affairs (EFILA)

While Intelligence has an exceptional (indeed, some would argue excessive) amount of leeway to bend Alliance law, there are still numerous cases where operations come into conflict with the legal system. The Legal Affairs office advises EFI staff on legal matters. Often (especially during the Clark administration), political pressure was put on the justice system to expedite or ignore infractions involving Intelligence.

## Public Office (Public)

The Public Office handles press and public relations as well as recruitment.

## Purchasing & Supplies (P&S)

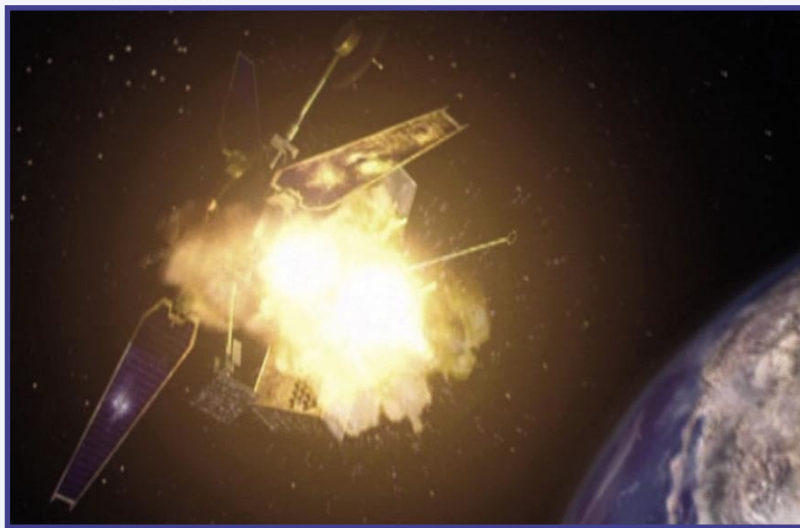
In keeping with the high level of secrecy involved in the Intelligence sector, Purchasing & Supplies works through a number of shell companies and off-the-public-record transactions. Thousand-credit toilet seats and computers purchased for a hundred times their listed value conceal the purchase of more important items, like cutting-edge scientific equipment, biological samples for organic technology research and so on.

## Reserve Forces

The EarthForce reserve is made up of three main sections – the formal reserves from Earth, Mars and the Belt alliance, the Colonial forces, and the planetary defence networks.

## Chief of Colonial Forces (CCF)

Of the six chiefs, the CCF is the least important, and knows it. The position of CCF is a death sentence in terms of advancement, so it is usually given to generals on the verge of retirement as a reward for long service. The CCF's role is to command all of the Alliance's defensive forces that are not directly within EarthForce.



In practice, the CCF's command extends only to the reserve forces on Earth, Mars and the Belt. The planetary defence networks of the four key worlds (Earth, Mars, Io, Proxima) are effectively under the command of the Navy thanks to permanent heavy naval presence there (all Colonial planetary defences are placed under Naval jurisdiction if the Navy has a base or other capital asset in orbit), while the colonial forces of the outlying colonies tend to be so small and informal they are hardly worth mentioning.

## Defence Networks

Each of the four key planetary networks is broadly similar in design. Bellerophon and Prometheus defence satellites are placed in a grid in geostationary orbit, which extra satellites placed on approaches to key population centres. Each satellite communicates to its neighbours and individual ground relay stations using direct laser beams. The satellites have a limited amount of automatic response – any ship within the satellite's field of fire that is behaving in a clearly hostile or dangerous manner (weapons charged and locked, moving outside registered orbital paths at high speed and so on) is automatically challenged and can be fired upon. Normally, however, the satellite must be commanded to fire.

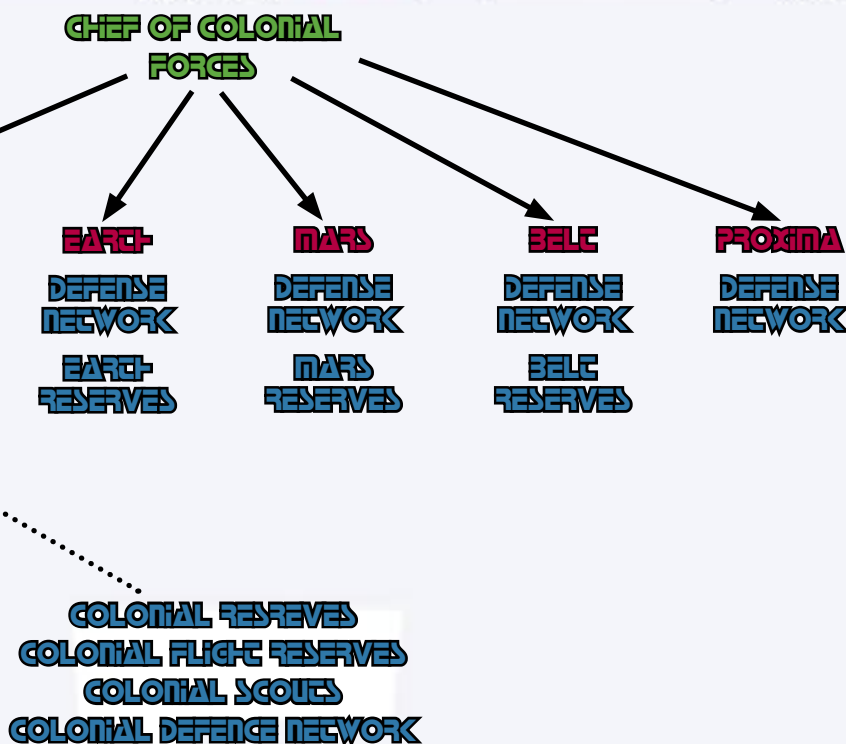
In addition to the satellites, each defence network has ground-based missile launchers and lasers and a limited number of Orion bases for extra fire support and co-ordination.

## Reserve Forces (Earth, Mars, Belt)

Any able-bodied human can join the EarthForce Reserves. Reserve forces train one or two weekends a month in basic military techniques. They are issued with solid if

## Reserve Forces Section Organisation

**COLONIAL FORCES**  
Note: Each Colonial Force is nearly entirely autonomous and organised along the following lines:



somewhat outdated equipment, but are not considered a really combat-ready force – the logistical problems of space travel mean that mass infantry invasions will never happen. The main purpose of the Reserves is to maintain civil order – they are deployed to deal with natural disasters, civil unrest and so on. The reserve tends to be commanded by retired EarthForce officers.

The Belt Reserve works somewhat differently to the Earth and Mars reserve forces. The Belt Alliance has a relatively small population, but has a huge number of combat-ready fighters and small ships. In the event of an invasion of the Sol System, the Belt Reserve would be called up, providing over ten thousand ships for the defence of the jumpgate and the rest of the system.

### Colonial Forces

Several Earth colonies maintain their own local defence forces. These tend to be poorly paid or even irregular volunteer forces, but they are co-ordinated and partially supported through the office of the CCF. As of 2265, Proxima III, Orion III, Orion VII, Deneb IV and Beta Durani all have some colonial troops. The Denebians are noted as having the best reserve force, on a par with some regular Army divisions, while the Orion III Reserve Navy is often called on to act as EarthForce's regular 'wet' navy.

**Colonial Reserve:** The Colonial Reserve troops are rarely deployed as front-line combatants (the exception was during the Minbari occupations during the war), but they see plenty of action. Most of the colonies have their own need for a standing army – from police actions on Beta Durani to fighting sea monsters on Orion III, it is a dangerous galaxy that must be met with military force.

**Colonial Flight Reserve:** The Flight Reserve of each Colony is mostly made up of atmosphere-only planes and a few shuttles, although larger colonies can muster a few dozen Delta-Vs or even old Starfox or Nova 'furies.

**Colonial Scouts:** The Scouts for each colonial world are trained to act as local guides and advisors to any Army troops deployed on-planet. Scouts are expected to know every inch of their area of expertise, and to provide vital local intelligence if the Army unit is cut off from communications and support.

**Colonial Defence Network:** The colonial networks tend to be made up of outdated Bellerophons, as the newer Prometheus-class satellites are needed for more high-profile defences. The Navy's Base Operations section provides added firepower for border worlds – when a new colony further out on the jump routes is settled, the Navy satellites are moved on, leaving the world defended by its own few satellites.

# Life in EarthForce

EarthForce is a vast organisation, spanning dozens of worlds and thousands of roles. The day-to-day life of a technician working on Zeus Station's sensor array is nothing like that of a GROPOS slogging through mud on Akdor, or that of an Explorer team uncovering an alien ruin on a dead world on the Rim, or that of a Starfury pilot patrolling space around Babylon 5. Still, they are all united in service to EarthForce, and share a common system of rules and regulations.



## Rank Structure

EarthForce personnel may be commissioned officers, warrant officers or enlisted men. Enlisted members are the low-ranking crew of starships and the ordinary foot troops of the Army. Warrant officers are enlisted men who hold special positions and responsibilities on board ship, serving as head of technical departments. Commissioned officers are the Starfury pilots, the commanders and the leaders of Army units. The Army and Navy use different rank titles, but the ranks are broadly equivalent. Each rank has a number, which is actually used in administration as a pay grade, but does generally equate to that ranks' seniority.

### Enlisted Ranks

E-Number	Navy	Army
E1	Trainee	Recruit
E2	Starman Apprentice	Private
E3	Starman	Specialist
E4	Petty Officer, Third Class	Corporal
E5	Petty Officer, Second Class	Sergeant
E6	Petty Officer, First Class	Master Sergeant
E7	Chief Petty Officer	Sergeant Major
E8	Master Chief Petty Officer	Command Sergeant Major

Navy ranks of E2 and E3 are occasionally still referred to as Crewmen, the rank used by their 'wet-navy' counterparts before the advent of space travel.

### Warrant Ranks

W-Number	Navy	Army
W1	Warrant Officer	Warrant Officer
W2	Chief Warrant Officer, Fourth Class	Chief Warrant Officer, Fourth Class
W3	Chief Warrant Officer, Third Class	Chief Warrant Officer, Third Class
W4	Chief Warrant Officer, Second Class	Chief Warrant Officer, Second Class
W5	Chief Warrant Officer, First Class	Chief Warrant Officer, First Class

### Officer Ranks

O-Number	Navy	Army
O1	Cadet	Cadet
O2	Ensign	Second Lieutenant
O3	Lieutenant Junior Grade	First Lieutenant
O4	Lieutenant	Captain
O5	Lieutenant Commander	Major
O6	Commander	Lieutenant Colonel
O7	Captain	Colonel
O8	Rear General	Brigadier General
O9	Vice General	Major General
O10	Lieutenant General	Lieutenant General
O11	Full General	Full General
O12	Fleet Admiral	General of the Army

The Naval title of Commodore is used on some occasions. Firstly, there can only be one Navy Captain on a ship – if a second Navy officer holding the rank of Captain comes aboard, he is referred to as ‘Commodore’ while on board. A Captain commanding a battle group is also given the temporary title of Commodore. Additionally, there is a long-standing tradition to refer to the commanding officer of a vessel as the Captain, no matter what rank he is.

The Army ranks are also used by the other branches of the service, such as the Colonial Forces (with the exception of the Colonial Flight Reserve and satellite commands) and Intelligence.

The O12 ranks of both services are actually titles rather than genuine ranks. Both are reserved for wartime only and assigned to the supreme commanders of EarthForce forces. Admiral Hamato was both the Fleet Admiral and the General of the Army during the Dilgar War, for example. There is no official rank of Admiral, although it is a title that can be used by Navy officers over the rank of Captain if they so wish. All officers ultimately answer to the Joint Chiefs and the President.

### Pay Scales (Credits)

Pay Grade	Weekly	Monthly	Annual
E1	500	1,000	12,000
E2	600	2,400	28,800
E3	700	2,800	33,600
E4	900	3,600	43,200
E5	1,100	4,400	52,800
E6	1,400	5,200	62,400
E7	1,800	7,200	86,400
E8	2,000	8,000	96,000
W1	1,000	4,000	48,000
W2	1,300	5,200	62,400
W3	1,600	6,400	76,800
W4	2,000	8,000	96,000
W5	2,400	9,600	115,200
O1	800	3,600	43,200
O2	1,000	4,000	48,000
O3	1,200	4,800	57,600
O4	1,400	5,200	62,400
O5	1,800	7,200	86,400
O6	2,200	8,800	105,600
O7	2,500	10,000	120,000
O8	3,000	12,000	144,000
O9	4,000	16,000	192,000
O10	5,000	20,000	240,000
O11	8,000	32,000	384,000
O12	10,000	40,000	480,000

EarthForce personnel pay the Alliance and local taxes under normal circumstances, but are tax-free when deployed to alien worlds, on campaigns or on patrols lasting longer than one month.

Personnel living on a base have their accommodation paid for, but other living costs such as food must be paid for; those living off-base gain a stipend of up to 20% of their base salary (5% at E1–E4, 10% at E5–E8 and O1 to O4, 20% for O5 to O12). Special duties and positions bring further bonuses to pay.

## Medals

EarthForce acknowledges the bravery and heroism of its members by awarding medals.

**Medal of Honour:** The Medal of Honour is the highest award available, and can only be awarded by decision of congress. It is given for exceptional heroism and service to the Alliance as a whole, and has been awarded only a handful of times. John Sheridan is the only person to have won the medal twice – once for the destruction of the *Black Star*, and once for saving Earth from the orbital defence platforms at the end of the civil war.

**Silver Star for Valour:** The Silver Star is awarded by the Joint Chiefs for exceptional bravery in the face of danger. The Silver Star is normally only awarded for actions undertaken in combat during wartime, although it was once awarded to the Captain of the Explorer-class *Cortez* for her actions during the investigation of a derelict alien space fortress.

**President’s Medal:** The President’s Medal is awarded considerably more freely than the Silver Star or Medal of Honour – two or three are given every year, with many more being given out during wartime. The President’s Medal is given for notable service to EarthForce and the Alliance.

**Order of Merit:** The Order of Merit is given for heroism and excellence in the performance of duty. It is not strictly reserved for deeds performed during wartime, but is normally associated with combat. It has occasionally been given for diplomatic or scientific accomplishment.

**Order of the Earth Alliance:** The Order of the Earth Alliance is given for great service to the Alliance as a whole. It has been associated with humanitarian actions; the team who took down the African Particle Beam in 2190 were among the first to be awarded the medal.

**Colonial Medal:** The Colonial Medal is given for heroism and distinguished actions that were performed outside the Sol system. The Colonial Medal was awarded to every Captain in the Earth Expeditionary Force.

## Naval Career Progression

Enlisted	Years in Service (average)	Warrant Officers	Years in Service (average)	Commissioned Officers	Years in Service (average)
Trainee	2			Cadet	3
Starman Apprentice	3			Ensign	4
Starman	4			Lieutenant Junior Grade	5
Petty Officer, Third Class	6	Warrant Officer	5	Lieutenant	8
Petty Officer, Second Class	8	Chief Warrant Officer, Fourth Class	7	Lieutenant Commander	12
Petty Officer, First Class	10	Chief Warrant Officer, Third Class	9	Commander	15
Chief Petty Officer	12	Chief Warrant Officer, Second Class	12	Captain	20
Master Chief Petty Officer	15	Chief Warrant Officer, First Class	15	Brigadier General	25
				Major General	30
				Lieutenant General	35
				Full General	40
				Fleet Admiral	50

## Army Career Progression

Enlisted	Years in Service (average)	Warrant Officers	Years in Service (average)	Commissioned Officers	Years in Service (average)
Recruit	2			Cadet	3
Private	3			Second Lieutenant	4
Specialist	4			First Lieutenant	7
Corporal	6	Warrant Officer	5	Captain	10
Sergeant	8	Chief Warrant Officer, Fourth Class	7	Major	15
Master Sergeant	10	Chief Warrant Officer, Third Class	9	Lieutenant Colonel	20
Sergeant Major	12	Chief Warrant Officer, Second Class	12	Colonel	25
Command Sergeant Major	15	Chief Warrant Officer, First Class	15	General (any)	30
				General of the Army	35

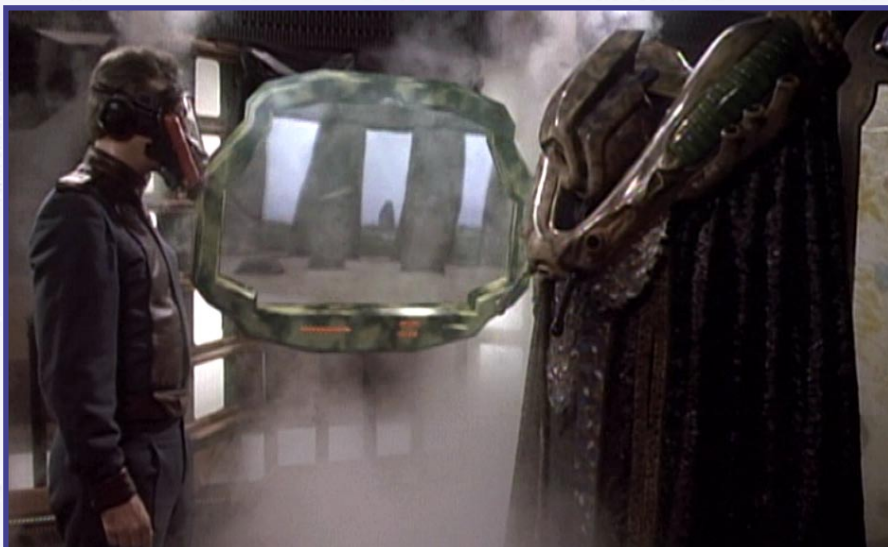
**Defence Service Medal:** The Defence Service Medal is given for heroism during combined operations, normally those involving both Navy and Army forces.

**Naval Commendation Medal:** The Naval Commendation Medal is given for notably heroic or successful actions in combat by a commissioned Navy officer.

**Army Commendation Medal:** The Army Commendation Medal is given for notably heroic or successful actions in combat by a member of the Army. Note that the Army Commendation Medal is open to enlisted and warrant officers.

**Superior Service Medal:** The Superior Service Medal is a commendation for high skills and diligence in the performance of duty. It is not necessarily associated with combat – the SSM can be awarded for managing a base or some scientific advancement.

**Order of Suns:** The Order of Suns is given for heroic action undertaken when exploring the galaxy. It has also become the equivalent of the Colonial Medal for encounters that take place outside the borders of the Alliance.



All the above medals are awarded only on rare occasions. A commanding officer can nominate one of his subordinates for a medal, but the decision is made by a higher body (the Senate for the Medal of Honour for example). If a medal is awarded a second time to the same person, it becomes a medal with bronze cluster; three times, medal with silver cluster; four or more times make it a medal with gold cluster. Especially high awards can also be marked with a ring of laurel leaves; these are referred to as being 'with laurels'. The highest award in the Earth Alliance is therefore the Medal of Honour, gold cluster with laurels.

There are several other awards that are always given when the conditions are met.

**First Contact Medal:** The First Contact Medal is given to the crew of the ship or members of the unit who make First Contact with a hitherto undiscovered alien race. The First Contract protocol must be followed for this award to be given.

**New Worlds Medal (Armstrong Commendation):** The New Worlds Medal is given to the human who is the first to set foot on an alien world.

**Purple Heart:** The Purple Heart is awarded to an EarthForce member injured by enemy action.

**Spacer's Medal (Grissom Commendation):** The Spacer's Medal is given to any EarthForce member exposed to vacuum or radiation while in space.

**Long Service Medal:** The Long Service Medal is given after 15 years service within EarthForce.

## Awarding Medals

Awarding of medals can mark the end of a plot arc in a campaign; it is a very handy in-character way to mark the accomplishments of the players. The Medal of Honour and the Silver Star should be awarded only at the height or end of a campaign, but the other medals can all be given midway through the campaign.

The Purple Heart is given if a character loses five or more hit points in a single encounter with an enemy force. Note that this must be an 'official' enemy power, rather than contact with criminals and the like.

## Recruitment & Training

The Planetary Draft ended in 2249, after the end of Minbari war. A new draft was proposed but never implemented during the Clark regime, although EarthForce recruitment did jump by almost 300% during his presidency. Today, recruitment stations are open in every major city and colony in the Alliance. Joining EarthForce is generally seen as a noble and respectable career choice.

Enlistees must be at least 18 years of age to join EarthForce. The Reserves do have several youth-oriented programs where teenagers can be given a taste of military training and discipline. The recruitment stations accept applications from people up to 50 years of age assuming they pass the required medical standards. Enlisted and crewmen train at the Navy Technical College or at any of the dozen training camps scattered across the Alliance.

To become an officer, a recruit must attend the Navy Officer School (for the Navy) or the West Point Complex (for the Army). The recruit must also have a university degree or the equivalent.

## Basic Training

All recruits, from officers down to GROPOS, go through the same basic training regime at the start of their training courses. It create a common frame of reference for all EarthForce members, as well as ensuring a basic level of fitness and competence among all recruits. Basic training includes physical training, marches, the use of PPGs and basic BilPro guns and the handling of standard vehicles including hovercraft and shuttles.

## Naval Crewmen

Crewmen attend the NTC or one of its branches for two to four years, depending on their specialisation. They also spend six months on board the Cadet Fleet.

## Army Recruits

After basic training, recruits are moved to one of the training camps for advanced combat training and training in their technical speciality. Unlike the monolithic NTC, the Army has over 20 smaller colleges where different technical specialities are taught, such as vehicle maintenance, electronics, communications, medicine and so on.

## Naval Officers

Naval Officers spend two and a half years at the NOS, studying their chosen specialisation and being trained in command, naval history, strategy and tactics, diplomacy and so on. They spend another year and a half on three six-month cruises on board the Cadet Fleet. Should they successfully complete this training course, they receive their commissions as Ensigns.

## Army Officers

Army Officers attend the West Point Academy for four years, where they are taught both a technical specialisation and the art of command. They also spend one year of the four offworld, at one of the colonies or at a naval starbase to familiarise themselves with space operations and hostile environments. On successful graduation from the Academy, they receive their commissions as Second Lieutenants.

## Intelligence Officers

Intelligence Officers attend Army training for two years before transferring to Intelligence's own private academy for further training in specialist fields.

## Roleplaying during Recruitment & Training

Starting a campaign during basic training allows characters to be built up from the very start (before they even have any character levels!), but offers little scope for adventures. One option is to play through events that take place when the characters are on board the cadet fleet, as that could conceivably get into interesting trouble. If two characters have been in EarthForce for roughly the same amount of time, they probably know each other from their academy days.

## EarthForce Careers

Enlisted crewmen and soldiers must serve for at least one tour of duty (three years) on signing up. If they serve for six years, they receive a 15,000 Credit grand towards starting a business or attending a university. This bonus is increased to 30,000 on completion of nine years – but after nine years, few leave the service and instead continue with it as a long-term career.

Officers in the Army or Navy must serve for at least nine years, but receive the same grant on departure.

Assuming a character meets basic proficiency requirements, he can expect to be promoted up the ranks during his career. Exceptional soldiers rise higher and faster, and advancement rates are also much faster during wartime as more places are opened up due to casualties. The average career progression in the Navy and Army can be seen on the Navy Career Progression and Army Career Progression tables:

## Character Classes & Promotion

Not every EarthForce member is an officer or soldier in game terms. Almost any class (with the obvious exception of telepath and alien-only prestige classes) can find a place in EarthForce. The progressions given below

**Naval Crew:** Worker (*Babylon 5 Core Rulebook*), becoming a troubleshooter (*Earth Alliance Fact Book*) at 5<sup>th</sup> level. Navy crewmen receive specialist training, allowing them to follow a more specific career route. See the section entitled Naval Crew Professions beginning on page 80.

Medical staff sometimes become Combat Medics (*Earth Alliance Fact Book*).



A crewman who goes on to train to be an officer multiclasses into the officer class.

**Naval Officers:** Naval Officers almost invariably take at least one level of the officer class (*Babylon 5 Core Rulebook*) at 1<sup>st</sup> level, representing their academy training. Most will take at least three levels of this class. After that, they can continue in almost any class. Most fleet officers are officers of one type or another and stay in that class.

Those in the Diplomatic Corps are diplomats (*Babylon 5 Core Rulebook*) or agents (*Babylon 5 Core Rulebook*). The agent class also works well for covert operations staff.

**Army Soldiers:** Obviously enough, most soldiers are soldiers (*Babylon 5 Core Rulebook*). Those who specialise in a particular field can become combat medics, demolitionists, scouts or snipers (all from the *Earth Alliance Fact Book*) or Special Forces (see page 156).

**Army Officers:** Officers take at least one level of officer to get their Branch Specialisation, then often alternate between officer and whatever their specialisation is – soldier, diplomat or agent.

**Intelligence Officers:** Intelligence officers can go straight to agent, or take a level or two of officer first. In especially technical departments, levels in scientist (*Babylon 5 Corebook*) may suit.

A character's rank does not necessarily have anything to do with his level. While it is more likely that a high-level (and therefore experienced and competent) character has a commensurately high rank, there is no reason why a 6<sup>th</sup> level officer could still be a Lieutenant Junior Grade while another 6<sup>th</sup> level character is a Captain. As a rule of thumb, assume that every two to four years of service equates to one character level, but this is far too slow for player characters.

Character ranks and promotions should be set based on the needs of the campaign. First and Second Lieutenants, Lieutenant Commanders, Majors and Commanders are often the best choice for character ranks – from the rank of Captain and higher, the character is often too removed from the action to be an entertaining choice.

## Naval Crew Professions

When a character first selects a level in the worker class, he may now immediately choose a profession from the list detailed below. Each profession has a list of abilities, skills or benefits that are applied to the character. A navy crewman may only ever select one profession – while it

is possible for a crewman to diversify later in life, this can be accurately reflected in his future choice of skills. The purpose of the profession is to reflect a worker's core knowledge and initial training. What he chooses to do with these skills and talents in the future is his choice! Each profession has a number of traits that differentiate it from others, as explained below.

**Salary Modifier:** Some professions are better or worse paid than others. This is a multiplier made to all Profession checks made to gain a weekly wage, as detailed on page 47 of the *Babylon5 Roleplaying Game and Fact Book*.

**Skill Bonuses:** This entry reflects a profession's training.

A character within the profession may add a +1 competence bonus to all checks made with the skills listed here.

**Other Bonuses:** Some professions have traits that go beyond salary and skill bonuses, becoming almost like class features. Any such abilities will be listed here.

**Expert Level:** Once a worker reaches 6<sup>th</sup> level, he gains a salary increase, as noted on page 42 of the *Babylon 5 Roleplaying Game and Fact Book*. At this point, he may be fairly described as an expert in his field and automatically gains the ability listed here.

The professions open to EarthForce crewmen are detailed below.

## Enlisted Serviceman

Not everyone in military service is a dashing pilot, competent commander or hard-bitten soldier. There are literally thousands (sometimes millions) of workers in military service that allow combatants to actually fight by providing all kinds of logistical and technical support. From maintaining the vehicles that move supplies to the front line to providing dental facilities for every other serviceman, soldier and officer in the service, there is a bewildering array of 'jobs' available in the military, all of which are filled by enlisted servicemen. While these duties may not carry the glamour of the soldier or the officer, few fail to realise the immense importance these men and women have to keeping the military fully functional.

**Salary Modifier:** x1.5

**Skill Bonuses:** Any two related to the worker's service duties.

**Other Bonuses:** Every serviceman, no matter what his intended role, will receive at least preliminary basic training in weapons and tactics. At 1<sup>st</sup> level he has a base

attack bonus of +1. Note that his base attack bonus for later levels does *not* increase – it is a one time bonus applied at 1<sup>st</sup> level only.

**Expert Level:** By the time he reaches expert level, the serviceman has begun his rise through the enlisted ranks and has gained a great deal of experience in both his service and the leadership of those around him. When expert level has been reached, the serviceman may select one of the following from the officer's class features: Branch Specialisation (fleet), Rallying Call and Way of Command. See page 34 of the *Babylon 5 Roleplaying Game and Fact Book* for details of these class features.

### Technician

The heroes of the galaxy fight in wars, make great scientific discoveries and perform acts in incalculable charity. However, someone has to make sure ships continue to sail through space, computers function and waste disposal systems carry on disposing of waste. This is the role of the humble technician, workers who perform their maintenance tasks all but invisibly to everyone else around them.

**Salary Modifier:** x1.5

**Skill Bonuses:** Knowledge (any one technically or scientifically based), Technical

**Other Bonuses:** The technician's training allows him to modify items, given time and resources. By making a Technical check (DC 20), the technician can perform one of the following modifications to a piece of equipment, as appropriate; Grant a +2 bonus to damage rolls; increase range increment by 20 feet; Reduce weight by one pound (to a minimum of one pound); increase ammunition capacity by 50%; increase Damage Reduction by +1; increase Speed by 25% and increase acceleration and deceleration by 1. This may only be done on items worth 100,000 credits or less and takes one day per 2,500 credit value of the original item. Modifying an item costs 10% of the original item's value in credits. Only one modification may be made to each item.

**Expert Level:** By this time, the technician has mastered his craft and has learnt several related disciplines allowing him to apply his knowledge to a variety of situations. When performing modifications to equipment and vehicles, the technician no longer has a limit on the original value of the item, nor on how many modifications may be performed on it. However, each type of modification (for example, an increase in Damage Reduction) may only be performed once and each modification beyond the first increases the cost of the modification by 10% (it will cost

20% of the original item's value in credits for the second modification to an item, 30% for the third and so on).

## Career History

This section allows a player to generate a history for his character in EarthForce. Begin by rolling on the appropriate training tables, then roll on the current year until you reach the present day of the campaign. The player and Games Master are of course free to change these events; the intent is to add detail to a character's background, not determine every bit of that background.

### Background

Many families have a long tradition of service to EarthForce, dating back to the earliest days of the Alliance. Others joined against the wishes of their family, or to see the galaxy, or because it was the only career open to them. Captain Lockley, for example, joined the service to make a new start in life after her disastrous early life.

### Background

Roll	Background
1–2	<b>Anti-EarthForce:</b> The character's family is opposed to EarthForce for some reason, and joining EarthForce caused a rift that has gone unhealed.
3–4	<b>Second Chance:</b> The character joined EarthForce to escape an unhappy or painful life, a criminal past or some other tragedy.
5–8	<b>Career:</b> The character joined up because of the training and salary offered by EarthForce.
9–10	<b>Curiosity:</b> The character wants to see the galaxy.
11–12	<b>Colonial:</b> The character is from one of the colony worlds, where the fleet is the only contact the world has with the rest of the Alliance and so EarthForce is held in high regard.
13–14	<b>Drafted:</b> The character was drafted during the Earth-Minbari War and never left the service. Only suitable for characters who have been in EarthForce since the war.
15–18	<b>Patriotism:</b> The character joined to serve humanity.
19–20	<b>A Tradition of Service:</b> The character's family has a long tradition of joining EarthForce; he presumably has several relatives in senior positions in the force. +5 to any one Promotion roll.

## Training

After rolling the character's background, select the year that the character was recruited by EarthForce and started training. For officers, roll on the Training Events table four times. For enlisted personnel, roll twice. If an enlisted officer returns for officer training at a later date, roll twice more later in the character's career.

### Training

Roll d20	Training
1–10	<b>No Event.</b>
11–13	<b>Contact:</b> The character makes a new friend of contact. Roll on the Contact table.
14–15	<b>Noted Accomplishment:</b> The character excels in some field of study. +1 to the character's next Promotion roll.
16	<b>Life Event:</b> Roll on the Life Events table.
17	<b>Unusual Event:</b> Roll on the Unusual Events table.
18	<b>Significant Accomplishment:</b> The character breaks some record set by previous classes during training. +2 to the character's next Promotion roll.
19	<b>Disgrace:</b> The character screws up, big time. He does not fail training, but must repeat the year and suffers a –2 penalty to his next Promotion roll.
20	<b>Injury:</b> The character is injured during training by some accident, such as an equipment failure, crash or the accidental use of live weapons. Roll on the Injury table.

## Promotion Rolls

A player can just select what rank a character ends up at, or can rely on the vagaries of the random career table to see what rank the character reaches. A character gets a cumulative +1 bonus to his next Promotion check; this cumulative bonus is lost when a check is made, regardless of the result. If the character rolls a result of Promotion check, then the character rolls 1d20, adds any Promotion bonuses and checks the following table:

### Promotion

Result	Promotion
Less than 0	–1 rank (demotion).
1–18	No advancement.
19–20	+1 rank.
20	+2 ranks.

## Contacts

These low-level contacts work in a similar way to the contacts acquired by the diplomat character class, but they will not automatically help the character – they are friends and acquaintances who owe minor favours, instead of the agents and information brokers acquired by canny diplomats. While an EarthForce character can get some benefit out of these friends, he probably will have to do them a favour in exchange. To see who these contacts are, roll on the contact table below.

### Contacts

Roll d20	Contact
1	<b>Senior EarthForce Officer:</b> The officer will normally be in the same branch as the character, but holds the rank of a Captain or higher.
2	<b>Mid-level EarthForce Officer:</b> The officer will normally be in the same branch as the character, and holds the rank of a Lieutenant to Commander.
3	<b>Low-Level EarthForce Officer:</b> The officer is on a par with the character.
4	<b>EarthForce Instructor:</b> The character became friendly with a teacher at the EarthForce training schools.
5	<b>EarthForce Technician:</b> The character knows a technician in EarthForce.
6	<b>EarthForce Scientist:</b> The character knows a scientist in EarthForce.
7	<b>EarthForce Bureaucrat:</b> The character knows a clerk, secretary or administrator in EarthForce.
8	<b>EarthForce Medic:</b> The character knows a doctor or medical technician in EarthForce.
9	<b>Civilian Scientist:</b> The character knows a civilian researcher in a university or corporation.
10	<b>Civilian Politician:</b> The character knows a politician in EarthGov.
11	<b>Civilian Technician:</b> The character knows a technician in some civilian corporation or agency.
12	<b>Civilian Reporter:</b> The character knows a reporter for one of the interplanetary agencies like ISN or <i>Universe Today</i> .
13	<b>Civilian Entertainer:</b> The character knows a civilian entertainer, from a bartender at a popular spaceport to an actor or singer.
14	<b>Civilian Traveller:</b> The character knows a drifter of the spaceways, a hitchhiker, nomad or independent surveyor.
15	<b>Civilian Medic:</b> The character knows a doctor or medical technician in the civilian field.



16	<b>Intelligence Operative:</b> The character knows a spy, either in EarthForce Intelligence or some other agency.
17	<b>Corporate Agent:</b> The character knows a corporate agent, working for one of the megacorporations like IPX or Edgars Industries.
18	<b>Telepath:</b> The character knows a telepath, probably one belonging to the Psi Corps.
19	<b>Lurker:</b> The character knows a lurker, a member of the criminal underworld.
20	<b>Alien:</b> The character is friends with an alien, probably a Centauri or Narn. Roll again on this table to see who the alien is, substituting the alien race's military for EarthForce.

The player is encouraged to fill these characters out, giving them names and current assignments. They can even be used by the Games Master as plot hooks – we see in *Messages from Earth* an old contact of Garibaldi's showing up at the station and telling the Babylon 5 crew about the Shadow ship on Ganymede.

## Reputation

Some events in a character's career give the character a reputation for a particular trait. The character can invoke a reputation once per game; the reputation works as a modifier to the character's Charisma ability score in appropriate situations. Reputations can also work against the character – a pilot with a reputation as a Hotshot might find his reputation useful when trying to impress other pilots in a bar, but it would work against him when trying to get his commanding officer to approve a daring rescue plan.

## Life Events

These are events in the character's life that are not necessarily related to his career, but do have an effect on the character.

## Life Events

Roll d20	Event
1–2	<b>Birth or Death:</b> Someone close to the character dies, like a friend or family member. Alternatively, someone close to the character gives birth (or is born!). The character is involved in some fashion (father or mother, relative, godparent and so on).
3–4	<b>New Contact:</b> The character gains a new Contact. Roll on the Contacts table.
5–6	<b>New Relationship:</b> The character becomes involved in a romantic relationship. Optionally, roll on the Contacts table for the background of the other party.
7–8	<b>Improved Relationship:</b> A romantic relationship involving the character deepens, possibly leading to marriage or some other emotional commitment.
9–10	<b>Ending of Relationship:</b> A romantic relationship involving the character ends. Badly.
11–12	<b>Betrayal:</b> The character is betrayed in some fashion by a friend. –2 to next Promotion check.
13–14	<b>Crime:</b> The character commits or is the victim (or is accused) of a crime. –2 to next Promotion check.
15–16	<b>Good Fortune:</b> Something good happens to the character; he comes into money unexpectedly, has a lifelong dream come true, gets a book published or has some other stroke of good fortune.
17–18	<b>Sickness or Injury:</b> The character is injured or sick. Roll on the Injury table.
19–20	<b>Unusual Event:</b> Roll on the Unusual Event table.

## Injury

Life in EarthForce can be highly dangerous; wartime and combat bring injuries, but accidents can happen even during peace.

### Injury

Roll d20	Event
1–10	<b>Minor Injury:</b> The character was injured, but recovered quickly.
11–13	<b>Significant Injury:</b> The character spent months recuperating. Miss the next year's roll. If the character was training, he must repeat the year.
14–16	<b>Significant and Lasting Injury:</b> The character spent months recuperating, as above, but also still shows signs of the injury, like a limp, scars, psychological damage.
17–18	<b>Significant Injury, Interesting Year:</b> As Significant Injury, but also roll on the Life Events table.
19–20	<b>Cybernetics:</b> As Significant Injury, but the character also required cybernetic limbs or organs to replace damaged ones. See the <i>Earth Alliance Fact Book</i> for cybernetic rules.

## Unusual Events

EarthForce personnel out on the frontier sometimes encounter events and entities that are... unusual. These cannot be wholly explained by modern science, as they are outside the experience of the Alliance as a whole.

## Unusual Events

Roll d20	Event
1–5	<b>Alien Encounter:</b> The character encounters an aspect of alien culture or technology that belongs to a known or unknown alien race, but has not been commonly encountered by humans before. Perhaps he sees a ship of unknown design, or is invited to view an alien cultural ceremony.
6–9	<b>Alien Artefact:</b> The character encounters or comes into the possession of an alien device of unknown origin, like an Apocalypse Box or organic symbiote. Perhaps one of the character's contacts has the device.
10–14	<b>Telepathy:</b> The character has an encounter with telepathy in some fashion; he is illegally scanned, encounters a rogue telepath or telepathic serial killer; has a bizarre encounter with Psi Corps or an alien telepath, or even has a telepathic experience himself, perhaps as a latent telepath.
15–18	<b>Technomancy:</b> The character encounters a Technomage or an example of technomancy.
19–20	<b>Ancient Encounter:</b> The character encounters some legacy of an elder race, perhaps even one of the First Ones. Examples include passing an elder ship in hyperspace or finding a ruin on some dead world. The discovery of the Shadow vessel on Mars would be an example of an Ancient Encounter.





## Tours of Duty

Once a character has left initial training, he is promoted to the first basic service rank (Starman Apprentice, Private, Ensign or Second Lieutenant). For each year the character is in the service of EarthForce, roll on the appropriate Event Table for the year.

### 2240

*The Gaim attack the border world of Ceti Gamma. EarthForce develops the pulse cannon.*

Roll	Event
1–2	<b>Injured</b> in war against Gaim.
3–4	Fought in the 'Bug War' against the Gaim.
5–6	Disaster relief on Ceti Gamma.
7–8	<b>Life Event.</b>
9–10	Assigned to weapons research division.
11–12	Assigned to patrol vessel.
13–14	Assigned to base.
15–16	Assigned to diplomatic duty.
17–18	Heroism in clash with Gaim. +2 to next Promotion check.
19–20	<b>Promotion Check.</b>

### 2241

*The first Poseidon is launched.*

Roll	Event
1–2	<b>Injured.</b>
3–4	Shakedown cruise of first <i>Poseidon</i> .
5–6	Peacekeeping on Mars colony.
7–8	<b>Life Event.</b>
9–10	Assigned to new colonies on the Rim.
11–12	Assigned to patrol vessel.
13–14	Assigned to base.
15–16	Assigned to diplomatic duty.
17–18	Continue with current assignment.
19–20	<b>Promotion Check.</b>

### 2242

*Operation ASGARD, the largest wargame in history, begins.*

Roll	Event
1–2	<b>Injured.</b>
3–4	Shakedown cruise of first <i>Poseidon</i> .
5–6	Peacekeeping on Mars colony.
7–8	<b>Life Event.</b>
9–10	Assigned to Operation ASGARD.
11–12	Assigned to patrol vessel.
13–14	Assigned to base.
15–16	Assigned to diplomatic duty.
17–18	Continue with current assignment.
19–20	<b>Promotion Check.</b>

### 2243

*The first Explorer comes online.*

Roll	Event
1–2	<b>Injured.</b>
3–4	Shakedown cruise of first <i>Explorer</i> .
5–6	Surveying new colony worlds on the Rim.
7–8	<b>Life Event.</b>
9–10	Assigned to patrol vessel.
11–12	Assigned to base.
13–14	Assigned to diplomatic duty.
15–16	Continue with current assignment.
17–18	Heroism on the Rim: +2 to next Promotion check.
19–20	<b>Promotion Check.</b>

### 2244

*Exploration of the galactic Rim.*

Roll	Event
1–2	<b>Injured.</b>
3–4	Sabre ratting on Narn border.
5–6	Jumpgate construction and security.
7–8	<b>Life Event.</b>
9–10	Assigned to patrol vessel on Minbari border.
11–12	Assigned to base.
13–14	Assigned to diplomatic duty.
15–16	Continue with current assignment.
17–18	Heroism on the Rim: +2 to next Promotion check.
19–20	<b>Promotion Check.</b>

## Assignment Tables

If a character is assigned to a patrol vessel, base or diplomatic duty, roll on the following tables to determine where.

### Patrol Vessel

Roll	Vessel
1–2	<i>Hyperion</i> , Hyperion-class.
3–4	<i>Lexington</i> , Hyperion-class.
5–6	<i>Hannibal</i> , Hyperion-class.
7–8	<i>Moore</i> , Hyperion-class.
9–10	<i>Pollux</i> , Nova-class.
11–12	<i>Schwartzkopf</i> , Nova-class.
13–14	<i>Castor</i> , Nova-class.
15–16	<i>Churchill</i> , Omega-class.
17–18	<i>Roanoke</i> , Omega-class.
19–20	<i>Agamemnon</i> , Omega-class.

*Roll if the vessel is not in service that year.*

### Base

Roll	Base
1–2	Zeus Station.
3–4	Earth.
5–6	Mars.
7–8	Io.
9–10	Proxima.
11–12	Orion.
13–14	Deneb.
15–16	Ceti Gamma.
17–18	Beta Durani.
19–20	Babylon Station.

### Diplomatic Duty

Roll	Duty
1–3	Centauri embassy.
4–6	Narn embassy.
7–10	League of Non-Aligned Worlds embassy.
11–15	Alliance colony.
16–20	EarthDome.

## 2245

*The Prometheus Group encounters the Minbari. The war begins. Planetary Draft instituted.*

Roll	Event
1–2	<b>Injured</b> in early clashes with Minbari.
3–4	Exploring the Rim.
5–6	Assigned to patrolling inner worlds for Minbari invaders.
7–8	<b>Life Event.</b>
9–10	Assigned to diplomatic efforts to acquire allies in war.
11–12	Trapped behind enemy lines.
13–14	Engaged in combat with Minbari.
15–16	Engaged in peacekeeping and riot control in inner worlds.
17–18	Heroism in the War: +4 to next Promotion check.
19–20	<b>Promotion Check.</b>

## 2246

*The Trail of Tears. The Tunnel War on Cyrus.*

Roll	Event
1–4	<b>Injured</b> in clashes with Minbari.
5–6	Assigned to patrolling inner worlds for Minbari invaders.
7–8	<b>Life Event.</b>
9–10	Assigned to efforts to purchase weapons from Narn.
11–12	Trapped behind enemy lines.
13–16	Engaged in combat with Minbari.
17–18	Heroism in the War: +4 to next Promotion check.
19–20	<b>Promotion Check.</b>

## 2247

*The Fall of Proxima. The Battle of the Line.*

Roll	Event
1–5	<b>Injured</b> in clashes with Minbari.
6–10	Trapped behind enemy lines.
11–15	Engaged in combat with Minbari.
16–20	The Battle of the Line: +4 to next Promotion check.

*Note:* Due to the tremendous losses suffered by EarthForce during the Earth-Minbari War, there is an automatic promotion check after 2247.

## 2248

*Rebuilding after the war.*

Roll	Event
1-2	<b>Injured.</b>
3-4	Assigned to retaking of Mars colony.
5-6	Assigned to pacification of outlying colonies.
7-8	<b>Life Event.</b>
9-10	Assigned to shipyards.
11-12	Assigned to base.
13-14	Assigned to training camps.
15-16	Assigned to border patrol.
17-20	<b>Promotion Check.</b>

## 2249

*The Babylon Project begins. Susan Ivanova joins EarthForce.*

Roll	Event
1-2	<b>Injured.</b>
3-4	Assigned to Babylon station.
5-6	Assigned to reinforcing Earth security.
7-8	<b>Life Event.</b>
9-10	Assigned to patrol vessel.
11-12	Assigned to base.
13-14	Assigned to diplomatic duty.
15-16	Continue with current assignment.
17-18	Notable competence: +2 to next Promotion check.
19-20	<b>Promotion Check.</b>

## 2250

*The first Omega is launched.*

Roll	Event
1-2	<b>Injured.</b>
3-4	Shakedown cruise of first <i>Omega</i> .
5-6	Dealing with disease outbreak on Rim colony.
7-8	<b>Life Event.</b>
9-10	Assigned to patrol vessel.
11-12	Assigned to base.
13-14	Assigned to diplomatic duty.
15-16	Continue with current assignment.
17-18	Notable competence: +2 to next Promotion check.
19-20	<b>Promotion Check.</b>

## 2251

*Martian Food Riots. Babylon 2 goes online. War of Janos VII.*

Roll	Event
1-2	<b>Injured.</b>
3-4	Fighting on Janos VII against the pirates.
5-6	Peacekeeping on Mars.
7-8	<b>Life Event.</b>
9-10	Assigned to patrol vessel.
11-12	Assigned to base.
13-14	Assigned to diplomatic duty.
15-16	Continue with current assignment.
17-18	Notable competence: +2 to next Promotion check.
19-20	<b>Promotion Check.</b>

## 2252

*Babylon 3 goes online.*

Roll	Event
1-2	<b>Injured.</b>
3-4	Assigned to Babylon 3.
5-6	Peacekeeping on Mars colony.
7-8	<b>Life Event.</b>
9-10	Assigned to patrol vessel.
11-12	Assigned to base.
13-14	Assigned to diplomatic duty.
15-16	Continue with current assignment.
17-18	Notable competence: +2 to next Promotion check.
19-20	<b>Promotion Check.</b>

## 2253

*Peacekeeping along the League of Non-Aligned Worlds border.*

Roll	Event
1-2	<b>Injured.</b>
3-4	Sabre rattling along League border.
5-6	Fighting against Drazi raiders.
7-8	<b>Life Event.</b>
9-10	Assigned to patrol vessel.
11-12	Assigned to base.
13-14	Assigned to diplomatic duty.
15-16	Continue with current assignment.
17-18	Notable competence: +2 to next Promotion check.
19-20	<b>Promotion Check.</b>

**2254***Babylon 4 goes online. President Santiago elected.*

Roll	Event
1-2	<b>Injured.</b>
3-4	Assigned to Babylon 4. Roll on the <b>Unusual Events</b> table. It is assumed the character left Babylon 4 before it vanished, although in campaigns that start post 2258, the character could have been on B4 when it was first shifted through time.
5-6	The character becomes involved or at least aware of the growing conspiracy that will give rise to the Clark regime. Perhaps the conspiracy tries to recruit the character, or an existing contact or commanding officer is involved. If the character becomes involved, he gets a +4 bonus to all Promotion checks until 2262, and a -2 to all Promotion checks thereafter.
7-8	<b>Life Event.</b>
9-10	Assigned to patrol vessel.
11-12	Assigned to base.
13-14	Assigned to diplomatic duty.
15-16	Continue with current assignment.
17-18	Notable competence: +2 to next Promotion check.
19-20	<b>Promotion Check.</b>

**2255***Canal Wars on Cyrus.*

Roll	Event
1-2	<b>Injured.</b>
3-4	Fighting against renewed Raider activity.
5-6	The character becomes involved or at least aware of the growing conspiracy that will give rise to the Clark regime. Perhaps the conspiracy tries to recruit the character, or an existing contact or commanding officer is involved. If the character becomes involved, he gets a +4 bonus to all Promotion checks until 2262 and a -2 penalty to all Promotion checks thereafter.
7-8	<b>Life Event.</b>
9-10	Assigned to patrol vessel.
11-12	Assigned to base.
13-14	Assigned to diplomatic duty.
15-16	Continue with current assignment.
17-18	Notable competence: +2 to next Promotion check.
19-20	<b>Promotion Check.</b>

**2256***Babylon 5 comes online. Miner's strike on Ganymede.*

Roll	Event
1-2	<b>Injured.</b>
3-4	Assigned to Babylon 5. Roll on the <b>Unusual Events</b> table.
5-6	The character becomes involved or at least aware of the growing conspiracy that will give rise to the Clark regime. Perhaps the conspiracy tries to recruit the character, or an existing contact or commanding officer is involved. If the character becomes involved, he gets a +4 bonus to all Promotion checks until 2262, and a -2 to all Promotion checks thereafter.
7-8	<b>Life Event.</b>
9-10	Assigned to patrol vessel.
11-12	Assigned to base.
13-14	Assigned to diplomatic duty.
15-16	Continue with current assignment.
17-18	Notable competence: +2 to next Promotion check.
19-20	<b>Promotion Check.</b>

**2257***Denethi Haze Disaster.*

Roll	Event
1-2	<b>Injured.</b>
3-4	Assigned to disaster relief.
5-6	Assigned to Earth.
7-8	<b>Life Event.</b>
9-10	Assigned to patrol vessel.
11-12	Assigned to base.
13-14	Assigned to diplomatic duty.
15-16	Continue with current assignment.
17-18	Notable competence: +2 to next Promotion check.
19-20	<b>Promotion Check.</b>





## 2258

*President Santiago re-elected.*

Roll	Event
1–2	<b>Injured.</b>
3–4	Assigned to peacekeeping task force on mission outside Alliance.
5–6	The character becomes involved or at least aware of the growing conspiracy that will give rise to the Clark regime. Perhaps the conspiracy tries to recruit the character, or an existing contact or commanding officer is involved. If the character becomes involved, he gets a +4 bonus to all Promotion checks until 2262, and a –2 to all Promotion checks thereafter.
7–8	<b>Life Event.</b>
9–10	Assigned to patrol vessel.
11–12	Assigned to base.
13–14	Assigned to diplomatic duty.
15–16	Continue with current assignment.
17–18	Notable competence: +2 to next Promotion check.
19–20	<b>Promotion Check.</b>

## 2259

*President Santiago is killed. The Thunderbolt Starfury comes online. The second Akdor campaign.*

Roll	Event
1–2	<b>Injured.</b>
3–4	Assigned to Akdor campaign under General Franklin.
5–6	Assigned to General Hague's task force.
7–8	<b>Life Event.</b>
9–10	Opportunity to join NightWatch/political office. +2 to all Promotion checks until 2262 if accepted.
11–12	Assigned to patrol vessel.
13–14	Assigned to base.
15–16	Continue with current assignment.
17–18	Notable competence: +2 to next Promotion check.
19–20	<b>Promotion Check.</b>

## 2260

*Martial Law is declared on Earth. The Shadow War.*

Roll	Event
1–2	<b>Injured.</b>
3–4	Assigned to peacekeeping on Earth.
5–6	Assigned to peacekeeping on Mars.
7–8	<b>Life Event.</b>
9–10	Opportunity to join NightWatch/political office. +2 to all Promotion checks until 2262 if accepted.
11–12	Assigned to hunting down renegades and alien traitors.
13–14	Assigned to peacekeeping on Proxima.
15–16	Assigned to weapons research/Black Projects.
17–18	Notable competence: +2 to next Promotion check.
19–20	<b>Promotion Check.</b>

## 2261

*The Civil War.*

Roll	Event
1–4	<b>Injured</b>
5–6	Assigned to peacekeeping on Rim/colony worlds.
7–8	<b>Life Event</b>
9–10	Assigned to Proxima.
11–12	Assigned to Mars.
13–14	Assigned to Earth.
15–16	Continue with current assignment.
17–18	Notable competence: +2 to next Promotion check.
19–20	Assigned to Experimental Destroyer Group.

*Note:* Due to the losses suffered by EarthForce during the Civil War and subsequent change of administration, there is an automatic promotion check after 2261.

## 2262

*End of the Clark regime. The Warlock destroyer comes online.*

Roll	Event
1–2	<b>Injured.</b>
3–4	Assigned to hunting down Raiders.
5–6	Assigned to reconstruction efforts.
7–8	<b>Life Event.</b>
9–10	Assigned to patrol vessel.
11–12	Assigned to base.
13–14	Assigned to diplomatic duty.
15–16	Continue with current assignment.
17–18	Assigned to ISA fleet: +2 to next Promotion check.
19–20	<b>Promotion Check.</b>

## 2263

*Reconstruction.*

Roll	Event
1–2	<b>Injured.</b>
3–4	Assigned to hunting down renegade Clark supporters.
5–6	Assigned to reconstruction efforts.
7–8	<b>Life Event.</b>
9–10	Assigned to patrol vessel.
11–12	Assigned to base.
13–14	Assigned to diplomatic duty.
15–16	Continue with current assignment.
17–18	Assigned to ISA fleet: +2 to next Promotion check.
19–20	<b>Promotion Check.</b>

## 2264

*The Telepath Crisis.*

Roll	Event
1–2	<b>Injured.</b>
3–4	Assigned to Mars during Telepath Crisis. Roll on the <b>Unusual Event</b> table.
5–6	Assigned to Earth during Telepath Crisis. Roll on the <b>Unusual Event</b> table.
7–8	<b>Life Event.</b>
9–10	Assigned to patrol vessel.
11–12	Assigned to base.
13–14	Assigned to diplomatic duty.
15–16	Continue with current assignment.
17–18	Notable competence: +2 to next Promotion check.
19–20	<b>Promotion Check.</b>

## 2265

*Consolidation.*

Roll	Event
1–2	<b>Injured.</b>
3–4	Assigned to hunting down renegade Clark supporters.
5–6	Assigned to reconstruction efforts.
7–8	<b>Life Event.</b>
9–10	Assigned to patrol vessel.
11–12	Assigned to base.
13–14	Assigned to diplomatic duty.
15–16	Continue with current assignment.
17–18	Assigned to ISA fleet: +2 to next Promotion check.
19–20	<b>Promotion Check.</b>

## 2266

*The Drakh attack Earth.*

Roll	Event
1–4	<b>Injured.</b>
5–6	Assigned to Earth during attack; infected with plague.
7–8	<b>Life Event.</b>
9–10	Assigned to defence of Earth.
11–12	Assigned to search for cure.
13–14	Assigned to diplomatic duty.
15–16	Continue with current assignment.
17–18	Notable competence: +2 to next Promotion check.
19–20	<b>Promotion Check.</b>

## Life Aboard Ship

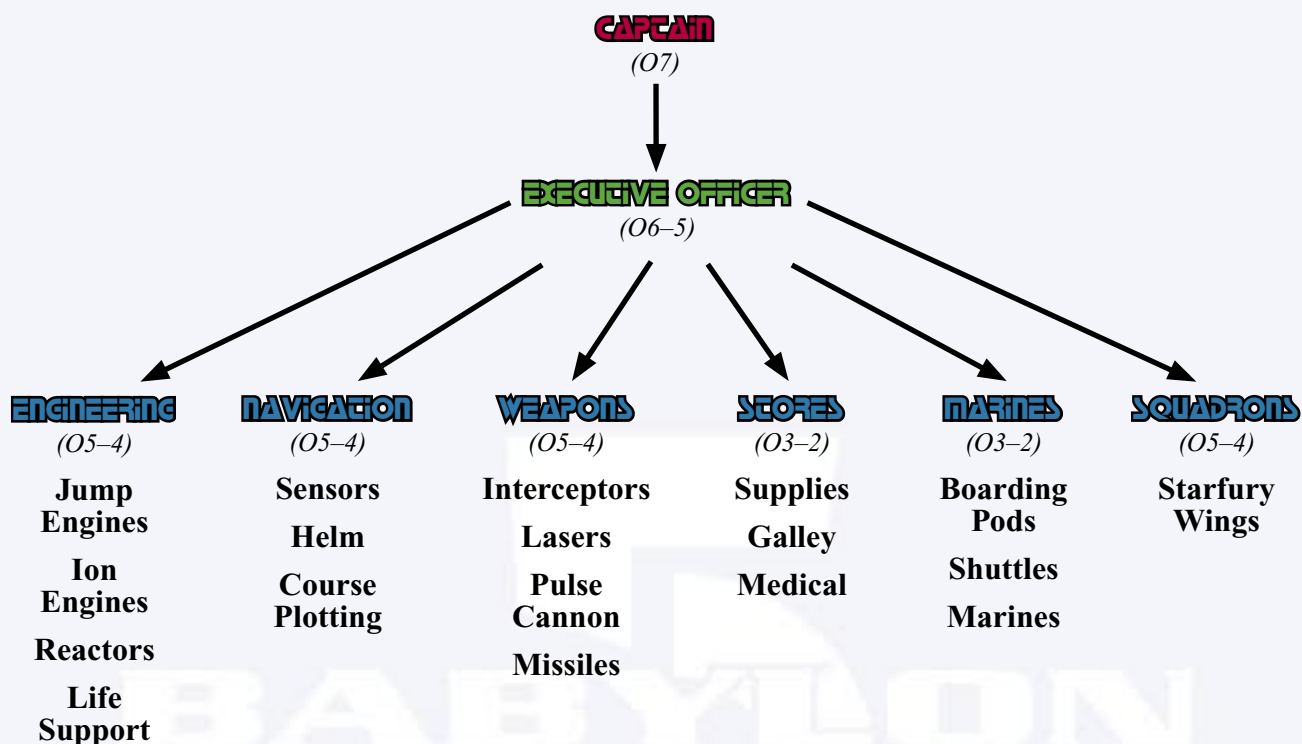
While EarthForce's recruiting vids might claim that life aboard one of the mighty battleships of the Earth Alliance is constantly exciting and challenging, the reality is somewhat more prosaic. On most ships, life consists of training, study, drills, mind-numbing yet highly focussed repetitive tasks, broken by the occasional terrifying accident or combat encounter – and all the drills, training and repetition has ideally become so instinctive that the crewman does not think about the fear until the danger has passed.

Space is dangerous. Even the biggest Omega is little more than a soap bubble of steel and ferroceramics. Spacers are well aware of the dangers of vacuum, of hull breaches, of radiation, of cold and heat. There are few environments less forgiving than outer space – and not only is space dangerous, but the very vehicles used to travel in it are also supremely dangerous. Crew on board a ship repeat every command they are given out loud not because it is an empty naval protocol, but because the slightest miscommunication could get someone killed. Power up a naval pulse cannon while the access plates are open, and you bathe the weapons room in deadly radiation. Change the course of the ship when the spinning gravity deck is moving too quickly, and the strain could rip the hull open. Add in the constant potential danger of contact with a hostile alien race or unknown space phenomenon, and remember that every ship might be called upon to represent humanity as a whole – a single bad decision nearly resulted in the extermination of the Human race when the *Prometheus* group met the Minbari.

Running a starship is a terrible, awesome responsibility, even for the lowliest crewman. The dangers of the void cannot be overstated.

## Chain of Command

The chain of command on board an EarthForce vessel varies from ship to ship, depending on the ship's current mission and purpose. The Captain (CO) or 'skipper' is always at the top, with his executive officer (XO) directly below him. The executive officer is normally a commander or lieutenant commander. Below the CO and XO, an EarthForce ship is divided into several sections:



The heads of section are mostly Lieutenants or Lieutenant Commanders, depending on the size of the ship. Second Lieutenants and Ensigns are technically in charge of the enlisted and warrant officers that make up the bulk of the crew, but junior officers swiftly learn to listen to the advice of experienced non-coms. Between 15 to 20% of the personnel of a ship are officers.



## Duty Shifts

There are four duty shifts on board an EarthForce vessel. Each shift lasts eight hours, and overlaps with other shifts for two hours. The ship's day lasts 24 hours; with one shift being designated the 'night' shift. Only the newer vessels (Explorer, Poseidon, Nova and Omega-class) have enough space for each crewman to be given his own bunk – Hyperions and older vessels require their crews to use 'hot-bunking', where the same sleeping compartment is shared by two or more people. Officers get their own bunks regardless of the size of the ship.

Some of the ships in the Exploratory Fleet actually have two crews, a Blue and Gold crew. The two crews alternate between missions, giving the ship the maximum amount of time in space.

During the first overlap period, the two crewmen hand over the duty station and discuss any noteworthy events that happened during the last shift. Most paperwork and reports are made during the overlap periods. Having this overlap ensures that there is full continuity of information – everyone in, say, the engineering section has a full knowledge of a problem with a particular piece of equipment, even if the problem is so minor that it never got mentioned in a report.

During and after a shift, a crewman is expected to study and practise his skills. There is a constant stream of technical manuals, tactical reports, news feeds and other official EarthForce documents that must be reviewed and learned. Everyone in EarthForce, from a first year Cadet to one of the Joint Chiefs, is expected to be 'engaged in the constant pursuit of excellent'.

## Stations on Ships

The Captain or other commanding officer announces changes in a ship's situation over the intercom, and orders the crew to one station or another, telling them what their current duty is.

- ⑤ **Duty:** The crewman's normal assignment on board ship.
- ⑤ **Burn:** Burn stations only apply to duty stations outside the rotated gravity decks, and only on ships with enough acceleration to produce the illusion of gravity. 'Burn stations' is announced before the ship fires its main engines, and signal the crew to prepare for gravity.
- ⑤ **Zero:** The opposite of burn stations, zero stations is called before the ship stops accelerating and zero gravity returns.

- ⑤ **Jump:** Jump stations is called before a ship jumps into hyperspace. The older vessels had very energy-hungry jump engines, and most non-essential systems had to be shut down before jumping. Therefore, when jump stations was called, the crew would deactivate most duty stations before securing for jump. Now that modern vessels have more efficient jump engines, and that there are far more active jumpgates, jump stations is only called rarely.

- ⑤ **Hyperspace:** Travelling in hyperspace means that some of a ship's capabilities, like most sensors, are useless. Hyperspace stations involves shutting down such stations and concentrating on things that actually work in hyperspace.

The above five stations only apply to the current duty shifts. The other three stations apply to the whole crew, even those in sleep or off-duty shifts.

- ⑤ **Key:** Key stations are the duty stations used by a skeleton crew – they are the minimum stations needed to run a ship. Key stations are generally called only if the ship is operating with a partial crew or is trying to assess how badly damaged it is.
- ⑤ **Battle:** During battle stations, one shift provides backup to the active shift, while the other two shift personnel get ready for damage control. Every weapon and defensive system on the ship is activated; all Starfuries are readied for launch and so on. Battle stations is sounded by a klaxon even if no official announcement is made.
- ⑤ **Emergency:** Emergency stations signals to the crew that the ship is in trouble and that they should prepare to abandon ship if necessary.

## Drills & Emergencies

Drills are a constant on board ship – a day almost never goes by without some simulated disaster or challenge. Having four separate duty shifts allows the crew to plot scenarios for each other; every shift has a Simulations Supervisor and his squad of blue-hatted Simulation Assistants who observe the performance of the active shift during the drill.

During an emergency, having the crew's reactions be as fast and practised as possible is vital for the survival of the ship. Space is deeply unforgiving.

## Common Drills and Emergencies

- ⑤ **Maintenance:** Stripping, repairing, rebuilding and testing a particular piece of equipment. Drills simulate a failure in a particular system. Nastier drills involve multiple failures at the worst possible times, such as a thruster misfiring just as the ship lines up a boresight weapon. The challenge in these drills is to complete the maintenance and repair as quickly as possible.
- ⑤ **Weapons:** Weapons drills involve activating, charging or loading, targeting and firing a weapon at a designated target as quickly as possible. All shipboard weapons have simulation modes, which allow the weapon to be tested without a full firing, but every ship fully tests its energy-based weapons at least once per week. Missiles and other ammunition-based weapons are fully tested more rarely.
- ⑤ **Interceptors:** Interceptors are the primary defensive technology available to EarthForce ships. Most Captains swear by their interceptor teams, counting them as the most valuable parts of the engineering crew. In addition to the normal challenges of equipment failures and random damage common to most drills, interceptor drills involve firing simulated projectiles at the ship from random directions, forcing the interceptor crew to constantly redirect interceptor fire. Especially nasty drills change the type of incoming projectiles randomly, forcing the interceptor crew to change the payload of the interceptor shots.
- ⑤ **Fire:** Fire in space is one of the most nightmarish situations to any spacer. While the ships are as flameproof as possible, there is still plenty of flammable material in any place where hundreds of humans have to live and work in a few cramped corridors. The oxygen tanks on board ship feed the fire, and the fire can quickly exhaust the ship's oxygen reserves and asphyxiate the crew even if the blaze is contained. Therefore, there is a strict policy stating that if a fire cannot be contained within five minutes (less time for bigger fires), that section will be sealed and cut off from life support.

Vessels are equipped with chemical fire suppressants in extinguishers, and several sections of a ship have built-in chemical sprayers. Water is not used as the recycling systems do not have enough of a reserve to make a significant dent in large fires.

- ⑤ **Hull Breach:** A hull breach and the associated loss of atmosphere is not quite as dangerous as a fire – the size of the breach necessary to vent a critical amount of air out is big enough to represent a structural threat to the whole ship. Micropunctures and minor breaches are repaired by crew in spacesuits. A temporary plastic-foam seal is applied before the breach is welded shut. Every section of the ship can be sealed to isolate a hull breach.
- ⑤ **Power Loss:** Each section of a ship has its own emergency batteries to keep critical systems alive in the event of the main power source going offline. Power Loss drills cut off main power and force those in the drill to work using emergency or no power until the electricity grid is repaired.
- ⑤ **Atmosphere Loss:** Atmosphere drills simulate the situation where the ship's atmosphere has been vented into space or tainted with poisonous gasses. The crew in the drill must carry out repairs while wearing rebreathers or environment suits. The drill also tests how long it takes the crew to get into survival gear – the Simulation Supervisor invariably takes joy in tagging crew as 'dead' and describing exactly how they 'died'.
- ⑤ **Evacuation:** Evacuation drills test how long it takes the crew to get to the lifeboats and abandon ship.
- ⑤ **Gravity Failure:** Gravity failure drills simply stop the gravity decks from spinning, forcing the crew to deal with a lack of rotational gravity. Gravity Failure drills are generally carried out at the same time as other drills, such as fire drills, to ensure that all crew are keeping their zero-g operations skills up to par.

### Drills

Mechanically, drills are resolved using Technical checks, with Balance checks being required in zero gravity. The DC for the check varies depending on the difficulty of the drill; most will be DC 15 or higher.

Crew trying to impress their commanding officers can willingly increase the DC of the check to get the task done faster. While the amount of time saved is not enough to make a real difference in combat, drills are all about shaving a few vital seconds so you get the gun loaded faster than C shift...

### 5 **Reactor Leak:**

Radiation from the fusion reactors or jump engines are rarely a threat to the health of the crew thanks to modern safety and containment technologies, but all crew are trained to monitor their radiation dosage. Chromatic tabs are attached inside uniforms and in key places around the ship; these tabs change colour if the radiation grows more intense.

- 5 **Jump Failure:** A jump failure occurs when the ship fails to form a symmetrical jump point, or when there is some bizarre gravitational flux in local hyperspace that disrupts the jump. Jump failures can cause structural damage and stress, as well as a massive backlash of electricity that fries key systems. Jump failure drills are especially dreaded, as they tend to combine maintenance, hull breach, power loss and gravity failure drills. Some Captains who are especially confident in their crew's abilities even schedule jump failure drills for the hyperspace to realspace transition.

## Combat Drills

- 5 **Enemy Scout:** The ship encounters an enemy ship that is the scout for an enemy force. The ship must either evade the scout without being detected or disable the scout before it signals for help.
- 5 **Enemy Vessel:** The ship encounters an enemy ship of roughly equal capabilities, and must destroy or escape it.
- 5 **Enemy Battle Group:** The ship encounters a group of several enemy vessels. The challenge here is normally to deal as much damage as possible while retreating.
- 5 **Enemy Fleet:** The ship encounters a massively superior force, and must retreat or escape.

### Combat Drills

Combat Drills are basically roleplaying games within a roleplaying game, and as such can be used as full-fledged scenarios in an EarthForce game. A whole game session could be taken up with a particularly complex and challenging drill. For example, the Player Characters must be assigned the duty of coming up with a way to communicate with an alien race while their ship is being boarded by that race's mindless insect soldiers.

Alternatively, for a change of pace, make the Player Characters the Simulation Team for a drill. Now, they have to think like Games Masters and defeat the crew of their ship. Games Masters should remember the cruellest tricks their players play, and use them against them at a later date.

One nasty variant is to mix a drill and a 'real' encounter. For example, take the Terrorism drill. The crew are running around shooting each other with stun guns and trying to work out which of them is the simulated terrorist – but one of them is actually a real terrorist, with a very real PPG...

- 5 **Boarding Action:** The ship is boarded by enemy forces, which must be kept out of key areas and driven off the ship.
- 5 **Running Silent:** The ship must control its emissions and signals to avoid detection by enemy sensors. Everything from radio signals to light bouncing off the hull must be minimised.
- 5 **Sabotage:** Hostile forces have sabotaged a key system or placed a bomb or other danger on board the ship. The crew must find and disable the sabotage.
- 5 **Terrorism:** Some of the crew are actually terrorists or dissidents who have infiltrated EarthForce. The loyal crew must identify and arrest them before they can sabotage the ship.
- 5 **Insanity:** Some of the senior crew have gone insane. Those affected must be identified and restrained.
- 5 **Run to Jumpgate:** The ship's jump engines have been disabled, and it must find its way to the nearest jumpgate.
- 5 **Lost Starfury:** One of the ship's Starfuries has been disabled and lost in nearby space. The crew must locate and retrieve the fighter before the pilot's life support runs out.

- 5 **First Contact:** The ship encounters a previously unknown alien race and must establish friendly contact with them.

Combat drills are normally conducted using electronic simulations, using virtual enemy ships and simulated firings. Either the enemy's movements are preprogrammed or the Simulation Supervisor and his assistants run the enemy ship remotely. The choice of enemy ship varies depending on the current political situation; millions of 'Nimbari' ships were virtually blown out of the black during the 2250s.

The Simulation Team work to make each combat different in some fashion. First Contact scenarios are known for being especially 'wacky', with EarthForce vessels regularly running into aliens from classic science fiction shows, who communicate exclusively through mime, or who bombard enemy ships with tapioca.

## Ship-Life

A crewman has between three and six hours of leisure time on board ship each day, depending on sleep cycles and duty shifts. At least one hour is normally spent in the ship's gymnasium, with extra time in the gym being mandatory for crew who spend time in zero gravity. All EarthForce personnel must be able to work normally in gravity of 1g (despite howls of protest from Martians and other low-g colonists, who argue that standardising on a more reasonable 0.6 would make sense, as most rotating sections on ships spin to produce less than 1g). In addition to the gym, crew have access to the ship's libraries of vids,



texts and music. There are several common rooms for crew, warrant officers, officers and senior officers which can be reconfigured as movie theatres, dining rooms, dance halls and so on. Vessels have a surprisingly full social calendar, with regular parties and special occasions – anything to fill the monotony of long voyages.

While scientific research is not one of EarthForce's primary functions, the fleet does allocate space on the larger ships to laboratories and research facilities. Not all of the scientists given leave to use these facilities are EarthForce; civilians can apply for a berth on board some patrol vessels. As EarthForce's ships are the largest and most powerful vessels available to humanity, they can go where lower-powered civilian ships cannot.

## Typical Schedules

Day	Patrol	Exploratory	Social (either ship)
1	Depart Zeus Station	Depart Zeus Station	Launching ceremony
5	Arrive Io Jumpgate	Arrive Io Jumpgate	Drills and training
10	Arrive Beta 7; jump to realspace	Arrive Beta 7; lock onto Deneb beacon	First jump party
15	Begin patrol of Beta system	Arrive Deneb; lock onto Zafra beacon	Simulated battle
20	Engage raiders in asteroid belt	Arrive Zafra system	
25	Visit Beta 7 colony; resupply	Begin surveying of Zafra system	R&R for patrol ship; movie marathon for explorer
30	Arrive Beta 7 Jumpgate; lock onto Ceti Gamma beacon	Jump to hyperspace; lock onto Thenothk beacon	Half-way through mission celebration
35	Arrive Ceti Gamma; jump to realspace	Arrive Thenothk system	Drills and training
40	Arrive Ceti Gamma colony	Begin surveying of Thenothk system	Maintenance and repair
45	Arrive Ceti Mining Station	Continue surveying	
50	Jump to hyperspace; lock onto Sol beacon	Drop automated probes; jump to hyperspace.	Turning for home party
55	Arrive Sol system	Arrive Zafra system; lock onto Deneb beacon	
60	Arrive Zeus Station	Arrive Deneb; lock onto Beta 7 beacon	

## Life in the Army

A naval crewman is a technician first and fighter second – running and maintaining a ship takes up the bulk of his time. For the average ground pounder, however, maintaining his kit takes a relatively small amount of time. Army life consists of sitting in barracks, sitting in troop transports, constant drills and training exercises, broken by the occasional combat deployment.

The army focusses on mobility; every regiment has its own transport assets or can fit on board a standard transport ship.

## Duty Shifts

The Army uses 8 and 10-hour shifts. Unlike the Navy, which essentially ignores the day-night cycle, an Army unit uses the diurnal cycle of whatever world it is on. Military bases shut down at night, although there is obviously constant security and plenty of night exercises and training missions.

On board ship, the Army switches to the local time. Stims are regularly used to adjust troops to changing sleep patterns.

## Drills & Exercises

Training and teamwork exercises are even more common in the Army than they are in the Navy. Welding a squad or platoon to work together as a single entity requires constant, rigorous practise. While the drills are tailored to the skills and needs of the unit in question, some of the more common are:

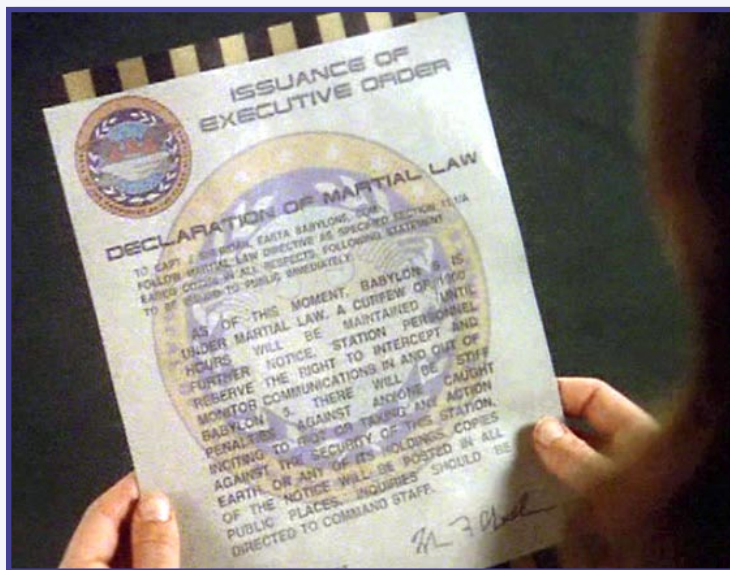
- ⑤ **Marching:** Close-formation marching and drills might seem out of place in the 24<sup>th</sup> century battlefield, but it does train soldiers to obey orders and promotes fitness.
- ⑤ **Target Practice:** EarthForce soldiers are expected to be proficient with PPGs, BilPro rifles and handguns, knives, shock sticks and a variety of more esoteric weapons, as well as skilled in basic martial arts.
- ⑤ **Deployment:** The speed with which a unit can mount or dismount from a transport shuttle or APC can be the difference between death and victory on the battlefield. Deployment drills involve getting the unit from A to B as fast as possible.
- ⑤ **Night Raid:** Every soldier in EarthForce is used to being woken by the sound of an alarm.

Variations of this drill include chemical or biological attacks, where the challenge is to get into protective gear as quickly as possible.

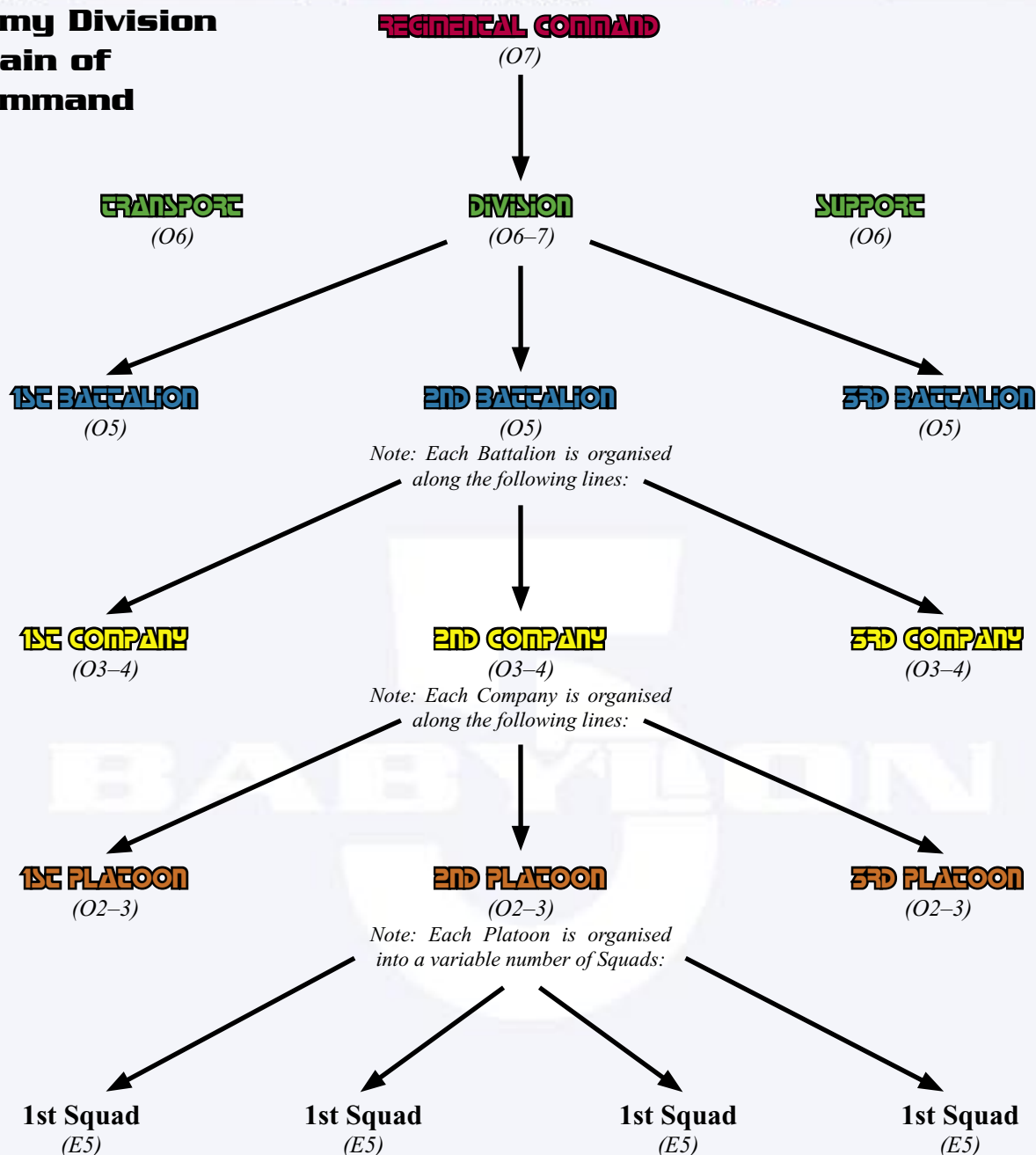
- ⑤ **Emergency Response:** In addition to its combat duties, the EarthForce Army is trained in providing disaster relief and aid in emergencies.
- ⑤ **Riot Control:** The Army has been used to control unruly civilian uprisings in the past, and riot containment and control is still a key part of the Army's mandate. Troops are trained how to use nonlethal means such as shock sticks and morph gas while still keeping themselves and the rioters safe.

Like the Navy, Army units regularly train in simulated exercises. Common scenarios include:

- ⑤ **Seek & Destroy:** The unit must locate and destroy an enemy unit. Depending on the scenario, the hunting unit might have access to satellite imaging, air support or sensor drones, or might be forced to rely on only the most basic detection and tracking techniques. Once the enemy unit is located, it must be caught and destroyed. The other side of this exercise is Evasion, where the unit tries to make it from point A to point B without being caught and destroyed.
- ⑤ **Guard:** The unit must protect a particular object, site or person. In some versions of the exercise, the objective is stationary; in others, it moves with the unit or randomly. Sometimes, the objective must be located and retrieved before the unit can guard it. Rival units are attempting to capture or destroy the objective.



## Army Division Chain of Command



- ⑤ **Take & Hold:** The unit must take and hold a particular objective. Take & Hold exercises are opposed by units on Guard or Take & Hold missions.
- ⑤ **Infiltration:** The unit must avoid enemy patrols and sensors and make their way covertly into a target area.
- ⑤ **Combat Simulation:** The unit engages in combat with multiple enemy units.

During exercises, soldiers and vehicles wear combat nets, which are sensor webbings that detect the simulated shots and explosions from the weapons used in the exercise. If a soldier is 'shot', the combat net works out how much damage the soldier would take if the attack had been a real one. Vehicles can even be programmed to shut down the appropriate subsystems when they are 'damaged'. More advanced hydraulic combat nets are sometimes used; these contain a gel that solidifies when electrically charged. If a soldier wearing one of these nets is shot in the leg, the gel is activated and locks the leg to realistically simulate the damage.

## Alien Environments

EarthForce units train for combat in every environment where combat is likely to take place. Some conditions, while theoretically survivable, are so extreme that it is unlikely that the Army will ever be called to fight in such places. Specialist units like the H.E Forces exist to take on that dangerous duty. Every front-line EarthForce unit is expected to be ready to fight in any of the following environments with a maximum of 72 hours preparation time:

- ③ Forest
- ③ Swamp
- ③ Sandy Deserts
- ③ Jungle
- ③ Tundra
- ③ Urban and Suburban
- ③ Low Gravity (down to 0.3 g)
- ③ High Gravity (up to 1.5g)
- ③ Low Oxygen (oxy supplements required)
- ③ Non-breathable Atmosphere (breather masks required)
- ③ Moderate Radiation/Chemical/Biological (type I environment suits required)

Basic army units are not required to fight in:

- ③ Zero Gravity
- ③ Superhigh Gravity (1.5g or greater, requiring gravity exoskeletons)
- ③ Vacuum
- ③ Artic
- ③ Underwater
- ③ Superhot (type III environment suits required)
- ③ Corrosive Atmosphere (type III environment suits required)
- ③ High Radiation/Chemical/Biological (type II environment suits required)

## Unit Types

Standard units within EarthForce fall within the following designations. 'Units', in this context, can be anything from platoons to whole divisions; some divisions are combined armed forces, while others are entirely composed of a single unit type.

- ③ **Air:** Air units are purely designed for air superiority; they are made up of Heimdall fighter-bombers, gunships and combat flyers. With the advent of the new Thunderbolt-type Starfuries, those fighters will likely be integrated into the Air units within the next three years.



- ③ **Air Cavalry:** Air Cavalry units are made up of Frigga VTOLs, which carry troops into combat at high speed. AirCav units are supported by Valkyries to clear and defend landing zones, with a ratio of three Friggas to one Valkyrie.

- ③ **Air Support:** Air Support units are designed to provide fire support to ground units. They normally include Valkyries, although some add Heimdall fixed-wing bombers into the mix.

- ③ **Armoured:** Armoured units are composed of main battle tanks. The Army uses the Asgard chassis in all its standard tanks, although the new generation, starting with the Sigard, will use a heavier frame. Standard MBTs are the Thor and gauss-equipped Odin.

- ③ **Armoured Cavalry:** Armoured Cavalry are heavily armed and armoured transports for infantry, capable of surviving fire from heavier enemy weapons than the lightly protected Baldurs.

- ③ **Artillery:** Artillery units are composed of Loki missile-tanks, Frey MRLses and occasionally Uller Air Defence Artillery. The purpose of artillery is to provide long-range heavy fire support to local units.

- ③ **Assault:** Assault units are designed to break enemy strongpoints, fortifications and similar dangerous obstacles. Assault units are composed of armoured infantry supported by Thors, Hel Armoured Fighting Vehicles and Valkyries.

- 5 **Engineering:** Engineering units and sappers are normally equipped with Magni heavy lifters and multipurpose Swanmay engineering vehicles.
- 5 **Infantry:** Exclusively infantry units are equipped with assault rifles (see page 108) and flak jackets. Each infantryman also carries a basic medkit, supplies for 48 hours, a portable computer/communications array, a boot knife, a standard Auricon PPG sidearm, a link, a digging tool and binoculars.
- 5 **Infantry, Armoured:** Armoured infantry units wear heavy body armour, which restricts movement but protects against heavy weapons fire. Hostile Environment armour also falls into this category.
- 5 **Infantry, Mechanised:** Mechanised infantry units include enough transport assets to carry all the soldiers into battle. Mechanised units include infantry with Baldur, Bragi or Skirnir vehicles.
- 5 **Medical:** MASH units operate out of Mobile Army Surgical Hospitals shuttles.
- 5 **Reconnaissance:** Army recon operates using Vidar spyplanes and Sleipnir recon vehicles to gather information.
- 5 **Security:** Security units provide support and security to EarthForce bases. They come equipped with Gungnir, Quiver and EF-449 heavy PPG platforms.
- 5 **Transport:** Transport detachments include Magni heavy lifters; cargo shuttles and Idun resupply trucks.

## Rules & Regulations

EarthForce regulations fall into the following categories:

- 5 Basic Regulations
- 5 Chain of Command

In game terms, each rule is given an importance from 1 to 7. The higher the number, the more important the rule. See *Breaches*, below.

**L1:** Trivial; only noted by officers who are utter sticklers for regulations.

**L2:** Minor; worthy of disciplinary action but not a mark on permanent record.

**L3:** Significant; conduct unbecoming of an EarthForce officer.

**L4:** Major; a dereliction of duty. This level of breach weighs heavily on a character's permanent record.

**L5:** Disgrace; the character has shamed himself and the uniform. This level of breach can virtually end a character's career.

**L6:** Utter Disgrace; the character risks being drummed out of the service.

**L7:** Treason; the character has betrayed EarthForce completely and wilfully.

## Basic Regulations

These regulations apply to all EarthForce personnel, from the greenest recruit to the highest-ranking general.

- 5 **Uniform & Appearance:** A member of EarthForce is expected to present a neat and respectable appearance when on duty (L1), to wear the appropriate uniform (L2) with all applicable rank markings and insignia (L1).
- 5 **Equipment:** EarthForce personnel must have their sidearm, link and any other assigned basic equipment in full working order (L2), and must be able to maintain this equipment (L1).
- 5 **Duty:** Being late for or missing a duty assignment is an offence (L1 at least, L3 in many situations). Failing to complete duty in a satisfactory fashion is an L2 to L4 offence – merely being lax is L2, but causing damage or injury through incompetence is L4.
- 5 **Behaviour & Conduct:** EarthForce personnel must of course obey all the laws of the Earth Alliance, as well as any local laws. EarthForce bases and space stations fall under the jurisdiction of the EarthForce military police, not local law enforcement. Breaking Alliance civil law ranges from L1 (breaking the peace, unruly behaviour) to L6 (murder).
- 5 **Physical & Psychological Fitness:** EarthForce personnel must undergo regular physical checkups that incorporate both medical exams and fitness tests. These checkups are performed once per year or after a prolonged period at high or low gravity. Psychological tests are also performed once per year, testing for psychological problems including delusions, depression, paranoia, dissatisfaction or frustration. Part of this test is referred to as the 'check for moral fibre', which tests for honesty, honour and bravery. Failing a checkup is an L3 offence, but the EarthForce officer is encouraged to correct this failing instead of accepting the blot on his record.

- 5 Competence:** An EarthForce member must demonstrate a mastery of his assigned specialisation, as well as a basic competence in firearms, self-defence, computer operations, communications protocol, vehicle operations, first aid, diplomacy and survival. Failing to demonstrate competence when tested in any of these fields is an L3 offence; repeated failings are L4 or worse.

There are also a number of special qualifications that can be obtained by a member of EarthForce; once these qualifications are obtained, they are retested once every two years to ensure that the skills remain sharp.

### Competence & Special Qualifications

In game terms, an EarthForce character must be able to pass skill checks at DC 10 in Medical, Technical, Drive and Pilot, as well as passing melee and ranged attacks against DV 10. If the check relates to the character's primary duty (Drive for a tank driver, Medical for a doctor and so on), then the DC is raised to DC 15.

Some of the special qualifications available are listed below, along with the requirements needed:

- 5 First Contact (Diplomacy 4 ranks, Wisdom 11):** The character is permitted to make First Contact with unknown alien races. Ideally, any contact is made by two officers with First Contact qualifications;

having only two humans present has been deemed unlikely to intimidate aliens, but also gives backup and a second opinion to any diplomatic overtures.

- 5 Starfury Operation (Pilot 4 Ranks, Spacecraft Proficiency):** The character is checked out to fly an Aurora-type Starfury under all conditions. Thunderbolt operation requires five ranks in Pilot. Flying a Starfury without a license is an L3 offence.

- 5 Heavy Weapons Operation (Base Attack Bonus +1, Heavy Weapons Proficiency):** The character is checked out to operate heavy personal weapons such as grenade launchers, flamethrowers, heavy machine guns and laser rifles.

- 5 Starship Piloting (Pilot 4 Ranks, Spacecraft Proficiency, Technical (electronics):** The character is qualified to pilot a full-scale capital ship in both real- and hyperspace.

- 5 Starship Operations (Technical (electronics) 4 ranks, Computer Use 4 ranks):** The character is qualified to operate any of the key operations (Ops) stations on a starship.

- 5 Fleet Command (Pilot 2 Ranks, Knowledge (military) 4 ranks, Wisdom 13, Intelligence 13, Charisma 13):** The character is qualified to command a Naval Battle Group.



- 5 **Advanced Zero-G Operations (Balance 2 Ranks, Tumble 2 Ranks):** The character is qualified to conduct operations in zero gravity. Most crew on board modern spaceships are not required to have Advanced Zero-G qualifications, as their duties will rarely take them out of the gravity decks. Advanced Zero-G is normally held by engineering and repair crew.
- 5 **Hostile Environment Operations (Con 13, Technical (mechanical) 2 ranks, Survival 2 ranks):** The character is qualified to operate a Type II or III environmental suit and is qualified to enter and deal with hostile environments.
- 5 **Advanced Survival (Survival 4 ranks):** The character is qualified in advanced survival techniques, permitting him to go behind enemy lines or stay on un-colonised worlds for months at a time.
- 5 **Fraternisation:** EarthForce allows both men and women to serve, and most barracks and washrooms are unisex. Where possible, the sexes are divided into separate barracks and washrooms, in which case entering a room dedicated to the opposite gender is an L1 offence. Fraternisation – sexual relations of any sort – is officially not permitted between EarthForce personnel on an EarthForce base or ship. In practice, this rule is often ignored and infractions are considered minor offences (L1). However, should the relationship cause morale or behavioural problems within the unit, this is a more serious matter (L3). Relations between officers within the same chain of command is expressly forbidden (L3 or more). It is generally preferred that any and all fraternisation takes place quietly, behind closed doors and well off the ship.
- 5 **Security:** Not having proper identicards or a link is an L2 offence, as is failure to challenge an unidentified person for such proof of identity. Note that due to the presence of telepaths and holography, merely *recognising* someone is not considered proof of identity. Giving away EarthForce secrets is L5 to L7.

### Security Levels within EarthForce

All official EarthForce documents and information carries one or more of the following security levels.

**PUBLIC:** The information in the document is not secret and can be viewed by anyone.

**NOFORN:** The information in the document is not for the use of foreign nationals or aliens.

**EYES ONLY:** The information in the document should only be read, not printed out, copied or stored in any fashion.

**BRAIN ONLY:** Rarely seen outside the upper echelons of the intelligence community, Brain Only data is either transmitted by telepath couriers or is decoded by pre-existing hypnotic routines – to anyone without the hypnotic commands, the information just looks like a random pattern of light and sound.

**CONFIDENTIAL:** The document is for the use of EarthForce, EarthGov and other official government bodies (such as Psi Corps) only, and should be not distributed to civilians without a security clearance.

**CLASSIFIED:** The information is restricted to EarthForce only. Distributing Classified data is an L2 offence.

**SECRET:** The information is considered a secret by EarthForce; only those with Secret clearance can read it. Getting a Secret clearance is relatively easy; all EarthForce officers and most specialists, warrant offers and senior NCOs will have Secret clearance. Distributing this data is an L4 offence. Most technical documents are Secret.

**VERY SECRET:** Very Secret is used for important tactical information. Very Secret data includes current enemy troop deployments; information about EarthForce assignments, information about alien governments obtains by EFI and so on. Commanders and higher generally have Very Secret clearance.

**TOP SECRET:** The highest clearance most officers will ever know about, let alone possess, Top Secret is used for the most sensitive information. Distributing Top Secret information is an L7 offence.

**ULTRA VIOLET:** Ultra Secret's mere existence is not known to most people in EarthForce; awareness of Ultra Violet is very much on a need to know basis. It is reserved for various super-secret projects like Project Tarsus and the Advanced Destroyer Program. Distributing Ultra Violet information is an offence normally punished by the offender vanishing and never being seen by human eyes again.

In addition to the clearances listed above, there are also five channel codes that indicate how a message may be transmitted.



**BRONZE:** Any transmission method may be used. Bronze messages can be transmitted in the clear by radio if no other options are available, as Bronze messages are not expected to be secure.

**SILVER:** The default transmission level, Silver channel messages are expected to be transmitted via secure means, using encrypted tachyon broadcasts or uninterceptable point-to-point lasers.

**GOLD:** Gold channel messages are the highest level of standard security channel. Messages sent via Gold channel are heavily encrypted using the most secure codes. Maintaining the integrity of Gold channel communications is vital for any military unit, as most communications from headquarters come via Gold channel.

**BLACK:** For a communication channel to be rated Black, it has to even more secure than Gold. Only a handful of places have the cryptographic technology and computer security necessary to qualify for Black level.

**NULL:** A message with the Null tag may not be transmitted or relayed in any fashion. Null messages must be delivered by courier, and that courier must be given whatever protection or passage is needed to get the message to its destination.

## Chain of Command

As described above, every member of EarthForce is part of a chain of command. He has a clearly defined superior officer, and may have one or more subordinates. Orders are passed down the

chain of command, information and advice comes back up it. Respecting and maintaining the chain of command is key to maintaining good order in battle.

Personnel who break or disrespect the chain of command are in considerable trouble. There are different levels of insubordination:

**Minor (L1):** Back talking, not saluting or saying 'sir', disrespecting a superior officer and so on.

**Insubordination (L2):** Disobeying the order of a superior officer, including deliberately and wilfully going against the *spirit* of an order while obeying the letter of it.

**Deliberate (L4):** Disobeying the order of a superior officer, even when that order is forcefully repeated.

**Major (L5):** Disobeying an order in battle or in a crisis situation.

There are also several context-specific modifiers:

- 5 Officer giving the order is two or more ranks higher than offender: +L1
- 5 Officer giving the order is in direct line of command above offender: +L1
- 5 Officer is giving the order; offender is non-commissioned or warrant officer: +L1

Regardless of the situation, disobeying an order cannot be an offence above L7.

## Other Stupid Things Player Characters Will Do

The list of rules and regulations is obviously incomplete – fully listing all of EarthForce's regulations would require hundreds of pages. However, it is possible to predict some of the events that will come up in games:

- 5 Stealing weapons: L3
- 5 Stealing a Starfury: L4
- 5 Stealing a warship: L6
- 5 Going AWOL (Absent With Out Leave): L3
- 5 Kidnapping an Officer: L4
- 5 Firing on a civilian ship: L5
- 5 Starting a war: L7

## Offences & Breaches

The Offence rules are an abstract system to determine how much trouble a character is in. Once the basic offence level has been determined, modify it as follows:

**Good Intentions:** The character went against regulations because he felt it must be done, in order to protect his fellow officers, to save lives, or to promote peace – reduce the offence level by one.

**Good Results:** The character's actions were against EarthForce regulations, but had the best possible result. Reduce the offence level by one to three, depending on how beneficial the results were. Disobeying orders because you have worked out that your Captain is under telepathic domination is acceptable – if you can prove it.

**Deliberate:** The character knew he was breaching regulations, was warned about it, but did it anyway. Increase offence level by one.

**Especially Disastrous:** The character not only disobeyed orders, he caused extra problems by doing so. Increase offence level by one to three, depending on the level of disaster.

**Especially Unwarranted:** The offence was especially pointless and mean-spirited. Increase offence level by one.



## Punishment

The punishment varies depending on the modified level of the offence.

**L0:** No punishment.

**L1:** Extra duty shift or unpleasant duty (cleaning toilets); extra examination ('have your gear scrubbed so shiny that I can see my face in it'); loss of privileges.

**L2:** Considerable extra duty; detention or confined to quarters.

**L3:** Detention, docked pay (10–20% of salary for at least one month), mark in permanent record (decreases chances of promotion).

**L4:** Docked pay; suspension; transfer to other duty; mark in permanent record.

**L5:** Demotion; suspension.

**L6:** Long-term suspension; dishonourable discharge.

**L7:** Dishonourable discharge; imprisonment.

**L8:** Imprisonment.

**L9:** Long-term imprisonment.

**L10:** Death of personality.

## Appeal

There are three routes of official appeal within EarthForce.

Firstly, the plaintiff can just appeal the decision of the officer who handed out the punishment, asking for leniency or bringing up mitigating factors.

Each unit has an ombuds who listens to complaints and handles inquiries and protests. The ombuds can give advice to the plaintiff, or take the matter up with the superior of the officer who handed out the punishment. Both the officer and the ombuds usually take the same attitude of 'suck it up, soldier' – most punishments are entirely justified, and EarthForce does not promote people who do not understand the burdens and responsibilities of command.

The third route of appeal only happens in extreme situations (L5+). In such situations, an internal EarthForce investigation is normally called, to examine the whole situation. Staff from Internal Affairs investigate the



situation and interview the parties involved. JAG staff are also assigned to the case, to present the evidence before a panel of superior officers who make the final decision. Tribunals of this sort are rare, expensive and time-consuming so they are only assembled in dire need.

### Running Appeals and Court Cases

Mechanically, appeals work by reducing the level of the offence. An appeal requires the plaintiff making a Diplomacy or Knowledge (law) check at DC 5 + (Lx5); if successful, the offence is reduced by one level. There must be a level of doubt or confusion for this appeal to work; telling your superior officer that he has a face like a Pak'mar'a's hump and then trying to talk your way out of trouble is unlikely to work.

The ombuds works the same way, but the DC is increased to 10 + (Lx5). However, the ombuds is likely to have high Diplomacy and Knowledge (law) skills. If the ombuds does make an appeal and beats the DC by 10 or more, then the offence is reduced by two levels instead of one.

Court cases and tribunals should be roleplayed out, but mechanically require multiple opposed Diplomacy, Knowledge (law) and Knowledge (military) checks. The side that wins the majority of the checks wins the overall case.

## Equipment

Standard EarthForce equipment ranges from ordinary uniforms and links to the mighty Omega-class destroyers. Extra equipment is also described in the *Babylon 5 Roleplaying Game*, page 81 and the *Earth Alliance Fact Book*, page 176.

## Uniforms

The basic uniform for an Earth Alliance officer consists of a jacket and pants. There is a leather strip covering the fasteners, as well as leather cuffs. The basic colour of the uniform varies depending on service branch:

### Uniform Colour

Branch	Colour
Navy	Blue
Army	Brown
Marines	Green
Others	Grey

The EarthForce logo is worn on the left shoulder and right breast. Below the breast insignia is a stripe denoting the officer's duty assignment.

### Duty Stripe

Duty	Stripe Colour
Fleet Command	Gold Stripe with Star
Command	Gold
Personnel & Command	Silver/Gold
Standard Personnel	Silver
Medical	Red
Security	Green
Pilot	Blue
Science & Engineering	Yellow
Special Operations	Black

Medals and campaign ribbons are worn beneath the duty stripe when in formal uniform. A unit patch is worn on the right shoulder. Rank insignia are worn at the collar and belt. Each rank has its own insignia, as follows:

Black shoes, a standard issue link and a PPG sidearm are the other official components of the uniform. Equipment can be clipped to the belt or kept in pockets. The uniform does have some minor protective qualities, as the mesh underlay blocks low-level radiation.

The dress variant of the uniform has longer duty stripes running down the pants legs and sleeves and requires that the officer wear all his medals and campaign ribbons. Cavalry units are permitted to wear a cavalry sabre instead of PPG sidearm when in dress uniform.

### Other Uniforms

Starfury pilots and tankers are permitted to wear a special uniform. This uniform consists of a flight jacket and pants, with a squadron scarf worn inside the jacket. The uniform actually serves as the basic flight suit, and the jacket covers the various connectors and tube feeds used to maintain life support functions inside a cockpit.

# EarthForce Insignia



EarthForce Medical Badge



EarthForce Security Badge



EarthForce Command Badge



EarthForce Engineering Badge



EarthForce Fire Badge



General



1 Star: Brigadier-General  
2 Stars: Major-General  
3 Stars: Lieutenant-General

4 Stars Full General  
5 Stars: General of the Navy/Army (wartime only)



Captain (Navy) / Colonel (Army)



Commander (Navy) / Lt. Colonel (Army)



Lt. Commander (Navy) / Major (Army)



Lieutenant (Navy)  
Captain (Army)



Junior Lt. (Navy)  
1st Lt. (Army)



Ensign (Navy)  
2nd Lt. (Army)



Warrant Officer



Enlisted Man



Fleet Command Duty Insignia



Command Officer Duty Insignia



Personnel & Command Officer Duty Insignia



Standard Personnel Staff Duty Insignia



Medical Staff Duty Insignia



Security Staff Duty Insignia



Pilot Duty Insignia



Special Operations Duty Insignia

# EarthForce Badges & Uniforms



Private



Corporal



Sergeant



Master Sergeant



Sergeant Major



Sergeant Major  
of the Army



Earth Alliance Logo



Pilot's Wings  
(Captain/Commander)



Pilot's Wings  
(Lt. Commander)



Pilot's Wings  
(Officer)



Pilot's Wings



1. Navy Fatigues
2. Army Fatigues
3. Navy / Security Body Armour
4. Army Body Armour
5. Flight Suit
6. Navy General Staff Uniform
7. Army General Staff Uniform
8. Navy Warrant Officer's Uniform (Army version is green)
9. Navy Officer's Uniform (Army version is brown)

## Armour

Basic infantry troops wear a helmet and flak jacket. The helmet includes a built-in computer with a heads-up display, giving the soldier tactical information relayed from the other members of his squad and from command. The helmet also includes a camera and microphone to relay everything that soldier sees and hears back to the battle network.

**Battle Armour:** EarthForce has experimented with heavier powered armour, but lacking the physical strength of the Narn or the advanced materials science of the Minbari, these experiments have been less than successful. Power suits are occasionally used by Special Forces for specific missions, but have yet to be integrated into the order of battle.

A character wearing a power suit gains a +2 equipment bonus to Strength, but suffers a -4 penalty to Dexterity. The suit absorbs the first four points of damage from any source.

**Heavy Gravity Exoskeleton:** These exoskeletons are worn on worlds with a high (2g+) gravity. They cancel the Dexterity penalty from high gravity (see page 65 of the *Babylon 5 Roleplaying Game*), while the internal pressure suit helps deal with circulatory problems. The exoskeleton provides one point of armour.

**Encounter Suit, Type I (Basic):** Type I environmental suits are lighter versions of the pressure suits used in space. The suit provides basic protection from radiation and hostile environments. The suit is fully sealed and self-contained.

**Encounter Suit, Type II (Advanced):** Type II suits are much heavier and better armoured than Type I suits. They are used in conditions where a Type I suit would be much too fragile. They are heavier than conventional pressure suits and are capable of sustaining life support for up to 18 hours.

**Encounter Suit, Type III (Long-Term):** Type III suits are more like small vehicles than suits; they are entirely enclosed and capable of sustaining life support for up to 36 hours.

## Suits

Suit	Cost	Weight	DR <sup>1</sup>	Skill Penalty	Defence Penalty	Base Speed Reduction	Operation Time <sup>2</sup>
Battle Armour	4,000 cr.	50 lbs.	4	-4	-0	-10 ft.	—
Heavy Gravity Exoskeleton	500 cr.	40 lbs.	1	-2	-2	—	—
Basic (Type I Encounter)	950 cr.	32 lb.	1 (2)	-3	-3	-10 ft.	12 hours
Advanced (Type I Encounter)	2,500 cr.	20 lb.	1 (2)	-2	-2	-5 ft.	18 hours
Long-Term (Type I Encounter)	4,000 cr.	40 lb.	1 (2)	-4	-4	-15 ft.	36 hours
Combat (Type I Encounter)	3,500 cr.	35 lb.	3 (4)	-4	-1	-10 ft.	8 hours

<sup>1</sup> Encounter suits use the bracketed Damage Reduction against any kind of heat or cold damage, including PPG fire.

<sup>2</sup> The duration that a suit can sustain life before needing to be recharged and re-supplied (with fresh oxygen mix and so on).



**Encounter Suit, Combat:** Combat suits have only limited life support capabilities, but are more heavily armoured.

Sealed suits are bulky and cumbersome, making it extremely difficult to perform certain tasks while wearing one. The skill penalty is applied to the following skills so long as the suit is worn: Balance, Climb, Jump, Move Silently and Tumble. The skill penalty is also applied to the following skills so long as gloves are worn: Forgery, Medical, Sleight of Hand and Technical (if the task requires fine manipulation or control, not if it is purely knowledge based). Removing gloves in conditions where a suit is necessary is not advised; the user will take damage as if exposed to vacuum for 1d4 rounds until safety features seal the wrists of the suit. The sheer agony of having one's hands exposed to vacuum will generally mean they become useless for whatever task they are required for in any case, though a successful Will save (DC 20) may allow a single action without penalty. If the user remains ungloved for ten rounds or longer, the damage to the hands from capillary explosions, cold and radiation will be so great that amputation will be required. Furthermore, all suits incur a penalty upon a wearer's Defence Value and base speed.

## Military Weapons

EarthForce has yet to fully standardise its personal weapons in the same way that it standardised tank chassis after the Dilgar War. Different colonial guard units use different (usually locally-produced) weapons.

**Assault Rifle:** The standard heavy weapon of the EarthForce army is the ABPro-34 rifle, which spits out over one thousand rounds per minute on full automatic. It uses the standard binary propellant system used in other EarthForce weapons, although the individual rounds contain half the chemicals used. The rifle's stock contains a detachable second reservoir with the second BilPro component.

The rifle can be switched to single or rapid fire, collapsed down to a submachine gun or rested on a tripod. The casing is sealed so it can operate in extreme temperatures and less-than-ideal conditions. It carries 1,200 rounds in its standard magazine.

**Gauss Rifle:** Gauss weapons are commonly associated with heavy vehicle-mounted weapons, as their power requirements are extremely demanding. However, experiments with man-portable gauss rifles are continuing, and they have acquired some popularity among snipers, as they are incredibly good at piercing armour. The G-29X includes a built-in thermal imaging scope and a transceiver to view transmissions from bugs and drones. The gauss rifle has a magazine of 120 rounds, but the main restriction is the weapon's batteries, which can only fire six shots before requiring a fresh charge.

The gauss rifle ignores the first four points of DR.

**Heavy PPG:** Heavy PPG cannons are a compromise between 'not blowing giant holes in the side of your ship' and 'blowing giant holes in the armoured intruder'. They are essentially scaled-up versions of the standard PPG pistol, eschewing the rapid fire of the PPG rifle for sheer firepower. Heavy PPGs are inaccurate (–1 to all attack rolls) and can only fire once every two rounds. Its magazine contains enough power for 12 shots.

**Holdout PPG:** A human copy of the rare Minbari holdout laser, the holdout PPG is the size and shape of a knuckleduster. It only has enough energy for a single shot, but that can be the difference between life and death. The PPG is not as hard to detect using weapon scanners as the Minbari version, but it does have a good chance of being missed by an inattentive security guard.

**Rocket Launcher:** The SPKR-7 Heavy Ordnance Delivery System is a smart rocket launcher. It is designed as a weapon to be worn, not carried – it attaches to a special vest for correct use and carrying. The vest includes a laser pointer and a web of sensors, allowing rockets to be remote aimed and controlled. There are several types of rocket that are compatible with the launcher.

If fired in heat-seeking mode, the rocket gives a +2 attack bonus against vehicles.

**Target Painter:** A target painter is a hand-held laser/scanner that marks a target for destruction. Marking a target with a laser pointer gives a +2 synergy bonus to attacks against that target from vehicle-launched weapons.

## Military Weapons

Weapon	Cost	Dmg	Area of Effect	Critical	Ammo	Range Increment	Size	Weight	Type
Assault Rifle	400 cr.	2d8	—	19–20/x2	1,200	50 ft.	Medium	5 lb.	Projectile, Rapid Fire
Gauss Rifle	2,000 cr.	2d8	—	18–20/x3	6	100 ft.	Large	8 lb.	Projectile
Heavy PPG	1,500 cr.	3d6	—	19–20/x2	12	80 ft.	Large	10 lb.	Energy
Holdout PPG	400 cr.	2d6	—	19–20/x2	1	10 ft.	Tiny	2 lb.	Energy
Rocket Launcher	1,200 cr.	**	**	**	1	**	Large	12 lb.	Projectile
<i>Anti-Aircraft Rocket</i>	400 cr.	4d6	20 ft.	—	—	500 ft.	Tiny	3 lb.	Projectile
<i>High Explosive Rocket</i>	300 cr.	6d6	20 ft.	—	—	200 ft.	Tiny	3 lb.	Projectile
<i>Armour Piercing Rocket*</i>	400 cr.	6d6	20 ft.	—	—	200 ft.	Tiny	3 lb.	Projectile
<i>Fragmentation Rocket</i>	300 cr.	4d6	40 ft.	—	—	200 ft.	Tiny	3 lb.	Projectile
Target Painter	200 cr.	—	—	—	—	200 ft.	Tiny	1 lb.	—

\*Armour piercing rockets reduce the DR of vehicles by 5.



## Special Equipment

Sheer firepower rarely wins battles. The best route to victory is to be smarter than the enemy. The following equipment is commonly used by EarthForce personnel to gather intelligence on the enemy.

**Bug, Audio:** Tiny recording devices of all sorts are in use by EarthForce Intelligence. The basic audio bug consists of a small blob of stick gel with a computer chip at its core. Any vibrations cause microcrystals to form in the gel. These crystals sink deeper in the gel. Once per day, the chip scans the surrounding gel; this scanning pulse translates the shape of the crystal into a sound recording and dissolves them. The virtue of this design is that the chip is only active and hence detectable once per day; the chemical reaction of crystal formation does not show up on standard bug scans.

The data held in the bug is either retrieved by installing a burst radio transmitter with the bug, or else physically retrieving the bug.

Other audio bugs include laser microphones bouncing off windows or other surfaces that vibrate, link taps, hidden radio transmitters and taps built into voice sensors on computer terminals. The average bug has a recording radius of 50 feet and an effective Listen skill of +8.

**Bug, Visual:** Visual recorders no longer have to be big enough to contain a camera lens, as EarthForce scientists have developed a photosensitive film that records light hitting it. Cameras are more accurate and give better picture quality, but are harder to install than photo slaps. Visual bugs have an effective Spot skill of +8.

**Bug, Data:** Data taps into computer systems are normally accomplished using computer hacking, but physical taps are also used when the computer system is regularly swept for informational backdoors and illegal processes. Data taps include overlays that record any data being entered through a keyboard or voice interface, or crystal copiers that copy any data travelling through a data crystal port.

**Bug, Intelligent:** Intelligent bugs are actually a form of micro-drone. An intelligent bug looks like a medium-sized insect at first glance, but is actually a tiny mobile camera and microphone. The bug is smart enough to hide itself when enemies are searching for it, and can even follow a designated target.

**Intelligent Bug:** Fine construct; Spd 20 ft, climb 15 ft; hp 1; DV 16; DR 0; Str 10, Dex 14, Con —, Int 14, Wis 12, Cha —

**Skills and Feats:** Hide +16, Climb +9, Listen +8, Spot +8, Move Silently +9; Climb Module.

**Bugzapper:** A bugzapper wand is a complex array of scanners and probes used to find, identify and destroy bugs and other listening devices. Finding a bug requires a Search or Technical (electronics) roll, and the character gets a +4 synergy bonus if he has five ranks in the other skill (five ranks in Search if using Technical (electronics) for example). The DC for the check varies depending on the type and complexity of the bug. It takes five rounds (half a minute) to search a ten-foot by ten-foot by ten-foot cubic area.

### Bugzapper DCs

Bug Type	Bugzapper DC
Audio	10–40
Visual	5–30
Data	10–40
Intelligent	15–30

## Drone

EarthForce's electronic research facilities have developed a number of simple robotic drones. Drones are small mobile devices that can be remote controlled or programmed with a set of simple artificial intelligence routines. Drones go where it is too dangerous to send soldiers. It is much cheaper and safer to send a small robot into an enemy bunker. A summary of their characteristics are presented below.

**Size and Type:** Drones size can range from Fine to Large and all drones are of the construct type. The size of the drone is used to determine many of its base statistics.

**Speed:** All drones have a base speed of 20 ft. This may be altered by the selection of drone specific feats.

**Hit Points:** A drone's hit points are determined by its size and feat selection. Each size of drone has the following basic hit points: Fine 1 hit points, Diminutive 2 hit points, Tiny 5 hit points, Small 10 hit points, Medium 15 hit points, Large 20 hit points.

**Defence Value:** A drone's defence value is calculated as normal, see page 59 of *The Babylon 5 Roleplaying Game and Fact Book*.

**Damage Reduction:** As with armour that is worn by characters, the Damage Reduction value determines how much damage the drone can shrug off. This is determined by the drone's size: Fine DR 0, Diminutive DR 0, Tiny DR 2, Small DR 4, Medium DR 6 or Large DR 8.

**Abilities:** Drones never have a Constitution or a Charisma score.

**Skills and Feats:** Drone possess a number of skill points equal to 2 x Intelligence. Drones of size Fine through Small have one feat while Medium and Large drones have two.

### Sample Drones

**Drone, Basic:** A basic drone resembles a cross between a spider and a maintenance bot, laden with cameras and microphones. A drone can be remotely controlled using a simple hand-held control system, or given basic orders (*'enter the structure, visit every room you can, avoid detection, return here when complete and wait for pickup'*).

**Basic Drone:** Tiny construct; Spd 20 ft; hp 5; DV 12; DR 2; Str 10, Dex 10, Con —, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha —

**Skills and Feats:** Climb +6, Hide +10, Listen +6, Move Silently +6, Spot +6; Alertness

**Drone, Combat:** Combat drones are bigger, more heavily armoured devices. They are not especially powerful in terms of firepower, but they can be used to draw fire from enemy forces.

**Combat Drone:** Small construct; Spd 20 ft; hp 10; DV 13; DR 4; Str 11, Dex 14, Con —, Int 7, Wis 14, Cha —.

**Skills and Feats:** Hide +10, Listen +6, Spot +8; Combat Module (Attack +4 ranged, twin-linked W&G Model 10 PPGs)

**Drone, Flying:** Flying drones are small mobile cameras. They have the many of the same properties as basic drones but have a flying speed of 40 feet per round with perfect manoeuvrability.

**Basic Drone:** Tiny construct; Fly 40 ft. (perfect); hp 5; DV 12; DR 2; Str 10, Dex 10, Con —, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha —

**Skills and Feats:** Hide +10, Listen +7, Move Silently +6, Spot +7; Flight Module

### Drone Feats

#### Climb Module (Drone)

This drone has been equipped with apparatus to allow it to climb.

**Benefit:** The drone gains a climb speed of 15 feet and may use either its Dexterity modifier or Strength modifier for all climb checks.

**Normal:** The drone does not possess a climb speed and all Climb checks are made with a Strength modifier.

#### Combat Module (Drone)

This drone has been equipped and programmed to use an inbuilt weapon-system.

**Benefit:** The drone gains a single melee or ranged attack form. The attack bonus is equal to one + size modifier + Str modifier (for melee) or + Dex modifier (for ranged).

**Normal:** Drones are not equipped with or programmed to use weapons.

#### Flight Module (Drone)

This drone has been equipped with microjets allowing it to fly.

**Benefit:** The drone gains a fly speed of 40 feet with perfect manoeuvrability. A drone fitted with a flight module that is size Tiny or less will lose the ability to walk.

**Normal:** Drones are not able to fly.

### Item Costs

Item	Cost	Weight
Drone	300 cr.	2 lb.
Combat Drone	1,000 cr.	20 lb.
Flying Drone	500 cr.	2 lb.
Audio Bug	50 cr.	—
Visual Bug	50 cr.	—
Data Bug	25 cr.	—
Intelligent Bug	300 cr.	—
Bugzapper	100 cr.	1 lb.

# Black Projects

For all intents and purposes, EarthForce was originally founded on a secret project – it was the revelation of the EarthShield satellite network that prompted the crisis that led to the organisation's creation. Ever since then, EarthForce has had a staggering R&D budget and carte blanche to follow any line of inquiry into new weapons technology.

As EarthForce went into space and encountered alien races with alien weapons, the importance of technological superiority became even more evident. Superior weapons made all the difference in space combat. 'Closing the gap' became an obsession – without superior technology, EarthForce could not stand up to an attack by the Centauri or another established power.

The Dilgar War proved that one of the best sources of new technologies was the other races, but launching wars of acquisition was never an option for humanity (EarthForce intelligence did step up its efforts to 'borrow' techniques from other races, such as the Hyach's spinal laser). As the Interplanetary Expeditions Corporation discovered more and more alien ruins, however, the way forward became clear. EarthForce would try to close the gap by delving into the ruins of the past.

While this 'cargo cult research' was denigrated by many, it has served EarthForce well since the program was initiated. It would take Humanity centuries to catch up with the Minbari under normal circumstances, but with the secrets looted from a dozen dead worlds or traded from other governments, EarthForce was able to create vessels like the Omega or Warlock class that could stand up to a Sharlin.

Currently, slightly less than two-thirds of EarthForce's research budget goes towards reverse engineering alien technologies and integrating them into existing designs. The remainder mostly goes towards evolutionary work, building better versions of existing weapons and technologies. EarthForce has yet to break new ground, although the hyperspace jamming technology used in the Battle of the Line may be the precursor to a new field of military technology.

## Black Projects

EarthForce works closely with a number of megacorporations. The old military-industrial complex has survived and thrived by working with EarthForce, and has grown more powerful than ever. Corporations like Edgars Industries, Lockheed-Hyatake, Duffy Electronics, IPX, Pro-Zeta, Mitchell-Hyundyne or Blackwell Corporation all have virtually unlimited access to EarthForce's cash

and inner workings. Indeed, many of these wield more influence within sections of EarthForce than EarthGov does. This is because of the high level of compartmentalisation within the research division. Many projects are conducted on specially constructed asteroid bases in uninhabited systems, away from prying eyes and spies, but also away from government oversight committees and regularly contact from EarthGov. Mars is something of a hotbed for this sort of secret project, but more and more research is being conducted on the fringes of the Alliance.

Currently, EarthForce has research facilities on almost every settled world in the Alliance, but the most notable are:

- 5 Earth – computers, strong AI, information warfare, psychological warfare
- 5 Mars – Xenoarchaeology, weapons R&D
- 5 Ganymede – Xenoarchaeology
- 5 Io – Starfury Project R&D, hyperspace technologies, artificial gravity
- 5 Uranus – starship designs
- 5 Proxima IV – personal weapons, survival equipment
- 5 Ceti Gamma – biological warfare and genetic engineering
- 5 Beta 7 – biological warfare and genetic engineering
- 5 Beta 9 – Xenoarchaeology
- 5 Sector 420 – Xenoarchaeology
- 5 Theta – biological warfare and genetic engineering

## The Coming of Shadows

EarthForce's first encounter with the legacy of the Shadows came decades before they were awoken on Z'ha'dum. Even when the Shadows slept, the agents of the Shadows like the Streib and Drahk were active, keeping watch over their slumbering masters and their works. The first contact was probably some minor piece of Shadowtech left behind on some world.

The real contact began in 2253, when a Shadow base was discovered on Mars. The ship discovered there was swiftly recovered by another Shadow vessel, but enough remained of the base to put EarthForce on a dark road. Unlike every other example of organic technology discovered to that date, Shadowtech seemed to *want* to be used. It gave up its secrets with terrible ease. The base, however, was largely ruined – the ship was the key, and the ship was gone.

EarthForce had tagged the ship with a homing beacon, but the fleeing Shadow vessel moved in a way that the tracking scanners could not recognise, and it was swiftly lost in the wilds of the hyperspace. Desperate to retrieve the vessel,

EarthForce and IPX would launch dozens of long-range probes in the next three years, searching for any trace of the homing beacon's signal. Eventually, they found the probe's signal in 2256, dispatched the *Icarus*...and woke the Shadows.

Long before the crew of the *Icarus* set foot on Z'ha'dum and become the first *human* servants of the Shadows, however, EarthForce was contacted by other servant races. Putting a beacon on the Shadow vessel was taken as a sign that humanity *wanted* to learn about the dark technology, and the servants of the Shadows knew that such desires were to be rewarded. Carefully, subtly, they made contact with ambitious people within the Alliance. Xenoarchaeologists, weapons merchants, generals, politicians... the servants of the Shadows had done this before, with dozens of other races, and Humanity fell into their web with ease.

Working in concert with agents of the Shadows (mostly Streib with Drakh overseers, but there were other species involved), EarthForce began a massive project to develop Shadow technology. President Santiago was aware of this, but agents working for then-Vice President Clark worked to contain knowledge of the project. EarthForce had been looking for organic technology for some time, and Clark wanted to be remembered as the president who ushered in this new age. It is unlikely that, back then, he intended to assassinate Santiago; that would come later, when he learned what he really wanted.

As soon as the Shadows were awoken, their servants reported their progress with the new spacefaring races. Human servants like Morden and the other *Icarus* survivors, as well as newly recruited humans like Justin, were ordered to take over the Shadow dealings with EarthGov. Their immediate priority was to put Psi Corps under Shadow control, which they accomplished with Clark's help. The Shadow corruption of EarthGov was a cascade affect – turn one aspect of the government or society, and others follow. A corporation is hired to work on organic technology with EarthForce...the leaders of that corporation realise that alien governments will do anything to get their hands on this technology, so the corporation increases its security manifold... it begins investigating its employees more thoroughly. Soon, dissension becomes sedition.

## Shadow Technology

The most obvious use of Shadow technology came in the crash-project development of the Shadow Omega, or Omega-X, at the end of the war, but that was a clumsy and desperate attempt to put the technology to use. More successful and long-ranging projects are still underway – the *Excalibur* encounters a hybrid vessel in 2267 and while its base was destroyed by Galen, the research was not.

There are five main strands of Shadow technology being investigated by EarthForce, although the ultimate goal is a complete understanding of the principles of Shadow organic technology.

## Xenoarchaeology

While mastering the underlying principles of Shadowtech is the ultimate goal, EarthForce is also interested in immediate results. The Shadows left a lot of their toys lying around the galaxy; as soon as they left, the other races immediately began searching for these abandoned artefacts. Psi Corps, for example, got its hands on a cache of 'pilot pods', the Shadow devices used to crew Centauri vessels in 2262. The Xenoarchaeology teams are in charge of finding new Shadow sites, cataloguing the devices found and attempting to get anything they find working as soon as possible.

## Shadow Artefacts Recovered by EarthForce

EarthForce has recovered numerous copies of several devices:

**Pilot Pods:** These curious devices are artificial versions of the control matrices of Shadow vessels. Essentially, they are temporary replacements for the living beings normally used to control the ships. These devices were first seen in use in 2153, when the Shadow vessel found on Mars was rescued by another ship. The second ship implanted one of these pods in the buried vessel, allowing it to fly without a living being on board.

When a pilot pod is integrated with a ship's systems through cybernetic grafts, it can replace a large proportion of the crew. Each pod has a Pilot and Technical skill of +10 each, as well as the Spacecraft Proficiency feat. Each pod can replace up to 25 pilots, officers or crew. A vessel's control systems must be retrofitted include control lines for the pod, a process that takes several weeks. Once these control lines are in place, though, the pod can be fitted or removed easily.

**Sensor Blankers:** These are small devices the size of a credit chit. When touched to any computer network, the blanker forces the computer into a loop, preventing it from functioning as long as the blanker is within 250 feet of the computer. The computer does not crash (although systems attached to it may do so) and continues normally when the blanker is removed. The blankers have an effective Computer Use skill of +40 for overcoming defences against this kind of interference.

**Shadow Field Generator:** A vastly more advanced version of the black light suits worn by special operations units, the shadow field generator gives its wearer the invisibility and partial intangibility of the Shadows, allowing him to



## Hybrid Ships

Developing fully organic vessels is currently beyond the scope of EarthForce's wildest dreams – even the Shadows preferred to leave their ships to grow over centuries, buried in the warm darkness beneath the soil. The preferred solution is to create biomechanoid vessels – part organic, part traditional engineering. There is no need, for example, to apply Shadow technology to life support, or to replace conventional controls with living processors. The clumsy Shadow Omegas were the first prototypes of this research, but they were merely a stepping-stone to a design called the *Nemesis* class. The *Nemesis* was based on the early framework for the Warlock class, but replaced the Warlock's weapons and armour with Shadowtech.

phase in and out of reality. The wearer gains a +10 bonus to Hide and Move Silently checks, a +4 dodge bonus to Defence Value, and can also become intangible for up to one round. While intangible, the wearer can move through solid objects, although metals with a DR of 10 or more or powerful electromagnetic fields can block movement. Furthermore, every ten minutes, the wearer must make a Will save at DC 15 or suffer 1d4 points of Wisdom damage, as wearing the field is extremely disorientating and causes hallucinations.

**Bio-Regenerator:** This implant gives incredible healing properties, allowing the user to recover from virtually any injury. As long as more than 50% of the brain survives, the bio-regenerator can regrow a body almost from scratch. Physically, the regenerator consists of several nodes of black material, each about the size of a link. These are embedded beneath the skin of the user.

A character fitted with a bio-regenerator regains one hit point each round. If reduced below zero hit points, the regenerator automatically stabilises him, even if he is reduced below –10 hit points. However, the regenerator's ability to heal that level of damage is more limited, and the character only regains one hit point per week until he is fully healed.

**Whisperer:** The whisperer appears to be some sort of Shadow communications device. It resembles a small black gemstone. When the user visualises a location, the gemstone somehow transmits the user's thoughts to that location, which manifest there as a whispering voice and a distortion of the shadows and light in the area. The range of the whisperer seems to vary wildly; it is usually limited to a few hundred miles, but has been able to bridge interstellar distances on occasion.

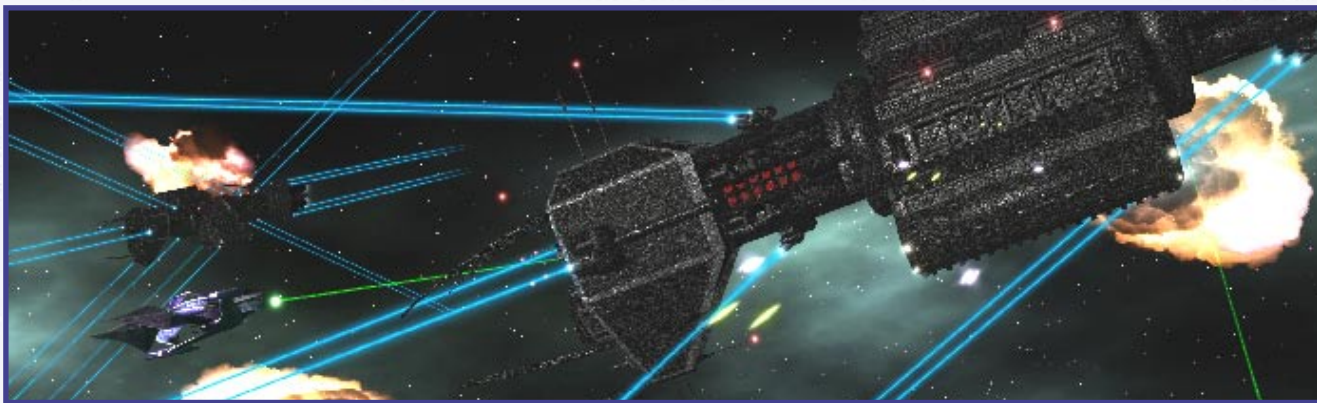
## Augmentation

The augmentation program was the successor to the older Lazarus and Tarsier projects, which used cybernetic and genetic engineering respectively to improve on the basic human physiology. The Shadow augmentation project, however, swiftly went far beyond just making stronger, faster soldiers. It became evident that researchers who had Shadowtech implanted into their bodies were better able to understand and manipulate other Shadowtech, so first volunteers and then test subjects were experimented on. This led to the creation of the 'Shadow Peons' encountered by the *Excalibur*.

The ultimate aim of augmentation, however, is to replicate the technology of the Technomages on a grander scale. EarthForce has been aware of the truth about the Technomages for some time – the Drakh informed EarthGov about them before the war, in the hopes that Humanity would use its far reach to capture the errant servants of darkness. Now that the Shadows and the majority of the Technomages are gone, the field is clear for EarthForce to create its own new order, as soon as it figures out how...

## Living Technology

The first example of human organic technology was decanted in 2261 in a laboratory on Ceti Gamma. It was a relatively simple organic battery, a far cry from the virtually infinite zero-point-energy power cells used by the Shadows, but it was proof of the concept that EarthForce could engineer its own living machines from scratch. The next phase of living technology will involve engineering species of weapons and computers, then engaging in a selective breeding program to develop even more powerful and efficient devices.



The Living Technology section is also the cutting edge of nanotechnology within the Alliance. While basic nanotechnology has been in use for some time, it is limited to the construction of simple molecules and relatively coarse work. Self-replicating nanotechnology is now on the horizon.

### Hyperscience

Organic technology is a means, of course, not an end in itself. The organic devices functioned using scientific principles, and their functionality can be replicated using more conventional technology. The Hyperscience section is attempting to create conventional weapons of, say, the Shadow cutter beam or the Shadow's ability to 'sideslip' into hyperspace without using a jump vortex. One of their early successes has been the development of a new form of mathematics previously known only to the Technomages, which allows hyperspace to be described far more accurately than previous models.

## Black Project Ships

The next generation of ship designs for EarthForce is quite unlike anything that has gone before. There are three, competing lines of development – one based on Vorlon and Minbari technology, one on Shadow technology and the third is an evolutionary development based on previous designs, but incorporating new technologies such as artificial gravity.

The third strand, exemplified by the Warlock, is technically the weakest of the three, as it incorporates the least First One technology. The first strand, which gave birth to the *White Star* and *Victory* designs, is marries advanced technology with the ability to maintain it but shackles EarthForce to the Interstellar Alliance and the Minbari. The final option – using Shadow technology – has obvious advantages and disadvantages.

## Omega-X Destroyer (Shadow Omega)

The Omega-X is a refit of the original Omega class, augmented with advanced weapons taken from the Shadow research projects. The ships were created in a last-ditch attempt to stop Sheridan's invasion of Alliance space – his White Star fleet and alien allies proved to be more than a match for even Omega-class destroyers, so President Clark demanded that the new Warlock-class destroyers be launched to protect Sol.

While the Warlocks could not be made ready in time, technicians working on the project were able to graft Shadow armour and weapons onto the established Omega superstructure. The resulting hybrid was ugly and unwieldy, capable of functioning only because of the organic adaptability and innate vigour of the Shadow technology, but was supremely powerful – until the launch of the Vorlon-inspired Victory class, the Omega-X was perhaps the most powerful ship fielded by any of the younger races.

Colossal III Spacecraft; hp 800; DV 3 (–12 size, +5 agility); DR 30; Spd —; Acc 4; Dec 2; Han +1; Sensor +12; Stealth 16; SQ Jump Point, Long-Ranged, Artificial Gravity (rotating section), Adaptive Armour; Cargo 150,000 lb.; 12 Officers, 28 Pilots, 24 Sensor Operators, 100 Crewmen.

### Weapons

Two Twin-linked Shadow Beams; Boresight; Attack +0; Damage 200+1d100; Critical special; Range 7

Four Shadow Beams; Turret; Attack +0; Damage 200+3d100; Critical special; Range 7

Six Mk II Interceptors; 2 Front/Left/Right, 2 Rear/Left/Right, 1 Left/Right, Attack +3 (targeting computer), Damage 10+3d10; Critical 20; Range 1; Rapid Fire.

### Craft

24 Starfuries, 2 Shuttles.

### Shadow Beams

These beams automatically deal 1d3 critical hits on a successful attack and ignore DR.

## Nemesis

The Nemesis class is based on the same hull design as the Warlock, but uses Shadow technology throughout. Unlike the 'hatchet job' of integration used in the Omega-X, the Nemesis is a fully functional cyber-organic warship.

With the fall of the Clark regime, the Nemesis project was nearly scrapped by EarthForce. It took nearly five years for work to begin again on the ships, and new hulls had to be obtained as the old hulls had been converted into basic Warlocks. The project's name was changed from Warlock (or Warlock-X) to Nemesis, and research began again, out of sight of the Interstellar Alliance's watchdogs. While using Shadow technology is not strictly forbidden by ISA law, they are aware of how disruptive it can be. Currently, only a handful of Nemesis-class ships are in operation, all of which are stationed at secret research bases where they can be maintained by Shadow peons, who are needed to tend to the Nemesis' more advanced systems.

Colossal IV Spacecraft; hp 1,100; DV 6 (-14 size, +8 agility); DR35; Spd —; Acc 5; Dec 2; Han +3; Sensor +14; Stealth 16; SQ Jump Point, Long-Ranged, Artificial Gravity, Adaptive Armour; Cargo 450,000 lb; 20 Officers, 28 Pilots, 24 Sensor Operators, 300 Crewmen.

### Weapons

Two Tri-linked Shadow Beams; Boresight; Attack +0; Damage 200+1d100; Critical special; Range 7

Four Shadow Beams; Turret; Attack +0; Damage 200+3d100; Critical special; Range 7

Six Mk II Interceptors; 2 Front/Left/Right, 2 Rear/Left/Right, 1 Left/Right, Attack +3 (targeting computer), Damage 10+3d10; Critical 20; Range 1; Rapid Fire.

### Craft

24 Starfuries, 2 Shuttles.

### Shadow Beams

These beams automatically deal 1d3 critical hits on a successful attack.

## Warlock Class

The Warlock Advanced Destroyer is the Sharlin-killer that has been promised by the shipyards since the Minbari War. The galaxy has changed greatly since the project was first initiated, and Earth's closest ally in the galaxy is now the Minbari Federation, but the Warlock program was still completed and the ship is now rolling off the production lines.

Physically, the massive Warlock looks little like the 'flying bricks' of older designs. It is a streamlined brick – nowhere near as elegant as the fish-like Sharlin or spindly Victory-class ships, but it has a symmetry and monolithic majesty that is quite unlike the ungainly rotating sections and open hangar-mouths of earlier ships. This is because the Warlock is the first human ship with full artificial gravity.

Colossal IV Spacecraft; hp 1,000; DV 6 (-14 size, +8 agility); DR30; Spd —; Acc 6; Dec 2; Han +3; Sensor +8; Stealth 12; SQ Jump Point, Long-Ranged, Artificial Gravity; Cargo 450,000 lb; 20 Officers, 40 pilots, 34 Sensor Operators, 400 Crewmen.

### Weapons

Three Hex-linked Heavy Pulse Cannon; 3 Boresight, Attack +2 (targeting computer), Damage 20+3d10; Critical 19–20; Range 5; Rapid Fire.

Two Particle Beams; 1 Forward, 1 Aft; Attack +2; Damage 10+3d10; Critical 20; Range 3

Three Heavy Railguns; Turret; Attack +2 (targeting computer); Damage 20+2d10 (ignores DR); Critical 20; Range 6; Ammunition 100.

Four Medium Pulse Cannon; Turret; Attack +2 (targeting computer); Damage 10+2d10; Range 4; Rapid Fire.



Six Mk II Interceptors; 2 Front/Left/Right, 2 Rear/Left/Right, 1 Left/Right, Attack +3 (targeting computer), Damage 10+3d10; Critical 20; Range 1; Rapid Fire.

#### Craft

48 Starfuries, 4 Shuttles.

## Other Black Projects

EarthForce's research division has dozens of other projects underway. Some of the more notable are:

**Project Lazarus:** An early attempt to use cybernetics to enhance soldiers, Lazarus' greatest successes were in resuscitating nearly dead casualties. However, the psychological damage dealt by being brought back in this fashion was so severe that the project was largely abandoned in favour of its successor, Project Tarsier. Lazarus was taken over by the Psi Corps, who had great success by locking the mind at the moment of death. Project Lazarus is described in the *Psi Corps Factbook*.

**Project Tarsier:** Using techniques salvaged from the Dilgar, Tarsier attempted to use genetic engineering and surgery to create supersoldiers. The results were largely positive, although individual cases had too high a failure rate to make the mass deployment of Tarsier-enhanced troops possible. Tarsier graduates are normally used for special operations. See the *Crusade* sourcebook for details on Project Tarsier.

**Project Maelstrom:** Maelstrom's goal is the creation of hyperspace bomb, a weapon based on the same principles as the hyperspace interdicator used in the Battle of the Line. When detonated, the bomb would create a massive storm in hyperspace, sweeping ships off course, crushing hulls and forcing other vessels into realspace. The main problem is delivering the bomb – it can only be detonated in hyperspace, so it has to be fired through an open jumpgate or the ship that fires the bomb risks being caught in the explosion.

Maelstrom is currently on hold, as the research asteroid in the Vega system that was host to the researchers was destroyed in an accident.

**Project Wraith:** Wraith is an attempt to match the Minbari's stealth capabilities. The crystalline hulls of the



Minbari ships are beyond human materials technology at present, so EarthForce took a different approach, by masking a ship's signals as much as possible and coating the hull with an energy-absorbent layer. Currently, only relatively small ships can be converted into Wraith-types and any engine burns are easily spotted, but it is hoped that this technology can be applied to Starfuries, making them harder to target.

**Project Sophia:** The manufacture of strong, learning Artificial Intelligence is banned within the Earth Alliance, following a series of disasters where AIs approached sentience and went insane, breaking their programmed limits and going out of control. Now, the only intelligences permitted for use have strict limits on their growth; they can learn, but only within very narrow fields. While this sort of dumb AI is acceptable for civilian use, the military has always chafed under these restrictions.

For an AI to be truly smart, it has to be given the ability to rewrite its own code completely, but this freedom led to homicidal insanity in previous AIs as the program destroyed its own Asimov Laws and went rogue. Project Sophia, based on techniques stolen from other races (notably the Vree), is attempting to create a strong AI. Instead of letting the AI go through the disastrous 'adolescence' where it *becomes* sentient, the project is attempting to create a program that is self-aware from the moment it is switched on. If successful, the Sophia-type AIs will be used with public projects like EFAIS.

# EarthForce Campaigns

In many ways, the *Babylon 5* television series (not to mention *Crusade*) is an EarthForce campaign. The main protagonists (at least, the ones that map most closely to Player Characters) are EarthForce officers. EarthForce is out there in space, exploring the galaxy, defending humanity, getting their hair cut, investigating the mysteries of ancient worlds and new frontiers and building our last, best hope for peace. Other groups of humans might be out looking for trading opportunities or wealth or some personal quest. EarthForce is out there looking for trouble.

It is a proud, noble order, the best of humanity – but also infected and corrupted by the worst. It was EarthForce officers who bargained with the Shadows on Ganymede, EarthForce ships that blasted the Grey Council and nearly wiped out the human race, EarthForce ships that tried to capture Babylon 5, EarthForce satellites that threaten to scorch the planet – but it was also EarthForce who drew the Line, who saved the world from destruction.

Centring a campaign around EarthForce has numerous advantages and offers plenty of opportunity for adventure, but also introduces its own problems and restrictions.

## Why EarthForce?

Before starting a new *Babylon 5* campaign, the Games Master should ask both himself and the players why they want to play a game set within EarthForce. Are all the characters going to be members of EarthForce? Are they all of the same rank? What rank are they? Will the players be able to put up with limits on their actions, or will they chafe under the restrictions of military service?

Roleplaying a character in the military takes discipline on the part of a player. Officers are expected to be part of a team, to obey the chain of command and to follow orders. Their actions are subject to much more scrutiny and weight than those of freelancers. Everything a character does within EarthForce has consequences, and that burden can be difficult for a player who is not expecting it.

For example, a group of free traders accidentally annoy an alien race because of the antics of their Lurker character that tries to steal a jewelled religious talisman. The aliens destroy the character's ship and ban them from re-entering their star system. It is a disaster for the free traders, but they can pick up again by acquiring another ship (say, by putting themselves in debt to a sinister corporation). However, replace 'free trader' with 'EarthForce crew' and the situation instantly becomes much, much worse. The characters will be imprisoned or court-martialled for losing the ship, and the aliens might cut off all contact with the whole Earth Alliance. If the players want freedom of choice above all else, then EarthForce is probably not their ideal career.

The flipside is that EarthForce characters do get to make the big decisions. They are the instrument of EarthGov military policy, which means that they are deeply embroiled in the whirlpool of galactic politics and diplomacies. When star empires clash, EarthForce is there.

Therefore, assuming the players do want to play EarthForce characters, there are some more decisions that should be made when setting up the campaign.

## Mixed Group or All EarthForce

Having only EarthForce personnel in the group simplifies things immensely, as there is no need to justify them being part of a group and they are all operating under the same rules. Campaigns set on most ships or in the Army will have all the characters being part of EarthForce. The downsides are that this eliminates the possibility of having alien Player Characters, as well as telepaths and many other classes. Furthermore, there are no major contrasts or differing viewpoints.

In campaigns set in places where EarthForce personnel regularly work and spend time with non-military and aliens, then this restriction can be relaxed. The trick here is to find reasons for the characters to work together, and to ensure that the Player Characters do not *regularly* divide into cliques of EarthForce and non-EarthForce.

EarthForce does occasionally employ civilian specialists – normally scientists and experts, but EarthForce might have



need of a skilled thief, alien diplomat, telepath or even a technomage. *Crusade* is an excellent example of this sort of cross-class integration.

## Ranks

Low-ranking characters (privates, non-coms, junior lieutenants and so on) have relatively little influence. They go where they are told and do what they are told. This is especially true in large ships or bases, where a character of this rank is just one among dozens or even hundreds of other characters of the same rank. This rank does work well for mission-based games – each scenario could be a different mission for the pilots of Zeta Squadron, or for the 4<sup>th</sup> Platoon of C Company, or for the Base Security Team. Another variant is to have the characters isolated from the rest of EarthForce, say as the crew of a small ship or base far from the main centres of command.

Mid-ranking characters have more freedom and responsibility. They might be the commanders of sections on board ship, or be specialists in some field. A campaign set on board a base, for example, could have the head of Medlab, the head of security, the head of science and the head of engineering as Player Characters. One very solid campaign structure is to have the overall commanding officer (the Captain of a ship, say) be a Games Master-controlled character, to act as brake and guide for the Player Characters. The players are the commanders and

senior staff of the ship. One problem with that (which was glossed over to a degree in the *Babylon 5* series) is that such high-ranking officers have their own staff to whom they could theoretically delegate tasks. In most games, the Player Characters are supposed to be the ones who take down the terrorists or who travel down to the planet and investigate the Vorlon ruins. Having the game degenerate into a series of ‘*my security guards investigate Grey 17*’ or ‘*the alien guardians killed the Alpha science team?* *Ok, we send the Beta team. With guns.*’ does not suit most campaigns. Here, the level-based nature of the d20 System plays to the game’s advantage – as the high-ranking Player Characters will be higher-level than their subordinates, they can handle situations that are beyond the subordinates. Garibaldi is not always down in the trenches shooting bad guys just because he does not trust anyone; he is also there because he is the best shot in Security.

Ambitious Games Master may try running a campaign where the characters are all high-ranking EarthForce officers, commanders and Captains and generals and so on. Here, the characters have vast resources at their disposal, and the game will focus on them gathering the information they need and then coming up with a strategy to deal with the situation. An ‘adventuring group’ could consist of a whole Naval Battle Group, with each character being in charge of one ship.



## Service History

How long have the characters been in EarthForce? Low-level and low-ranking characters might be just out of training and on their first assignment, while other characters might have years of loyal service to EarthForce behind them. Previous assignments and encounters can be used to provide background for present-day adventures. For example, the Games Master could bring in a Non-Player Character who served with one of the player characters in the past; giving the two a common background helps establish the importance of the Non-Player Character.

There can be all sorts of plot hooks and skeletons in a character's history. Did he run across a secret EarthForce or Psi Corps project? What was that strangely shaped black ship he glimpsed in hyperspace one night? More mundanely, what if the character committed some crime in the past, but was never found out? Alternatively, perhaps the character was framed for a crime, but that crime was never discovered until now. Characters could even have been experimental subjects in one of the Black Projects, or have been the only survivor of some disastrous mission and are now haunted by the ghosts of their fallen comrades.

More ambitiously, previous experiences can be run as flashbacks. EarthForce-based flashbacks are especially easy to run, as the players know how to behave and act when handed a temporary flashback character who is part of the military. The drama of a flashback can be undermined if the players take ages to work out how their temporary characters relate to each other – putting them in a military framework avoids this problem.

## Chain of Command

Before the game starts, consult with the players about how the chain of command will operate. Some players will be happy to obey the orders of others; other players dislike such authority and will seek to rebel. One easy solution is to put all the characters at the same rank; make them all privates in the same squad or lieutenants on the same ship.

If one character is in charge of others, then there are some solutions. Superiors should phrase orders in a general way – instead of telling subordinates what to do, tell them what the superiors want accomplished and leave the solution up to them. Superiors should also never give orders that they expect to be disobeyed – one way to keep the respect of the troops is never placing them in a position where they would want or need to disobey an order. The Games Master should reward characters who come up with solid plans and who carry them out, especially when they follow the orders of their superiors in order to execute the plan. If the player characters are supposed to be military officers, then reward them for acting like soldiers and leaders.

What should be avoided at all costs is pettiness. Subordinate Player Characters should not be mindless zombie slaves who have to follow the orders of their superiors, but nor should they be constantly disobeying commands. A character rebelling against orders should be a major plot development, not a constant event. Subordinates should not quibble with every order; superiors should not give orders that cause dissension or irritation as a matter of course.

### Promotions and Discipline

Promotions should be best be used as landmarks in a campaign, instead of tying them strictly to level. Be aware of the dangers of rank inflation – if the Games Master hands out ranks as a reward for completing adventures, then the characters can shoot up the ranks very quickly. That said, rank is an excellent reward and character goal for long plot arcs, so it should not be forgotten about and player ranks should not be a static think.

Discipline within EarthForce should be used equally carefully. The rules on page 102 describe the standard punishments for infractions and breaches of regulations, and it is tempting to hammer disobedient Player Characters with such punishments. This can be counterproductive, as Player Characters rarely take well to being punished, especially unjustly punished. At least in the early stages of a campaign, warn characters that they are about to break the rules – it is one thing for a character to be punished for disobeying orders, it is another thing entirely for that character to be punished if the player was unaware of what he was doing or did not think he was doing anything wrong.

## Equipment

One of the useful things about being part of EarthForce is that the characters have access to the latest in military gear and equipment, including weapons. While *Babylon 5* is *never* about who has the biggest gun, this access to technology does give the characters the power and the responsibility to act. Say the characters are the command crew of a Hyperion in a neutral system – they are one of the most powerful groups in that system, they are the deciding factor in the balance of power. If one race in that system is oppressing another, then the characters have to choose whether or not to intervene. Note that this choice is an active one, one way or the other – the crew of a small independent trader or a team of archaeologists have little chance of changing the society and government of a whole world, but an EarthForce ship can actually intervene on that scale.

Give the characters challenges and decisions that are commensurate with their skills and equipment. They are the best of the best, wielding the most powerful and

advanced weapons ever created by humanity. The actions of the Player Characters and EarthForce will change the galaxy.

## Campaign Feel

EarthForce is a science fiction military setting, but it is not too divorced from modern-day militaries. The life of a crewman on board a Hyperion is not too different to that of a crewman on board a nuclear submarine, while a GROPO sitting in a bunker on Akdor probably has a lot in common with his great-great-great-great-great-great-great-grandfather sitting in a tent in Iraq. Reading modern-day military textbooks, websites and novels can be source of atmosphere as well as plot ideas. Throw around acronyms and mix minor day-to-day problems in with cosmic battles and elder races. Ivanova zoomed around the galaxy searching for lost First Ones, but at the back of her mind, she was probably worrying about her coffee plants down in Hydroponics (and who she was going to kill if there was no real coffee on the station when she got back).

## Naval Campaigns

The Naval branch of EarthForce is the one seen most often in the series, and probably offers the most scope for campaigns. The big decision is where the campaign is set – on a moving ship, or a station? Of course, the campaign can move from one to the other as the characters are assigned to a different place.

## Stations

A stationary station, so to speak, can be an orbital base or a planetside base. Its defining quality is that it is fixed in place, so people and plots *come* to the station, as opposed to the station going to them. The opposite is true for ship-based campaigns. Therefore, when designing a station-based campaign, the following elements must be considered:

- 5 What is the purpose of the station? Is it a listening post? A repair facility? A defensive strongpoint watching over a key planet? A neutral port for humans and aliens, all alone in the night? A secret research laboratory, delving into secrets of Shadow technology?

- 5 Who are the personnel on board the station? Who is in charge, what facilities does the station have (which implies there are crew present to man them)? What defences does it have?
- 5 What surrounds the station? Is it located above a dead world, or a thriving colony? Is the system held exclusively by the Earth Alliance, or are there neighbours present? How do they feel about the station?
- 5 Why do people come to the station? What upsets the status quo in the station and drops adventures and challenges in the players' laps? What is the source of drama? What is the standard 'plot generator' for the campaign?

To take Babylon 5 as an example:

- 5 Its purpose is to be a neutral ground for diplomacy and trade, our last best hope for peace.
- 5 Its facilities and command crew are Sheridan, Ivanova, Franklin, Garibaldi and so on. The station is (post season 2) heavily armed and has its own Starfuries, not to mention the White Star fleet and the defensive ships given to it by the Minbari and League worlds.
- 5 Babylon 5 is in orbit (or, at least, close to) a dead (-ish) world, but the EarthForce base that makes up the core of the station is 'surrounded' by a massive demimonde of traders, lurkers, alien ambassadors and agents, trade ships and so on.
- 5 People come to the station because it is a trade up and centre for diplomacy (at least initially).

There are other possible structures for a station-based campaign, such as:



**Outpost 47:** The Nochtal system lies on the border between Earth and Minbari space. The Nochtal are a dangerous but depressed breed of shapeshifters (see *The Galactic Guide*, page 141 for details), but they claim only their noxious world, not the other planets of the system. Both the Alliance and Minbari have established bases in this system, to keep an eye on the Nochtal and each other.

- ⑤ Outpost 47's purpose is to monitor the system as a whole, with special reference to Minbari activity.
- ⑤ The characters are the command crew of the small listening outpost, with Captain Hugo as their Non-Player Character superior. Hugo has been assigned to this outpost for years, mainly because his depressive and secretive temperament matches that of the Nochtal, and he is so paranoid about being replaced that he keeps the station incredibly secure.
- ⑤ In addition to the Nochtal, Outpost 47's closest neighbour is a Minbari Military Caste outpost, crewed by veterans of the Earth-Minbari War. While the two sides distrust each other, they are the closest help. There is also a Drazi slaving ring operating in the system, hoping to harvest Nochtal. Finally, a Centauri diplomat operates a small neutral station for travellers and information brokers.
- ⑤ As the Nochtal are heavily involved with espionage and assassination on a galactic scale, all sorts of spies and drifters come through the system. The system is also a potential flashpoint for clashes between Earth and Minbar.

Masks and deception should be key themes throughout the campaign. If set during the same timeframe as the television series, then Clark administration paranoia about alien usurpers will be a rising problem in the game – perhaps EarthForce ends up believing that the characters have been replaced.

- ⑤ A human drifter comes through the station. She is trying to find a Nochtal who will mimic herself. It turns out that the drifter is a powerful rogue telepath, and Psi Corps are hot on her heels. She wants the Nochtal to pretend to be her when the Corps come. What to the characters do?
- ⑤ Intercepted communications suggest that the Minbari station is in trouble. Are they really in distress, or is this a ploy by war-hungry Military caste to provoke the characters into 'invading' the Minbari station?
- ⑤ In centuries past, the Nochtal fought a war with the Antrans and wiped most of them out. Perhaps a few Antrans survived and are now plotting revenge on their destroyers. If they could convince the Alliance that the Nochtal are dangerous...say by destroying the Alliance outpost...
- ⑤ The Drazi capture a shuttle containing the characters. How do they escape from the slavers?

**Storm Point Station:** For decades, the aging Storm Point station has been the gateway to the Rim, the last port of call for Explorer ships and task groups. The station itself was part of the Earth Expeditionary Fleet under Admiral Hamoto, and is the oldest Dionysus-class station still in operation. Storm Point is one of the best-known refuges for the fleet, with an elite medical and engineering team. When an EarthForce ship needs help, it heads to Storm Point. The station should have been retired ages ago, but it is so popular it is considered vital to the morale of the fleet.

- ⑤ Storm Point Station's purpose is to support the Exploratory Fleet.
- ⑤ The commander of the station is General Cook, universally known as 'the Admiral'. Storm Point is an aged Dionysus, which has accreted all sorts of additions and extra sections like new docking bays, laboratories, living quarters, alien sectors and so on. It now resembles a vaguely coherent junkyard with a Dionysus at its core.
- ⑤ Ships coming back from the Rim dock at Storm Point all the time. Therefore, there is an extensive IPX presence on board the station, as well as spies, religious cults, academics, historians, explorers, thieves and so on.
- ⑤ The station gets ships that are in trouble – crews who have run into psychic ghosts, nanotech plagues, angry First Ones and so on. They are troubleshooters for the Rim.

It is very easy to fall into the trap of throwing the 'crazy alien artefact of the week' at the crew of Storm Point, but that cheapens and diminishes the wonder of the unknown. Rather than having a crazy artefact of the week, go for the crazy civilisation of the month – have several linked adventures centring on a particular newly arrived ship or dead race. For example, if a ship comes in from the ruins of Ikarra, then have week one be about thieves trying to steal organic technology, week two centre on the Ikarran killing machine getting loose, week three about contrasting Ikarran genetic purity with the Clark regime and week four be about setting up EarthForce's organic weapons research.

- ⑤ An EarthForce ship comes through the jumpgate... and gets stuck. Something the ship encountered out on the Rim has tangled in it hyperspace, and now sections of the station are phasing in and out of existence. The characters have to navigate through the nightmare version of the station and cut the EarthForce ship loose.
- ⑤ A Vorlon cruiser appears next to Storm Point and just sits there, its weapons armed. A mysterious stranger arrives, claiming to be a Vorlon agent and telling the characters that they hold an artefact that the Vorlons

are forbidding humanity to have. Unless they hand over the artefact within 72 hours, the Vorlons will fire. Of course, the characters have no idea where this artefact is...or even if the stranger is really speaking for the Vorlons.

- 5 During the civil war, a damaged ship loyal to the Promixan revolutionaries shows up. Storm Point has yet to decide whether or not they support Clark or his opponents. What do they do? Given Storm Point's importance to fleet morale, there are doubtless plenty of Nightwatch on board...

## Ship

Ship-based campaigns differ from station-based games in two key ways – firstly, the ship goes to the plot instead of the plot coming to the ship. Secondly, the crew of the ship are likely to be all EarthForce – it is only on non-standard vessels like the *Excalibur* that you get aliens and non-military personnel. There will be far fewer continuing Non-Player Characters in a ship-based game, although there can be plenty of recurring ones (for example, an EarthForce ship is not going to have room for a G'Kar or Londo, but it can run into the campaign equivalent of Bester again and again).

Most ships have a long-term assignment for an entire voyage, which it temporarily suspends when orders come in from command. Assignments are missions such as:

- 5 **Patrol:** The ship patrols a section of the Earth Alliance, going from planet to planet looking for raiders, spies and other problems.
- 5 **Defend:** The ship is assigned to a particular base or world, and defends that base. More generally, it does whatever needs to be done for that base or world.
- 5 **Escort:** The ship is part of a group that travels together.
- 5 **Explore:** The ship pushes out into uncharted space.
- 5 **Peacekeeping:** The ship and the marines it carries are to ensure peace in a given area or world.
- 5 **Border Patrol:** As Patrol, but the ship is also there to show the strength of the Earth Alliance to the neighbouring power and to prove that the Alliance will brook no adventurism on their part.
- 5 **Courier:** The ship carries messages or specialists across the Alliance at great speed. A variant of this is the situation where the ship itself is a specialist – a hospital ship or vessel equipped with special sensors or other equipment.

- 5 **Supplies:** The ship carries needed supplies to Alliance bases, ships or colonies.

In addition to its usual duties, a ship might be ordered anywhere in the Alliance for various reasons. Missions types include:

- 5 **Investigate:** Something strange has happened, such as a station falling silent or a ship going missing. The ship must travel to the scene of the mystery and find out what is going on.

- 5 **Reinforce:** Humans need military backup! This can be supporting another ship on its mission, helping a colony out, adding to the potential defences of a station and so on.

- 5 **Rescue:** A disaster has occurred, and help is needed. The ship must lend whatever aid it can. The disaster can be anything from a shipwreck or crash to a natural disaster, a plague or an invasion.

- 5 **Hunt:** A hostile force is out there, one that must be located, engaged and destroyed.

- 5 **Monitor:** A ship assigned to monitor a situation is ordered to watch and gather information, but not to intervene unless necessary. It is essentially the most passive, nerve-wracking version of investigate.

- 5 **Repair/Refit/R&R:** The ship is ordered to visit a base or colony for its own good.

- 5 **Secure:** A ship ordered to secure a target must take and hold that target until relieved. This can be as simple as heading to an Earth outpost and making sure that no hostile force interferes with it, to seizing an enemy world from its defenders.

Most of the missions listed above apply during both peacetime and wartime, although wartime adds the threat of enemy attacks and ambushes, broken supply lines and so on.

In addition to the ship's mission, there is also the crew of the ship. Remember, the player characters will be spending the vast majority of the campaign interacting with this small handful of Non-Player Characters, so the Games Master should lavish attention on this supporting cast. One trick is to write each of the crew in layers – a professional layer (duty on board the ship), public layer (how they act off-duty), a private layer (some secret that will provide a plot in an episode) and a secret layer (the innermost motivations of the character).

**EAS *Tigerclaw*:** The Omega-class *Tigerclaw* has been assigned to the explorer fleet. Its continuing mission – to find strange new worlds, seek out new life and new civilisations, and make sure that they are not hideous black spider-things who glory in chaos and slicer beams and want to wipe out humanity. The heavily armed *Tigerclaw* is the hammer of the explorer corps, brought in when ships foresee danger. One nice theme would be to draw on Greek mythology – say the *Tigerclaw* has to follow the hyperspace trail of the EAS *Ariadne* into a hyperspatial labyrinth.

The *Tigerclaw* campaign can filter plot ideas from The Other Sci-fi Series through a *Babylon 5* lens. Encountering civilisations that have grown up in the shadow of the Minbari, or who were so traumatised by the last great war that they believe the *Tigerclaw* is a Vorlon ship, or who have no connection to the ‘mythology’ of *Babylon 5* but have their own bizarre cultures and goals can fill an entire campaign.

- ⑤ The *Tigerclaw* enters a dead system, but detects signs that an advanced civilisation once dwelled here. They soon find that the entire race is frozen, preserved using nanotechnology that freezes them in place like statues. Centuries ago, a plague swept through the race, threatening to wipe them all out. A single machine was left to watch over them and search for a cure – and it wants the *Tigerclaw* crew to use as test subjects.
- ⑤ A Brakiri vessel contacts the *Tigerclaw*, claiming to be on a similar mission of exploration and suggesting they pool their resources. What have the Brakiri stirred up, and should the *Tigerclaw* ignore the request or help the Brakiri before whatever’s threatening them comes for the *Tigerclaw*?
- ⑤ The *Tigerclaw* encounters a spacegoing colony of what claim to be souls – spirits who have escaped from their soul hunter jailors. They offer secrets of the past in exchange for protection and a few bodies.

**EAS *Stephenson*:** The *Stephenson* is a Tender ship, a fuel and repair ship that supports other vessels. Tenders are seen as astonishingly boring assignments by most

### Squadron & Marines

Two variants on the naval campaigns are making the Player Characters the pilots of Starfuries in a wing attached to a base or ship, or the marines assigned to a ship. The basic structure of the campaign is the same as above, but the Player Characters are a separate unit on board the ship, distinct from the bulk of the crew, with their own special duties and internal structure. This allows for far more independent action on the part of the characters – instead of the Games Master having to work out why a gunnery officer, doctor, linguist and an engineer get sent to investigate the haunted space station, the ship’s Captain can just assign the mission to the ‘Furies or the marines.

EarthForce personnel, but the *Stephenson* has a secret. It is actually part of EarthForce intelligence, and spies on the crews of the ships it visits.

- ⑤ The crew of the *Stephenson* discover a conspiracy among a cabal of high-ranking Captains to get revenge for the Minbari War. They intend to attack a Minbari colony, leaving no survivors to bring word back to Minbar. The *Stephenson* crew must act immediately – but what do they do?
- ⑤ Weapons have been disappearing from a munitions dump. The crew investigate, and discover that some vessel with a jump engine has been opening vortices in the midst of the dump, sucking weapons into hyperspace. Who is stealing weapons and why?



- 5 The Ministry of Homeland Security takes over the ship, and orders the crew to refocus their attention on political disloyalty – but the crew have their own problems with Clark’s policies. Who better than the eternally overlooked *Stephenson*, for example, to investigate the destruction of *EarthForce One*?

## Army Campaigns

Army base campaigns work just like naval base campaigns, although they are much more likely to be planet-bound. The Army is also more focussed on internal Earth affairs than the Navy, so Army bases tend to be on human colonies instead of orbiting neutral or uninhabited worlds.

Army campaigns can integrate Earth politics very well – major political trends include the push from the colonies for independence, the xenophobia and paranoia exploited by the Clark regime, the continuing telepath problem, the rise of the ISA and so on...

## Army Bases

**Fort Redstone:** Fort Redstone is the Army’s primary fortress on the Martian surface, a sprawling web of domes and tunnels built in the aftermath of the food riots. To Martian natives, Fort Redstone is the face of Earth’s imperial occupation of the red planet; while EarthForce tries to improve relations between the military and the native population; Redstone has been the target of numerous terrorist attacks.

Redstone’s primary official purpose is as a training camp and proving ground for hostile environment troops and technologies. Massive war games are conducted on the dusty red plains outside the base, as well as in the ever-expanding network of tunnels beneath the surface.



Redstone has grown so large, in fact, that parts of the base have been infiltrated by Free Mars terrorists...

- 5 Saboteurs damage the air circulation system within the tunnel network, and the air is running out. The characters have to choose which sections are sealed off – and there are people trapped in almost every section. Who lives and who dies, or can they make their way through the tunnels quickly enough to save everyone?

- 5 A cadet platoon out on a long march in environmental suits encounter something... unusual. Another giant black ship buried in the desert. While IPX, Psi Corps and EarthForce weapons research investigate it, the characters have to do a Roswell-style cover-up of the whole incident, controlling rumours and destroying evidence.

**Cetecean Research Centre:** The water-world of Orion VII is home to military experiments in breeding genetically enhanced dolphins and whales. EarthForce’s wet navy needs added assets for oceanic operations, especially when dealing with intelligent amphibians. Genetic experiments of this sort are heavily regulated and have had relatively few successes. The CRC is not just a laboratory, though; a medium-sized military base has grown up around it.

- 5 The early stages of a CRC campaign would be fairly sedate; minor problems on base, training exercises, talking to dolphins and so on. Then, the Alliance is attacked by a previously unknown aquatic race, who are incredible natural pilots. With the Alliance navy in retreat, the Army needs new ocean-side tactics to engage the enemy on their home worlds. The CRC suddenly goes from a minor research facility to the front line of the war.

- 5 In the second half of the campaign, the characters have to put all they learned earlier to use as EarthForce carries the war to the aquatic homeworlds.

## Army Units

Playing as a GROPO has a certain charm, but an ordinary army unit offers few opportunities for adventure. Campaigns centred around occupation forces and peacekeepers work like base-based (so to speak) campaigns, with a relatively static supporting cast of fellow soldiers, superiors, hostile aliens and so on. It is difficult for an army unit to do the ‘planet of the week’ stories available to a travelling spaceship.

Classic army assignments (and their related plots are):

- ⑤ **Peacekeeping:** The unit is sent in to keep the peace in a region. The characters must identify dangerous enemies and ensure they cannot endanger the unit or the people it has been sent to protect.
- ⑤ **Intervention:** The unit is sent in to deal with some problem, from a natural disaster to investigating some crime or similar event that calls for military presence.
- ⑤ **Garrison:** The unit is sent in to protect and defend a base – from an EarthForce base behind enemy lines to an alien prison in the midst of a planetary revolution.
- ⑤ **Escort:** The unit is sent in to protect and escort a particular target; from ensuring a politician does not get assassinated by rivals to bringing a load of decaying bioweapons to the one place on the planet where they can be safely disposed of.
- ⑤ **Secure a Target:** The unit is sent in to locate and secure a particular target, from a downed Starfury pilot to an enemy commander.
- ⑤ **Destroy a Target:** Seek and destroy.

It is possible to run more ambitious and complex campaign Army campaigns:

**The Lost Battalion:** The 42<sup>nd</sup> Recon is scouting an alien world on the far side of Centauri space when their transport vessel, the *EAS Xenophon*, is destroyed by a Shadow ship, because the *Xenophon*'s Captain uncovered information tying EarthGov to the Shadows. They have to fight their way home across two dozen worlds, acting as mercenaries and thieves to survive, because they are all officially dead (EarthGov does not want them back, as they might have retrieved the *Xenophon*'s Captain's log).

- ⑤ The unit is hired by the Narn, who need help in kicking Centauri occupiers off a Narn colony world. However, some in the Narn Regime believe they can profit more by handing the 42<sup>nd</sup> Recon over to EarthForce...
- ⑤ The unit makes contact with the telepath underground railroad, and get the following offer: the telepaths will sneak the unit back into the Alliance so it can reclaim its place in EarthForce, as long as the 42<sup>nd</sup> Recon supports the telepaths in their war with Psi Corps when the time comes.

**J Michael Strazynski's Spectrum Seven:** Any of the Army Special Forces can be the centre of a campaign. Each mission's preparation and execution could take two or three sessions. For example, a game centring on the elite Razvedchik unit could begin with a briefing on the planet and its known defences, then the players have to come up with a plan on how their characters will get onto the target world undetected.

## Intelligence Campaigns

Intelligence is the third 'active' branch of EarthForce, and offers great scope for scenarios. Small teams of spies and agents operating independently makes perfect sense for EFI, and Intelligence also largely bypasses the normal chain of command problem.

While Intelligence campaigns can theoretically be run from EarthForce bases (playing analysts might not sound like fun, but think of 24<sup>th</sup> century FBI dealing with Ministry of Peace, Nightwatch, Psi Corps and EarthGov interference, or archaeologists and conspiracy theorists tracing Vorlon involvement in humanity through history), most games will involve spying on the other great powers of the galaxy, as well as Earth colonies.

Intelligence games need lots and lots of information – throw facts and rumours at the players and let them sort it out. Combine mystery solving with investigation and heist scenarios. One session could centre on the characters trying to smuggle a defector out of Drahk space; the second, much more involved session would be about the characters trying to make sense of a flood of contradictory information from the defector. The Third Age of Mankind begins, after all, with Sheridan sitting in the war room looking at ship movements and realising that the Shadows are herding ships into a killing zone.

When designing an Intelligence campaign, the Games Master should have two or three overarching mysteries and lots of smaller ones. The overarching mystery, like a conspiracy within EarthForce, is revealed one clue at a time, while the smaller mysteries are encountered and resolved in a single adventure. One useful trick is to leave the central revelation up to the players – let them find out, say, that someone within EarthForce leaked tactical data to the Minbari during the war, and that their direct superior opposed the war, and that he was assigned to a listening post – but never spell it out and say 'your superior was the leak'. Instead, let the players make that connection.

**Assignment: Babylon 5:** For a campaign that shadows the events of the television series, consider a group of EarthForce Intelligence Agents assigned to the Babylon

5 station itself. The station is a nexus for commerce and diplomacy, and is therefore home to spies from every race. The characters are acting undercover, disguising themselves as traders, lurkers and so on, so there is no known connection between them and EarthGov. Not even the command staff of Babylon 5 know about the characters – their position on the station is wholly secret.

Many of the adventures in this campaign will be the dark side of *Babylon 5* episodes – they might be trying to steal Deathwalker's secrets or tracking the movements of the President's personal friend, Mr Morden, as he visits the station.

5 The characters become aware there is a conspiracy on board the station; the senior staff keep disappearing into closed meetings. How do they infiltrate this Conspiracy of Light?

5 N'grath – the insectoid mob boss of Babylon 5 – vanishes mysteriously. If the characters use their skills and EarthForce connections, they could theoretically take over criminal activities within the station. Having all the thieves and thugs gathering information would be a huge asset for EFI...

**All the President's Men:** The characters are former members of the Mars resistance and other anti-Clark groups, suddenly propelled to power by the revolution. Their superior, the former Number One from Mars, orders them to hunt down and arrest the various supporters of Clark, such as generals, MiniPax officers, secret police and Psi Cops who have gone underground.

5 A renegade Psi Corps member has gone to a secret asteroid base and brainwashed the crew there to believe that Sheridan launched a military coup, and that they are now part of the resistance against his Minbari-run puppet government. The characters must pretend to be Clark sympathisers so they can locate the telepath.

5 Senators are being blackmailed in advance of an important vote on Earth's membership and support of the new Interstellar Alliance. The characters must find and eliminate the blackmailers before the vote is called.

## Timeframes

The various phases in EarthForce's history each have their own potential for adventure. As EarthForce campaigns are basically about the grand sweep of politics and war and how they affect the characters, the changing face of the galaxy will deeply affect the game.

## Early Expansion

The early days of EarthForce, before First Contact with the Centauri, are not especially '*Babylon 5-ish*' and are unlikely to be of interest to players. Once humanity makes it out to the stars, though, things become more interesting. Players could play the crew of the first exploratory ship, making their first hesitant steps out into a wider, stranger universe.

This campaign could go in any direction. Maybe the characters end up starting the Narns' revolt, or get Earth conquered by the Centauri. They could set up the first extra-solar colony, a sort of Wild West frontier in space. Furthermore, the Earth Alliance of that era was a much shakier and more unstable entity that it would eventually become, and its future was very much in doubt.

One variant on this campaign is to not tell the players that they are in a *Babylon 5* campaign; they create characters for a *d20*-based hard-science fiction game. Earth gets jump technology from a derelict that happens to drift into the Sol system and is caught by Neptune's gravity. The characters are the crew of that first ship, and only realise they are in the *Babylon 5* universe when their first contact with an alien race leads to them discovering that the aliens have very silly hairstyles.

## Dilgar War

The Dilgar War was really EarthForce's finest hour, a heroic and desperate war against a dangerous and malignant enemy in the defence of life and freedom. It turned the Earth Alliance from a minor growing race into the heir-apparent to the Centauri's position as lion of the galaxy.

The adventures of the Earth Expeditionary Force on their long trek to Omelos could be the stuff of a whole campaign. Fleet Admiral Hamato was known for his unconventional tactics, leaving the situation open to player involvement – the Admiral might give the Player Characters a small task force and send them off to take a particular target or sow chaos behind the Dilgar lines.

The Dilgar make excellent villains, seeing as they are basically Space Nazis. The technology and ships available to the characters grows as the campaign goes on, as new and more advanced models of ships come online. By the end of the campaign, the players should feel that they laid the foundation for the *Babylon 5* series.

## Minbari War

In contrast to the Dilgar War, the defence against the Minbari was a virtually unmitigated disaster. In the whole of the three-year war, EarthForce only managed three kills of Minbari capital ships, and two of them were in the very



first engagement with the Grey Council's ship. Every other battle was a defeat; every colony world fell to the invaders, loss after loss after loss after loss. Even if the Games Master is willing to let 'history' be changed and lets the players have a chance, however small, of beating the Minbari, the Minbari War is unlikely to be a fun campaign. The only victories the characters will likely be able to snatch are the bitter ones, like evacuating troops from a planet before the Minbari can destroy them or hiding the route to Earth from the Minbari by destroying a navigational database on an abandoned space station.

The endless defeat of the Minbari War does make it a good place for a brief prequel campaign – the war looms large in the memory of most EarthForce personnel, and 'what did you do in the war' is a question that is often considered, even if it goes unasked. The war is a perfect arena for prequels and flashbacks – see the first adventure of the Adventures chapter for a sample of this style of game.

## Last Best Hope

The years immediately after the Minbari War are very interesting from a roleplaying perspective, as the characters would be part of one of the few surviving EarthForce units or ships. The burden on them would be much heavier as they have no backup, no reserves – they have to deal with the problems on their own. The characters might have to turn back the Koulani invasion on their own, or somehow make the Narn believe that EarthForce has a supersecret weapon that defeated even the Minbari.

During this period, the Alliance also aggressively pursued alliances and non-aggression pacts with other races, in a panicked attempt to secure its borders. These diplomatic overtures would eventually lead to the Babylon Project.

The years just before the television series are also fertile ground for adventures. What, for example, was

Earth's first contact with the Vorlons like? The construction and sabotage of the earlier Babylon stations, the food riots, the exploration of the Rim, the various campaigns of General Hague, serving under Sheridan on the *Agamemnon* – look into any section of the *Babylon 5* setting, and there are potential campaign set-ups there.

## Shadow War/Clark Regime

The Shadow War has little direct impact on the Alliance or EarthForce; humanity's worlds were never attacked by the Shadows or any of the races stirred up by the war. That said, a little tweaking of history to make the Clark regime expansionist instead

of isolationist, and EarthForce chews up the League worlds while the Centauri conquer the Narn. However, Shadow agents and ships were moving through Earth space during the war, with lost ships being retrieved by both Shadows and EarthForce researchers.

The dominant feature of this period, of course, is the Clark Regime and the civil war. It is best to build the paranoia and darkness of the regime slowly, and cast it in a good light at first. For example, run a scenario where an alien saboteur interferes with the characters; an agent from EarthForce who is charming, competent and helpful shows up and aids the characters in capturing the saboteur. It is only as their new friend (and play him as a 'good guy' throughout) leaves that they discover he has just been assigned to the new Ministry of Peace.

When the civil war starts, choosing sides should not be an easy option. Try to manoeuvre the characters into situations where the right side is not obvious; give them the *impression* that people are better off under the Clark regime, or that aliens are to blame for many of Earth's problems. Have some of their trusted allies be supporters of the regime. Having the characters chose the obviously winning and good side instead of the patently doomed and evil side lacks drama – make the revolt seem hopeless and not the obvious 'right' choice. On the surface, at least, paint things in shades of grey.

## Drakh War

The Drakh War is the next great challenge facing EarthForce. The Army is occupied with keeping order on Earth, as the panicked population degenerates into chaos and anarchy. Meanwhile, the surviving elements of the Navy are preparing for the transition of the human capital from Earth to Proxima, as well as searching for a cure. While Earth teeters on the brink of destruction, the Alliance has to continue under EarthForce's vigilant care.

# The Eurystheus Campaign

The *EAS Eurystheus* was one of the first Nova-class destroyers to be constructed. It is assigned to the colonial fleet, responsible for patrolling the systems rimward of Sol. The *Eurystheus* has a proud tradition of service to the Earth Alliance and its citizens.

The Player Characters are officers and specialists newly assigned to the *Eurystheus* at the start of 2258. The adventures in this section take the characters from 2258 to 2261. Basically, these scenarios are the big 'arc' adventures of the campaign, which set the stage for the next section of arc. The Games Master should fill the intervening time in the campaign with his own scenarios, which can build on the plot seeds sown in the arc adventures.

Alternatively, individual adventures can be pulled out and used in an existing campaign. Treat this chapter as a toolbox and a source of ideas, not holy writ. The campaign is mainly geared towards naval officers, but can be adapted to work with Army or Intelligence characters; the *Eurystheus* is a big ship, with a highly flexible mission profile.

## The Basic Plot

The *Eurystheus* Campaign centres on the growing alien influence within EarthForce, how it is inevitable once a race goes into space and how it is the actions and attitudes of humans who shake how this alien influence affects humanity. Both sides in the coming civil war are 'influenced' by aliens – one learns strength and wisdom stemming from a union of different races, while the other used paranoid fears of the other to gain control of EarthGov while at the same time eagerly accepting the dark alien technology and aid of the Shadows.

These two sides are exemplified in the *Babylon 5* series by Sheridan and Clark, but they are also present in microcosm on board the *Eurystheus*.

The campaign begins with a prequel, set during the Earth-Minbari War. The *Eurystheus* is crippled and nearly destroyed by a Minbari vessel, but survives thanks to an ancient defence mechanism that attacks the Minbari ship. In their investigations into their unlikely saviour, the *Eurystheus* crew encounter something alien and terrible.

The pregenerated Player Characters of this prequel are:

- 5 Lieutenant Serge Grayson, the navigator. Grayson ends up becoming part of the Shadow technology on the world below.
- 5 Lieutenant Victor Dahl, security officer from Proxima. Dahl initially serves on the occupation force on Isaili, but then goes rogue.

- 5 Lieutenant Rose Swade, operations. Young and inexperienced; promoted because of casualties caused by the war. Joins IPX after the war.
- 5 Lieutenant Alice Foster, pilot. Alice will go on to become Captain of the *Eurystheus*.
- 5 Lieutenant Louis Chavel, sensors. Joined EarthForce against the wishes of his family, fervent believer in the Alliance and EarthGov.
- 5 Kirin Turhan, a Centauri exile and special advisor to EarthForce on alien affairs.

Years later, a few of the survivors are back on the *Eurystheus* as the Non-Player Character senior command staff. The ship is now commanded by Captain Foster, while Chavel is her executive officer. Turhan has changed his name to Turley and is now disguised as a human, to protect his identity from Centauri assassins. The other three characters will crop up later in the campaign.

## Scenarios

**Prologue: Eyes in the Gulf:** The *Eurystheus* discovers an ancient defence system during the Minbari war.

**One: The New Guard:** The new officers of the *Eurystheus* take part in a massive war game, which is interrupted by a very real threat.

**Two: Splinters in the Whirlwind:** The *Eurystheus* intercepts a fleeing Narn ship, which has a very interesting cargo aboard...

**Three: The Hunt:** The *Eurystheus* is sent after an ancient weapon.

**Four: Breaking Points:** Greyson awakens and the fate of the Earth Alliance falls into the hands of the characters.

## Eyes in the Gulf

This is the prequel scenario to the campaign. It can be run before the campaign starts, or else as a flashback during *The Hunt*. It uses six pregenerated characters – if there are too few players, drop characters in the following order: Chavel, Dahl, Swade, Turlea.

It is the middle stage of the Minbari war. The *Eurystheus* was part of Destroyer Group Tycho, sent to engage the Minbari at Beta Durani. The attack failed, and Group Tycho was scattered. The *Eurystheus* fled to a neutral system that lacks even a jumpgate, the system of Isail. The Minbari followed, attacking the *Eurystheus* seconds after it jumped to normal space. The barrage of fire from the Sharlin was devastating; the *Eurystheus*' hull buckled and its electrical systems collapsed as connections melted. The life support systems failed. The ship was seconds away from destruction.

Then...something happened. Through the haze of the Sharlin's stealth field and the damaged sensors of the *Eurystheus*, the surviving bridge crew saw something – a black cloud – attack the Sharlin. The Minbari ship opened a jump point to flee, the cloud fired something into the jump point, and then a burst of energy crashed the *Eurystheus*' computer, fried its sensors and knocked the crew unconscious.

The scenario begins with the characters waking up on the bridge of the *Eurystheus*, some three hours after the Minbari attack. The Player Characters are the highest-ranking officers left alive – Captain Hofstater is dead, as are the other senior



officers. *Eyes in the Gulf* is a rather linear adventure, as it sets up events later in the campaign.

## What's Actually Going On

The Isail system is home to an ancient Shadow base, which created the defensive drone that attacked the Sharlin. The Sharlin was heavily damaged, but survived the Shadow attack and is currently repairing itself in hyperspace. They also intend to return and destroy both the *Eurystheus* and the ancient enemy.

The characters need to locate and reactive the Shadow base before the Minbari return if they are going to make it out alive. In years to come, this minor Shadow base will prove to be one of the first clues that leads EarthForce down a dark path into corruption.

### Lt. Serge Grayson

**2<sup>nd</sup> Level Human Officer**

**Hit Points:** 8 hp

**Initiative:** +2

**Speed:** 30 ft. (6 squares)

**DV:** 12

**Attack:** +3 melee or +4 ranged

**Special Qualities:** Branch Specialisation (fleet)

**Saves:** Fort +0, Ref +2, Will +4

**Abilities:** Str 12, Dex 15, Con 10, Int 14, Wis 13, Cha 8

**Skills:** Computer Use +7, Drive +6, Intimidate +3, Listen +5, Knowledge (astrophysics) +10, Pilot +6, Sense Motive +5 and Technical (spacecraft) +7

**Feats:** Data Access, Latent Telepath, Skill Focus (knowledge – astrophysics) and Spacecraft Proficiency

**Equipment:** PPG, Link

You've always been uncomfortable around people. Joining EarthForce was really just an excuse to get into space, onto a ship. Out there in the blackness, it is so much quieter. True, you're crammed into a tiny sardine can with a hundred other people, but you quickly learn to ignore them and just listen to the silence. You know the rest of the crew see you as something of a loner, but don't especially care. Your career

has stalled, even in this bloody war, as you are seen as 'lacking aptitude for command'.

You have an unnatural knack for navigation. You can thread the *Eurystheus* through hyperspace currents that would drag any other ship to its doom. You can hear distant songs out there, as if the lonely stars are calling to each other.

### Lt. Alice Foster

**1<sup>st</sup> Level Human Officer/1<sup>st</sup> Level Diplomat**

**Hit Points:** 6

**Initiative:** +1

**Speed:** 30 ft. (6 squares)

**DV:** 13

**Attack:** +0 melee or +2 ranged

**Special Qualities:** Branch Specialisation (fleet), Contact

**Saves:** Fort +0, Ref +3, Will +5

**Abilities:** Str 8, Dex 12, Con 10, Int 14,

Wis 13, Cha 16

**Skills:** Computer Use +5, Diplomacy +8, Knowledge (military) +6, Listen +5, Pilot +5, Sense Motive +5, Speak Language (Centauri), Spot +5, Technical (spacecraft) +6

**Feats:** Data Access, Lightning Reflexes, Skill Focus (knowledge - military), Spacecraft Proficiency

**Equipment:** PPG, Link

You are going to win the Earth-Minbari war. You're going to kick those alien aggressors back to Minbar and make them pay for every ship they destroyed with three of theirs. At least, that was the plan.

You're something of a tactical genius. In both military matters and diplomatic negotiations – not to mention your personal life – you're known for your aggressive attacks on your opponent's weaknesses. Battle Group Tycho's ambush was partly your idea, and it was a solid plan: counter the Minbari's stealth technology by ambushing them at close range. However, it didn't work and now the *Eurystheus* is running. You feel partly responsible, but you know you're going to pull the ship out of this disaster and go onto win. If you don't, who will?

### Prequel or Flashback

This scenario can be run as a prequel at the start of the campaign, or a flashback during *The Hunt*. If the players are familiar with the *Babylon 5* series and setting, then it works best as a flashback. Otherwise, they will probably work out that the Isaili secret is a Shadow weapon too early, which gives away too much later in the campaign. For players who do not immediately think 'black stuff + screaming noises = SHADOWS!' then *Eyes in the Gulf* works better as a prequel, as it establishes the command crew of the campaign.

### Lt. Victor Dahl

2<sup>nd</sup> Level Human Soldier

**Hit Points:** 13

**Initiative:** +1

**Speed:** 30 ft. (6 squares)

**DV:** 13

**Attack:** +4 melee or +3 ranged

**Special Qualities:** Weapons Training

**Saves:** Fort +4, Ref +3, Will -1

**Abilities:** Str 15, Dex 13, Con 13, Int 12, Wis 8, Cha 10

**Skills:** Climb +4, Drive +3, Hide +4, Intimidate +2, Listen +1, Medical +4, Move Silently +4, Spot +2 and Survival +2

**Feats:** Alertness, Weapon Focus (PPG Rifle) and Lightning Reflexes

**Equipment:** PPG Rifle, Link

Is it ass kicking time yet? You signed up when the war started, and have discovered that combat makes you feel a thousand times more alive than anything else does. You're also very, very good at it. You'd make a poor EarthForce officer during peacetime, and you know it, but with those Minbari bastards stomping all over the outer colonies, Earth needs one of her sons to go out there and blast them to bits.

You were infuriated by your assignment to the *Eurystheus* – you're a GROPO, not a flyboy, and you didn't expect to get any action. Now, it looks like the Navy needs you...

### Lt. Rose Swade

1<sup>st</sup> Level Human Officer/1<sup>st</sup> Level Scientist

**Hit Points:** 7

**Initiative:** +1

**Speed:** 30 ft. (6 squares)

**DV:** 11

**Attack:** +1 melee, +2 ranged

**Special Qualities:** Primary Area of Study (electronics), Branch Specialisation (fleet)

**Saves:** Fort -1, Ref +1 Will +4

**Abilities:** Str 10, Dex 13, Con 8, Int 15, Wis 12, Cha 14

**Skills:** Computer Use +7, Hide +3, Knowledge (alien life) +7, Listen +6, Medical +6, Pilot +6, Spot +6 and Technical (electronics) +7

**Feats:** Alien Anatomy, Data Access, Improved Trip and Spacecraft Proficiency

**Equipment:** PPG, Link

You really, really shouldn't be here. You were drafted and promoted with almost unseemly haste, due to the need for experience and skilled spacecraft operators. You expected to get a job with one of the big corporations with IPX; instead, you find yourself on the front line against an alien armada. You quite like aliens when they're dead for a million years and you're examining the ruins of their cities. It's another matter entirely when they're trying to kill you right now.

You're nervous and jumpy, and have a tendency to freeze in stressful situations. Hardly a good qualification for a military officer, but you never wanted to join the Navy. You've been trying to overcome this deficiency by studying martial arts and training constantly, but really, you'd quite like to find a desert planet and hide there until this war is over.

### Lt. Louis Chavel

1<sup>nd</sup> Level Human Officer/1<sup>st</sup> Level Worker

**Hit Points:** 12

**Initiative:** +1

**Speed:** 30 ft. (6 squares)

**DV:** 11

**Attack:** +1 melee, +2 ranged

**Special Qualities:** Blue Collar, Branch Specialisation (fleet)

**Saves:** Fort +1, Ref +1, Will +6

**Abilities:** Str 10, Dex 12, Con 8, Int 14, Wis 15, Cha 13

**Skills:** Computer Use +6, Concentration +6, Diplomacy +5, Knowledge (astrophysics) +5, Listen +9, Pilot +3, Sense Motive +5, Spot +6 and Technical (electronics) +6

**Feats:** Alertness, Data Access, Spacecraft Proficiency and Iron Will

**Equipment:** PPG, Link

Everyone thinks you are astonishingly friendly and laid-back for a successful career officer. While every ship – if it's lucky – has at the heart of its crew someone who keeps the crew together and is everyone's confidante, it's almost unheard of for that person to also be a bridge officer on the fast track to command. Your secret is that you got all your bitterness and anger out long ago – your family were deeply opposed to you joining EarthForce, and you cut off almost all ties with them when you got your commission. EarthForce and the Alliance is your family now.

### Kirin Turhan

2<sup>nd</sup> Level Centauri Agent

**Hit Points:** 11

**Initiative:** +1

**Speed:** 30 ft. (6 squares)

**DV:** 14

**Attack:** +1 melee, +2 ranged

**Special Qualities:** +3 racial bonus to Bluff and Diplomacy, +1 racial bonus to Fortitude saving throws against poisons

**Saves:** Fort -1, Ref +4, Will +1

**Abilities:** Str 10, Dex 13, Con 8, Int 12, Wis 12, Cha 17

**Skills:** Bluff +10, Disguise +8, Escape Artist +4, Gather Information +6, Hide +4, Move Silently +4, Pick Pocket +4, Pilot +4, Sense Motive +5, Spot +5

**Feats:** Noble Birth

**Equipment:** Link

You are a noble of the Centauri, a relative of the Emperor himself! Admittedly, a very very distant cousin, but a relative nonetheless. Up until a few years ago, you were a rising star in the court; your family grew rich off the extremely favourable trade agreements you created with minor races in the League and out on the Rim. Then, a... misunderstanding at court led to you fleeing the Republic with assassins hot on your heels. You took refuge with the Earth Alliance, trading your knowledge of alien worlds for protection. Perhaps this was quite not the best of ideas – Irritatingly, they went to war with the Minbari soon afterwards. The humans have an amusing phrase, involving frying pans and fires that applies to your situation, but you are not laughing right now.

You quite like the humans. They're so delightfully earnest about everything, like children in a fairy tale. You do hope the Minbari keep a few of them alive...

## Background for the characters

The war is not going well. The alien race called the Minbari has swept across the spinward reaches of the Earth Alliance, conquering colony after colony. Their superior weapons and stealth technology means they have won every engagement since the start of the war, with a single exception – the destruction of a Minbari raider in the Sol system by the *Lexington*. The *Lexington* overcame the Minbari range advantage by attacking them at close range in an asteroid belt.

Battle Group Tycho, of which your Nova-class destroyer *Eurystheus* belongs to, was assigned to ambush the Minbari ships in the Sinzar system. The attack was perfectly planned and perfectly executed – but it still failed. The *Eurystheus* fled into hyperspace, heading for a ‘calm pool’ in the chaos of the spinward maelstrom that blocked earlier Earth explorers from encountering the Minbari. Your civilian advisor, the Centauri trader Kirin Turhan, told you there are systems in that pool that do not have jumpgates, but can be travelled to safely even without a hyperspace beacon. He was true to his word – nine hours ago, the *Eurystheus* jumped back into realspace to carry out emergency repairs.

The Minbari arrived two hours ago. One of their big warships had followed you through hyperspace. From the perspective of the ambush plan, this was a good thing – if the warship followed the *Eurystheus*, then it was moving away from the still-secret jump route to Earth.

The *Eurystheus* tried to run again, but its jump engines were still damaged. You did make it close to the system’s only inhabitable planet before the Minbari guns came within range. For the second time in two days, the *Eurystheus* was blasted with enemy fire. Life support failed, Captain Hofstater was about to order you all to abandon ship...then something black leapt out at the Minbari ship. You all lost consciousness.

## Scene One – Damage Control

The characters wake up cold and breathless on the bridge of the *Eurystheus*. They are the only people alive on the bridge – the Captain and other senior staff have been killed by shrapnel and electrical discharges. The hiss of the air ducts suggests that life support has been restored, but very little else seems to be working.

Technical checks (DC 10) reveal the following information (one piece of information per check):

- ⑤ Jump engines are trashed and cannot be repaired with the supplies on board.
- ⑤ Communications are out but can be repaired.
- ⑤ Life support is back online, and can sustain the surviving crew.
- ⑤ Most weapons are offline, but a single laser-pulse array is working.
- ⑤ Ion drive is working, but too much acceleration will damage the ship’s already fractured superstructure. The *Eurystheus* is in a decaying orbit over the planet below, but this is the least of the ship’s problems – the

orbit will not become dangerous for another three local years.

- ⑤ One wing of Starfuries and an atmosphere shuttle are still in the hangars – the other ‘furies were destroyed in previous engagements.

About a third of the crew have been killed, with many more injured. Only the gravity decks were hit by the energy pulse that knocked out the survivors, so panic is endemic in the engineering and battle sections. Several decks are still burning, but the fires are largely under control. The characters are most senior staff left alive, so it is up to them to take charge. How do they direct repair teams? How do they cope with the wounded? What do they say to the terrified crew?

## Scene Two – Investigations

Once the *Eurystheus* has been at least somewhat stabilised, the characters can try to find out their current tactical situation. External cameras kept recording after the pulse that knocked out the crew; these show the Minbari ship being attacked by what looks like a black cloud, about a quarter of the size of the *Eurystheus*. The black cloud appears to be gaseous, but spits a hail of sharp missiles at the Sharlin. The Minbari ship almost immediately jumps out – the cloud fires a small greenish projectile at the jump point, which explodes.

Careful analysis of the footage shows that the Sharlin definitely made it into hyperspace before the projectile hit. Transmissions from the Minbari ship are believed (Knowledge (military) check, DC 15) to be a distress call or alarm, although oddly phrased and seemingly outdated. It looks like the Minbari fled in terror, but they did not take severe damage and will presumably be back. Based on previous Minbari engagement patterns, the characters have around 12 hours tops before the Sharlin jumps back in-system and destroys the crippled *Eurystheus*.

The black cloud does not behave like a ship or a natural phenomenon. It *accreted* in space, forming from dust particles that flowed out of surrounding space. Most of these particles seemed to come up from the planet below. The cloud just dispersed when the Minbari ship escaped, dissipating away into its constituent particles. Given where the cloud vanished, the bulk of the particles will fall into the planet’s gravity well. The cloud was losing coherence even before the Sharlin left, suggesting that it would have failed and vanished even if the Minbari had stayed to fight.

The black cloud bears no resemblance to any known race’s technology. Its like will not be seen again until the Shadow Planet Killer appears, as it is basically a miniaturised version of that.

It is important that the characters realise there is a connection between the planet and the black cloud, and that they decide to go after the source of the cloud. If they do not discover the camera recording, then have one of the crewmen run across it during the course of repairs and bring it to their attention. Remind them at the Minbari are on their way back, and the *Eurystheus* needs some ace-in-the-hole if it is to survive until help arrives.

If anyone bothers to check the hull, some of the black dust is stuck to the *Eurystheus*' hull. If examined, it seems to be some sort of nanotech, although it is losing cohesion and breaking down into an immobile dust of broken machines. Whatever was co-ordinating the dust's movements and actions seems to be gone.

Turhan can make an Intelligence check to recall what he knows of the system.

### Lore Remembered

DC	Information
5	The name of the system is Isail, and is a 'jump cove', a stable zone of hyperspace without significant or unpredictable gravitational gradients.
10	The fourth planet is inhabited by an intelligent humanoid race. The Centauri vaguely considered enslaving them a century ago, but they lack strength and tend to be rather sickly. Their population has been in decline for centuries. Technologically, they are roughly on a par with humanity during the 19 <sup>th</sup> century, but their development seems to have stalled. They are not considered of any real use by the Republic. Their capital city is Culthimir.
15	There are a few odd stories about Isail; it has been used as a raider's refuge in the past, and they have occasionally glimpsed odd things in space out there.
20	He has heard something about other races referring to Isail as the world of heretics.

### Scene Three – Isail

The planet below is roughly the size of Earth (0.9g) and looks brownish-green from orbit. There are two major continents – the southern continent appears to be uninhabited, but lights can be seen from orbit along the coast of the northern one, concentrated around the city of Culthimir. On a successful Spot or Search check (DC 15) when reviewing the scans of the planet from the *Eurystheus*, a character will notice the presence of numerous giant pits in the southern continent – the marks where Shadow warship once tore themselves out of the ground. Furthermore, if the characters have been told by Turhan that there was a raider base there, they can scan known raider frequencies and pick up a very faint navigational beacon from a plateau around twenty miles outside the city.

Presumably, lacking any other clues as to the black cloud, the characters will take the only atmosphere shuttle and head down to the planet. If they do not, they will likely be forced to when the Minbari warship returns in Scene Seven. The obvious places to go are Culthimir or the raider base.

### The Raider Base

The Raider Base is located on an isolated plateau in the mountains above Culthimir. By foot, it would take the better part of four days to climb to the plateau, but it can be reached easily by shuttle. Calling it a base is rather generous, as it consists of no more than half a dozen prefabricated domes and sheds, all of which have long since been looted by the Isaili. There are no ships or shuttles left here. It is obvious

that the base was overrun by natives at some point in the distant past, and now the place is abandoned. Presumably, the raiders who were not killed or captured left with their mothership.

Searching the place reveals the signal is coming from a still-functioning navigational computer, a cheap Narn knock-off of a Centauri design. The computer files are in Narn, but can be automatically translated into Centauri or English. According to the base logs, a band of Narn raiders established a base here a year ago with the vague intention of shipping arms to the Earth Alliance in between raiding the Centauri border worlds. However, the last entry (made by one of the ground technicians) states that natives are 'massing at the base of the plateau'.

### Culthimir

The Isaili capital city is a rather ugly and dull place, with towers of green-grey stone and cobbled streets. It is wet and windy, and an air of decay hangs over the place. The Isaili who lounge in the streets are humanoid, with long delicate limbs and three-eyed faces. They speak slowly, making chattering noises in between each word. Much of the city is abandoned and falling into ruin; many of the Isaili appear obviously sickly.

The Isaili have heard of offworlders, even if none of those encountered by the characters have ever seen one. A few of the more educated ones speak a pidgin version of Centauri, enough to communicate by. They will be fascinated in a rather apathetic way by the characters. The leader of the Isaili that the character encounter is a priest-slave called Fuant. If the characters explain that they are from a spaceship, Fuant will be immediately shocked and alarmed. Only the gods and the devils come from the outer darkness – which are they?

The devils have been near, he confides, for the world screamed. Fuant has never seen a true demon, only the lesser ones that built a fortress north of the city (the raiders). They attacked the people, he insists, so the lesser demons were dealt with. If the characters claim to be demons, then the Isaili will probably attack the characters unless it is obvious they are armed and dangerous. If they claim to be gods, Fuant will smile, clap his hands and insist that they visit the temple.

### Average Isaili Guard

#### 1<sup>st</sup> Level Isaili Worker

**Hit Points:** 12

**Initiative:** +0

**Speed:** 30 ft. (6 squares)

**DV:** 10

**Attack:** +1 melee, +0 ranged

**Special Qualities:** Blue Collar Worker

**Saves:** Fort +1, Ref +0, Will +0

**Abilities:** Str 12, Dex 10, Con 8, Int 8, Wis 10, Cha 8

**Skills:** Climb +5, Listen +4, Profession (varies) +3, Speak Language (Centauri), Spot +4

**Feats:** Toughness

**Equipment:** None

At this point, the characters receive a message from the orbiting *Eurystheus* – communications have been re-established with the fleet. Help is five days away, but if the ship can hold out

### Isail and the War

Isail was used like Narn Homeworld as a base by the Shadows, who grew hundreds of their terrible black ships in the once-fertile soil of this world. The Isaili grew to worship the Shadows as dark gods, who took their strongest to serve as living control systems for the Shadow vessels. Unlike the Narn, who drove the Shadows from their world with the last of their mindwalker telepaths, the Isaili lacked the telepathy gene completely. After the war, the Vorlons seeded Isaili with a plague to prevent the world from being used by the Shadows again – the Isaili are now completely incompatible with the Shadow technology.

Still, they serve their vanished masters as best they can. The ships are gone, but the automated defence systems still function. They responded to the presence of the Minbari – ancient enemies of the Shadows, servants of Vorlons – in the system and the Isaili placed a captured raider into the control system. The raider was weak with fatigue and malnutrition, and the shock of interfacing with the Shadow technology killed her. The Isaili have used offworlders as better sacrifices to the control system in the past; they will do so again...

that long, then repair ships will arrive to bring their jump engines back online and bring the *Eurystheus* back to human space. Of course, given the Minbari are arriving in less than 12 hours at this point, this may be cold comfort to the crew.

### Scene Four – The Temple

The Isaili temple is a massive monolithic stone structure, easily the largest building on the planet. The walls are covered in eerie bas-relief sculptures of Isaili theology. The gods are represented by splats in the sky, the demons by eggs. The basic theme is that the Isaili were once faithful servants of the gods, but were cursed by the demons and now the gods have turned their faces from them. Human – or rather, Isaili – sacrifice is a big part of their religion of the cursed. One day, the carvings insist, the gods will return again and free the Isaili from their curse.

Only offworlders, explains Fuant, can enter the inner temple. The Isaili are barred from it. As the characters pass through the temple, call for Spot checks (DC 15). If successful, the character catches a glimpse of a prison cell off down one side corridor, containing the corpse of a Narn – one of the raiders captured by the Isaili who died in chains.

At the heart of the temple is a massive pit, dug into the bedrock. It is obvious that this pit was not dug by the Isaili, as the rock was cut and melted by some sort of laser or other energy beam. The temple is built around this pit. A massive but decaying gondola hangs above the pit. Once, centuries ago, the gondola could have been lowered into the pit, but now the only way down is via a humble knotted rope attached to a side of the pit.

Before the characters have the chance to enter the pit, an unearthly scream issues from the pit below them. Fuant whimpers and says that this means the demons have returned. The *Eurystheus* immediately contacts the characters and informs them that the Minbari are back. Unless something is

done *right now*, the Sharlin will destroy the *Eurystheus* in a matter of minutes.

At any point from now on, the Games Master should consider stopping the flashback/prequel scenario. For the purposes of the *Eurystheus* campaign, it is important that Grayson be the one who joins with the Shadow technology in the pit below. If it looks like the players are going to choose another one of their number for sacrifice, or if they are going to debate and stall until the *Eurystheus* gets destroyed, then switch to narrative (*'and then Serge climbed into the pit, and we never saw him again'*) or end the flashback.

At the bottom of the pit is a massive pile of bones. Most of these are Isaili skeletons, but there are also the remains of a few aliens. In the centre of this pile is a sort of upright altar, made of some glistening black material. Spikes and tentacles sprout

from the altar, grasping wetly for some prize. The corpse of a Narn lies just in front of the altar, as if it had been held by the tentacles until she died, then left to flop out.

If any of the characters steps in front of the altar – the control unit for the automated defences – then the scenario has been successfully completed, as the Shadow defences can now deal with the Minbari threat. To tempt the right character (Grayson) into the control unit, emphasise that here, in the pit, he can no longer hear the telepathic scratchings of the minds for the first time in his life. Here, he can only hear the machine.

### Scene Five – Echoes of an Ancient War

The Shadow defence system is reactivated as the Sharlin destroyer bears down on the crippled *Eurystheus*. A black cloud forms around the Sharlin, which takes heavy damage before fleeing. The Minbari never return to the Isail system, believing it to be still defended by a functional weapon from the last great war. They have encountered such weapons before, on dead worlds once held by the Shadows, and consider them not worth the trouble of dealing with.

The thought that the humans might wilfully investigate and use Shadow technology never occurs to the Minbari. For them, it is literally unthinkable that any race could consider such an act.

The rescue group arrives to repair the damaged *Eurystheus* four days later, as promised. Soon afterwards, another group from Intelligence arrives and takes charge of the Isaili system. Dahl and the trapped Grayson stay behind. All the characters are ordered to forget that they ever saw anything. Perhaps the Isaili weapon will be the key to victory, but it is in the hands of the researchers and weapons boffins now – good soldiers should put it out of their minds and concentrate on getting the *Eurystheus* back into the fight.

## The Eurystheus Campaign

The year is 2258. The place – the Earth Alliance destroyer EAS *Eurystheus*, assigned to the third (Exploratory) fleet and based at Proxima. The characters are newly assigned to the crew of the ship. It is assumed that they are 1<sup>st</sup> level characters and hence newly commissioned ensigns or second lieutenants, but higher-level characters can be installed at a higher rank.

Under the leadership of President Santiago, the Alliance has rebuilt after the disastrous Minbari war. The *Eurystheus* was one of the few Novas to survive the war, and so it was a keystone in the defence of the Alliance during the dark years immediately after the Battle of the Line. Being assigned to the *Eurystheus* is a high honour indeed. Now, with a new station finally going online to fulfil the dream of the Babylon Project, the *Eurystheus* can return to its original purpose of exploration and patrolling the distant borders of the Alliance.

### The Eurystheus

The *Eurystheus* has been completely refitted following the battle of Sinzar and again in 2256, and is now equipped with the most advanced computers and weapons available to humanity. It is a Nova-class destroyer, so it lacks the rotating gravity deck of the larger Omegas. Still, it is considerably more comfortable than a smaller Hyperion, and spends much of its time under high acceleration to provide a measure of artificial gravity. The *Eurystheus* is one of the proudest ships in the Navy and has one of the best crews.

Characters who listen to gossip, however, will hear odd rumours about the ship. That it was involved in the disastrous ambush at Sinzar is common knowledge, but ever since then, it is said the ship has been haunted by the ghosts of the crews who died at Sinzar. Strange things have happened on board the *Eurystheus* from time to time. No less than four people have died on board in mysterious circumstances, while nightmares and hallucinations are also rumoured to plague long-term crew. During the refit in 2256, some technicians insist they found strange organic growth inside sealed tanks deep in the *Eurystheus*' engines.

### The Curse of Eurystheus

The rumours are true, to a degree. The *Eurystheus* drifted through the dust cloud of Shadow nanotechnology in orbit of Isaili, nanotechnology that clung to the hull and integrated itself into the very molecules of the ship. This nanotechnology is now under the unconscious influence of former crewman Serge Grayson, who is still entombed in the temple under Isaili.

The Shadow nanotechnology does not play a major part in the campaign until the third adventure, but it can be used by the Games Master as a device to throw weird, unsettling events into the campaign. The *Eurystheus* is a haunted ship.

## Command Crew

The *Eurystheus* is under the command of Captain Foster, a decorated hero of the Minbari war and one of the fastest-rising officers in EarthForce. Her executive officer is Commander Chavel, an old friend of hers since the war.

Captain Alice Foster  
Commander Louis Chavel (XO)  
Lt. Paterson (Engineering)  
Lt. Graves (Navigation)  
Lt. Cmdr. N'guma (Weapons)  
Ensign Kieran Turley (Stores)  
Dr Takashi (Medical)  
Lt. Cmdr Winters (Squadrons)

### Captain Alice Foster

The Captain of the *Eurystheus* was highly decorated for her actions during the Minbari war, but has always seemed somehow dissatisfied by these accolades. Foster was convinced that the war was to be her shining hour, and its painfully anticlimactic ending infuriated her. How dare the Minbari just *give up* without so much as an explanation! She never got to eclipse her rival John Sheridan, who destroyed the *Black Star*. Since the war, Foster has sought a new challenge worthy of her skills. Politically, she is a hawk, advocating that Earth take a pro-active approach to hunting down and destroying threats to its safety.

Foster is an excellent CO, who encourages independent thought and creative solutions to problems. She will often delegate a problem to junior officers like the Player Characters – if they prove they can be trusted with a mission, she will leave its planning and execution up to them. Her forceful and somewhat egotistical personality can be abrasive. Foster thinks and moves quickly and expects her crew to keep up. She will reward skill but has no time or interest in coddling personnel who are not performing at her level.

#### 4<sup>th</sup> Level Human Officer/4<sup>th</sup> Level Diplomat

**Hit Points:** 15

**Initiative:** +1

**Speed:** 30 ft. (6 squares)

**DV:** 15

**Attack:** +5 melee or +7 ranged

**Special Qualities:** Branch Specialisation (fleet), Contact x2, Improved Diplomacy, Rallying Call

**Saves:** Fort +2, Ref +5, Will +10

**Abilities:** Str 8, Dex 12, Con 10, Int 14, Wis 14, Cha 16

**Skills:** Bluff +8, Computer Use +8, Concentration +5, Diplomacy +16, Knowledge (military) +12, Intimidate +8, Listen +7, Pilot +6, Sense Motive +10, Speak Language (Centauri), Spot +7, Technical (spacecraft) +7 and Tumble +6

**Feats:** Data Access, First Contact Protocol, Lightning Reflexes, Negotiator, Skill Focus (knowledge - military) and Spacecraft Proficiency

### Commander Louis Chavel

Unlike Foster, Chavel is seen as laid-back and friendly by the crew. On most vessels, the XO is the authoritarian whip and the Captain is the understanding, paternal figure.

The *Eurystheus* reverses this stereotype. This could be disastrous for morale if Chavel was not so charming and self-deprecating. He can keep the crew supporting Foster through him.

Beneath this approachable and friendly façade, Chavel is more troubled. Foster was able to put the incident at Isaili out of her mind when ordered to, but Chavel has not managed to forget. Furthermore, he now nurses a lingering distrust for the Alliance and EarthForce following their handing of that incident. He confides this only his wife, Maria, who lives back on Proxima.

#### 5<sup>th</sup> Level Human Officer/1<sup>st</sup> Level Worker

**Hit Points:** 20

**Initiative:** +1

**Speed:** 30 ft. (6 squares)

**DV:** 12

**Attack:** +4 melee, +5 ranged

**Special Qualities:** Blue Collar, Branch Specialisation (fleet), Rallying Cry

**Saves:** Fort +2, Ref +2, Will +8

**Abilities:** Str 10, Dex 12, Con 8, Int 14, Wis 15, Cha 14

**Skills:** Computer Use +9, Concentration +6, Diplomacy +10, Knowledge (astrophysics) +8, Listen +10, Pilot +9, Sense Motive +10, Speak Language (Narn), Spot +10, Technical (electronics) +8

**Feats:** Alertness, Data Access, First Contact Protocol, Iron Will, Veteran Spacehand, Spacecraft Proficiency

### Lieutenant Jacob 'Fusion' Patterson

Newly assigned to the *Eurystheus* following the suicide of its previous chief of engineering, Patterson is determined to prove that he is up to the demands laid upon him by the Captain. A native of Earth, Patterson joined EarthForce in time to fight at the Battle of the Line. He is notoriously anti-alien, especially anti-Minbari. He is fiercely loyal to other humans, especially those under his command.

Off-duty, Patterson is just as intense. His record has several black marks for off-duty brawling and drinking, although he is very careful not to let such wildness impact on his professional duties. He parties as hard as he works, and uses shore leave to blow off steam.

#### 2<sup>nd</sup> Level Human Officer/3<sup>rd</sup> Level Worker

**Hit Points:** 13

**Initiative:** +2

**Speed:** 30 ft. (6 squares)

**DV:** 15

**Attack:** +3 melee, +4 ranged

**Special Qualities:** Blue Collar, Branch Specialisation (fleet), Navy Profession - Technician

**Saves:** Fort +3, Ref +5, Will +3

**Abilities:** Str 13, Dex 15, Con 11, Int 13, Wis 8, Cha 10

**Skills:** Climb +7, Computer Use +10, Concentration +7, Intimidate +4, Knowledge (astrophysics) +8, Listen +9, Profession (technician) +8, Spot +9, Technical (engineering) +11 and Technical (space travel) +8

**Feats:** Alertness, Data Access, Lightning Reflexes, Skill Focus (technical – engineering) and Spacecraft Proficiency

### Lt. Mark Graves

The navigator of the *Eurystheus* has been with the ship since 2250. An avid follower of Foundationalism, Graves also serves as the ship's Chaplain, holding non-denominational religious services on a regular basis on board ship. He is seen by the crew as something of a martinet, always operating by the book and by approved procedure. He and Captain Foster have clashed numerous times since her appointment over navigation – she prefers to take riskier, faster routes and to push the ship's capabilities, while Graves is much more comfortable in sticking with tradition and conservative courses. For all his faith in a divine power, he seems to have the least faith in the crew and ship. It is only Chavel's calming influence that keeps Foster and Graves from arguing more regularly.

#### 4<sup>th</sup> Level Human Officer

**Hit Points:** 11

**Initiative:** +2

**Speed:** 30 ft. (6 squares)

**DV:** 14 (+1 Dodge)

**Attack:** +4 melee, +6 ranged

**Special Qualities:** Branch Specialisation (fleet), Rallying Cry

**Saves:** Fort +1, Ref +3, Will +5

**Abilities:** Str 10, Dex 15, Con 10, Int 12, Wis 13, Cha 14

**Skills:** Computer Use +6, Concentration +5, Diplomacy +7, Knowledge (astrophysics) +4, Knowledge (history) +4, Pilot +11, Sense Motive +6, Spot +6 and Technical (electronics) +6

**Feats:** Data Access, Dodge, Skill Focus (pilot), Spacecraft Proficiency, Vehicle Dodge

### Lt. Commander Iya N'guma

Something of a legend within EarthForce, N'guma is said to be the best gunnery officer in the fleet. Her scores at the Naval Academy have never been beaten, and she can beat all but the latest targeting computers in calculating a firing solution by eye and hand alone. Foster had to fight to get N'guma assigned to the *Eurystheus*; if it was not for Foster's actions and the *Eurystheus*' good reputation, then N'guma would surely be manning the weapons console on some Omega.

Off-duty, she is a skilled martial artist; although she worries that her skills will atrophy in zero gravity aboard ship. She therefore takes every opportunity she can to get into gravity. She intends to enter the alien fighting tournament of the Mutai at some point in the future.

#### 5<sup>th</sup> Level Human Officer

**Hit Points:** 14

**Initiative:** +3

**Speed:** 30 ft. (6 squares)

**DV:** 14

**Attack:** +7 melee, +8 ranged

**Special Qualities:** Branch Specialisation (pilot), Rallying Cry

**Saves:** Fort +1, Ref +4, Will +5

**Abilities:** Str 14, Dex 16, Con 10, Int 12, Wis 13, Cha 8

**Skills:** Bluff +3, Computer Use +5, Concentration +4, Listen +5, Pilot +5, Sense Motive +5, Spot +7, Technical (electronics) +9 and Tumble +6

**Feats:** Fire Control, Spacecraft Proficiency, Weapon Focus (spacecraft weapons), Weapon Proficiency (spacecraft weapons) and Weapon Specialisation (spacecraft weapons)

## Ensign Kieran Turley

It is a secret known only to Captain Foster, Commander Chavel and Doctor Takashi that Ensign 'Kieran Turley' is actually the Centauri Kirin Turhan. Following more attacks by assassins, as well as an official request for extradition by the Centauri government, it was decided to make the renegade Centauri 'disappear'. The *Eurystheus* was the best choice for an assignment, as the crew there already knew about the Centauri's unique state. Kirin was surgically altered to look more human, and has tried to assimilate himself into human culture. He still dreams of returning to Centauri Prime, especially as his distant relative Emperor Turhan sickens and Kirin moves up the line of succession.

In his human guise as Turley, the Centauri tries to act as naturally as possible and he is a skilled actor. However, there is still something slightly... off about him. Knowing his skills, Captain Foster often calls upon Turley for special missions.

### 6<sup>th</sup> Level Centauri Agent

**Hit Points:** 19

**Initiative:** +2

**Speed:** 30 ft. (6 squares)

**DV:** 17

**Attack:** +4 melee, +6 ranged

**Special Qualities:** +2 racial bonus to Bluff and Diplomacy, +1 racial bonus to Fortitude saving throws against poisons, Skill Mastery (Bluff), Sneak Attack +1d6

**Saves:** Fort +1, Ref +7, Will +3

**Abilities:** Str 10, Dex 14, Con 8, Int 12, Wis 12, Cha 17

**Skills:** Bluff +12, Concentration +5, Disguise +13, Diplomacy +9, Escape Artist +5, Forgery +4, Gather Information +6, Hide +6, Knowledge (star systems) +5, Move Silently +6, Pick Pocket +5, Pilot +5, Sense Motive +5, Spot +5, Technical (spacecraft operation) +5

**Feats:** Alien Empathy (human), Deceitful and Noble Birth

## Dr Hamesu Takashi

A skilled xenobiologist, Takashi was assigned to the *Eurystheus* mainly as Turley's handler. He is an expert in alien anatomies, and is something of a polymath. Takashi is just as skilled with a chemical analyser or archaeologist's sonic probe as he is with a scalpel or dermal regenerator, and takes charge of most of the ship's scientific and exploratory functions.

Takashi is a very private individual, and rarely socialises with the rest of the crew. He is diligent in regularly reporting his findings to EarthDome – thoughts of treason or disloyalty are almost inconceivable to him, as is the idea that EarthForce could ever be in the wrong. He is not a fanatic, just very focussed on his work to the exclusion of all else.

### 5<sup>th</sup> Level Human Scientist

**Hit Points:** 12

**Initiative:** +1

**Speed:** 30 ft. (6 squares)

**DV:** 12

**Attack:** +2 melee, +3 ranged

**Special Qualities:** Peripheral Studies (alien life), Primary Area of Study (Medicine), Use Alien Artefact

**Saves:** Fort +2, Ref +2, Will +6

**Abilities:** Str 10, Dex 12, Con 13, Int 16, Wis 15, Cha 8

**Skills:** Computer Use +14, Concentration +7, Diplomacy +7, Drive +6, Knowledge (alien language) +11, Knowledge (alien life) +11, Knowledge (history) +11, Knowledge (star systems) +11, Medical +13, Speak Language (Centauri), Speak Language (Narn), Spot +10 and Technical (electronics) +11

**Feats:** Data Access, Skill Focus (computer use) and Skill Focus (medical)

## Lt. Commander Dani Winters

A graduate of the Advanced Starfury Handling School, Winters considers the whole *Eurystheus* to be under her protection. A native of Mars, she is a political radical who advocates greater independence for the colonies – a rather unpopular position within EarthForce, and one that will likely result in her career stalling indefinitely at this rank.

She has a first cousin within Psi Corps, by the name of Talia, but the two have not spoken in over 15 years. The Corps discourages familial relationships.

### 3<sup>rd</sup> Level Human Officer/2<sup>nd</sup> Level Advanced Starfury Pilot

**Hit Points:** 10

**Initiative:** +3

**Speed:** 30 ft. (6 squares)

**DV:** 16

**Attack:** +5 melee, +8 ranged

**Special Qualities:** Advanced Dogfighting, Branch Specialisation (pilot), Push the Envelope, Rallying Cry

**Saves:** Fort +5, Ref +6, Will +4

**Abilities:** Str 10, Dex 17, Con 15, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 10

**Skills:** Computer Use +4, Concentration +8, Knowledge (astrophysics) +8, Pilot +11, Spot +9, Technical (electronics) +6

**Feats:** Dogfighter, Evasive Action, Fire Control, Spacecraft Proficiency, Weapons Proficiency (spacecraft)

The Games Master is encouraged to add more characters as necessary to the crew, or to replace or demote the Non-Player Characters described above. For example, if one of the Player Characters is a skilled pilot, then he can take Winters' place and the Games Master can put her as his wingman or just eliminate her altogether. If the characters are a team of scientists, then it is likely they will only deal with Dr Takashi on a regular basis.

## Campaigns onboard the Eurystheus

In between the 'arc' adventures described below, the voyages of the *Eurystheus* offer scope for plenty of adventures and encounters. The *Eurystheus*' normal role is as a backup to the other exploratory ships; it patrols the borders of human space, jumping out into the great semi-unknown when a smaller exploratory ship encounters something it cannot handle.

## Random events onboard the *Eurystheus*

Roll	Event
1	<b>Drill:</b> A drill or test is scheduled.
2	<b>Surprise Drill:</b> Captain Foster institutes a surprise drill, testing some aspect of the crew's competence.
3	<b>Visit to Earth base:</b> The <i>Eurystheus</i> docks with an EarthForce base.
4	<b>Other EarthForce ship encountered:</b> The <i>Eurystheus</i> encounters another EarthForce vessel, from another warship to a support tender, explorer, troop transport...
5	<b>Other human ship encountered:</b> The <i>Eurystheus</i> encounters a human trader, passenger liner, escape pod, mining ship, government courier...
6	<b>Alien ship encountered:</b> The <i>Eurystheus</i> encounters an alien vessel.
7	<b>Letters from home:</b> The crew receive personal communications from Earth and the colonies.
8	<b>Orders – escort:</b> The <i>Eurystheus</i> is sent to escort and protect a smaller vessel.
9	<b>Orders – courier:</b> The <i>Eurystheus</i> is sent to bring a message or dignitary to a destination.
10	<b>Orders – explore:</b> The <i>Eurystheus</i> is sent to investigate an uncharted system.
11	<b>Orders – show of force:</b> The <i>Eurystheus</i> is sent to demonstrate EarthForce's resolve and strength in the face of some potential threat.
12	<b>Social event:</b> Some social event like a birthday, party, religious celebration, sports match and so on happens on board ship.
13	<b>Social crisis:</b> Something goes horribly wrong in the crew, such as a disease, mutiny, telepathic subversion, sabotage, suicide...
14	<b>Hostile force – raiders:</b> Pirates or human raiders attack the <i>Eurystheus</i> .
15	<b>Hostile force – aliens:</b> A hostile force attacks the <i>Eurystheus</i> ; these could be Shadows or drakh, rogue Narns or Minbari, alien raiders, a previously unknown race...
16	<b>Distress Call – ship:</b> A ship sends out a distress call; it is damaged, adrift, lost, under attack...
17	<b>Distress Call – planet:</b> A colony sends out a distress call; it is under attack, infected, has discovered something unusual, needs supplies, dealing with a rebellion...
18	<b>Malfunction:</b> One of the minor systems on board malfunctions and needs to be repaired.
19	<b>Emergency:</b> Something goes seriously wrong on board the <i>Eurystheus</i> , such as a hull breach, fire, explosion, jump drive malfunction.
20	<b>Weird telepath/Shadow/nanotech inexplicable weirdness:</b> whatever the Games Master wants, thanks to the strange link between Serge Grayson and the <i>Eurystheus</i> .

The various Non-Player Characters each have their own plots, not all of which are explored in the arc episode. For example, Turley might take advantage of the chaos in the Centauri Republic following the death of Emperor Turhan and the war with the Narn to press his own claim to the throne. Lt. Patterson might lead the characters into trouble by getting them into a fight with Minbari (to really alarm the characters, get them into a brawl with a group of Minbari dressed in black, then let one of them catch a glimpse of a strange gemstone brooch...)

While the arc adventures concentrate on the rise of President Clark and the use of Shadow technology by the Alliance, there are plenty of other plot elements that are untouched. The Narn war, the passing of the Technomages, the rebellion of Babylon 5 and the Shadow War itself...

The random events table below can be used to fill time between adventures.

## The New Guard

The year is 2258. As more and more of EarthForce's mighty new fleet of Omega-class warships comes online, the EAS *Eurystheus* is assigned to run Operation Blue Orchid, a massive wargame to be held in the Beta 9 system. During the last such wargame, the experienced crew of the *Eurystheus* soundly defeated their opponents and won the coveted Blue Pennant. Now, the ship has a new Captain and a largely new crew, and is not expected to match her earlier accomplishments.

This first scenario introduces the characters to the *Eurystheus* and her crew, as well as throwing them into the deep end of space combat and EarthForce tactics. Most of the scenario takes place inside the Blue Orchid wargame where damage is simulated, so the players can be shown the effects of both personal and space combat without killing the characters or smashing the *Eurystheus* into pieces.

This scenario is for 1<sup>st</sup> or 2<sup>nd</sup> level characters.

## Operation Blue Orchid

EarthForce regularly conducts wargames to test its crews – the Blue series are simulated engagements designed to test tactical flexibility and creative thinking. There are few formal rules of engagement in a Blue game; any tactics can be used to accomplish the assigned mission. For this year's game, Blue Orchid, the mission for *Eurystheus* and her escorts is to transport a beacon from one planet to another. The three Omega-class ships *Charon*, *Cuchullain* and *Apollo* will oppose them, jumping in-system at some point then tracking the beacon carrier down.

The beacon itself sends out a tachyon pulse once an hour; the pulse can be detected anywhere within the Beta 9 system. Physically, it is a sealed metal sphere about three feet in diameter, light enough to be carried by two people or rolled by one. For the defenders (the *Eurystheus*' team) to win, the beacon must be delivered to the Canyon City Science Institute on Beta 9/III. If they keep the beacon out of the Attacker's hands for 48 hours, they get a partial victory. For the Attackers (the Omegas) to win, the beacon must be captured and delivered (for the best result) or destroyed (for a partial victory).

Opening the beacon to deactivate the pulse is an automatic loss. It is permissible, however, to try to dampen the beacon's pulse to make it harder to detect, say by putting the beacon within a reactor's radiation shield.

Range to beacon (hours) <sup>1</sup>	Electronics check to detect <sup>2</sup>	When dampened <sup>3</sup>
1	15	25
6	25	35
12+	35	40

- 1: Use the travel times table below to estimate range.
- 2: This basically works like detecting another ship, so add the scanning vessel's Sensors bonus to the Technical (electronics) check.
- 3: Dampening the beacon signal is tricky – the characters have to find some way of containing a tachyon pulse. Options include putting it inside some sort of casing, broadcasting a jammer signal, broadcasting a false signal and so on.

## The Teams

Defenders		Attackers	
Ship	Captain	Ship	Captain
<i>Eurystheus (Nova)</i>	Foster	<i>Charon (Omega)</i>	Drake
<i>Nestis (Hyperion)</i>	McBride	<i>Cuchullain (Omega)</i>	Fracino
<i>Jason (Hyperion)</i>	White	<i>Apollo (Omega)</i>	Wei
<i>Robinson (Tethys)</i>	Memphis		

The defenders are expected to get crushed. While they do outnumber the Attackers four to three, the *Tethys* is much too small and old to have any major effect on the games. All the Omegas need to do is blockade Beta 9/III and they can crush the defenders when they make a run on the planet. Only the Attacker team is allowed to use hyperspatial travel during the wargame.

## The Battlefield

**1:** The Dionysus-class space station *Northwind*, the control centre for Operation Blue Orchid. At the beginning of the scenario, all seven ships involved in the game, as well as several transports, are docked here.

**2:** Beta 9/IV. A hot, volcanic planet of mostly molten rock. The Polar Regions are cool enough to be visited by characters without protective suits, although they

will have to wear breather masks. Beta 9/IV ('Dante') has a small mining base at its south pole.

**3:** Beta 9/IV/a, Dante's moon, called Beatrice. Of little consequence, although it does have an automated relay station to bounce communications from the mining station back to Beta 9/III.

**4:** Empty space between the two planets. The map shown is obviously not to scale; direct-course travel times are as follows:

**5:** Beta 9/III, better known as New Colorado. Beta 9/III was originally founded as a mining base, as the planet has considerable mineral wealth, but has also become a successful research outpost for several corporations. Canyon City, built into the walls of the Grand Canyon, is the centre of Beta 9's science and the ultimate goal of Operation Blue Orchid.

**6:** The major moon of Beta 9/III, nicknamed Mal's Folly for reasons now lost. The moon is relatively large, which causes the high tides in the oceans of Beta 9/III below. The moon is uninhabited.

**7:** Beta 9/III's second moon, a medium-sized, potato-shaped asteroid called Tumbleweed. It is the home of a religious sect called the Faithful of Katun, who believe that angels will soon come to bring the elect of humanity to heaven. The sect is a descendant of one of the telepath-created religions that plagued Earth back in the 2070s.

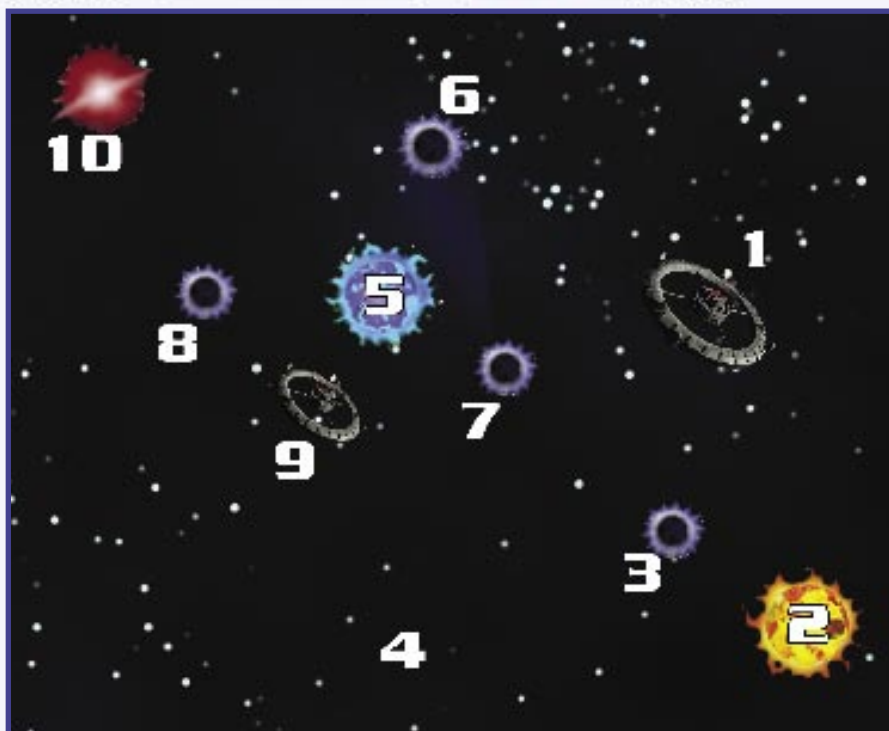
**8:** The third moon of Beta 9/III is known as The Nuisance. It is actually a fast-moving comet that was recently (within the last two centuries) captured by the planet's gravity. The Nuisance's orbit is extremely complex, as it is technically orbiting the moving locus of New Colorado's and Mal's Folly's gravity. The Nuisance completes one circuit of its twisting orbit every nine hours, making it something of a hazard to shipping.

**9:** Denver Station, an orbiting trade station/gateway to the planet below. Denver Station is a hub for commerce within the sector; as Beta 9 lies right on the frontier with the Markab and through them, the whole League, many ships pass through Denver.

**10:** The jumpgate for the Beta 9 system.

## Travel Times within Beta 9

	Northwind Station	Dante	New Colorado	Denver Station	Jumpgate
Northwind Station	—	10	10	11	12
Dante	10	—	18	19	21
New Colorado	10	18	—	1	3
Denver Station	11	19	1	—	2
Jumpgate	12	21	3	2	—



## The Complications

There are three major complications to Operation Blue Orchid, which will turn a simple war game into a gauntlet of fire for the Player Characters.

## The Gaim

The insectoid Gaim have sent a ship to secretly monitor the games. This ship will jump into the system after four hours, and try to stay out of sight while tracking the engagements between the Defenders and the Attackers. This vessel, whose name best translates as *Descending Spiral Abrogation*

## Timeline of Events

Mission Time	Event
-12	The characters arrive at Northwind Station. Potentially, they meet Rose Swade as they travel from Denver Station.
-6	The characters meet with the crews of the other vessels, as well as Captain Foster.
-4	There is a potential brawl in the bar. General Franklin briefs all the crews. The Gaim arrive in the system.
-3	The Omegas depart. Planning for the wargame begins.
-1	The shuttle carrying the beacon is ambushed by the raider Reach. The Gaim observe this.
0	The game begins.
6	The second beacon begins to pulse.
10	The <i>Cuchullain</i> jumps back into the system, virtually on top of Northwind.
11	The <i>Eurystheus</i> arrives at Dante and retrieves the beacon.
14	The <i>Apollo</i> comes through the jumpgate.
18	Research Team 24 begins feeding information to the <i>Cuchullain</i> .

*Yellow Unregret*, will initially refuse all communications attempts and will flee if challenged, returning to continue its covert mission later. Clever players may be able to use the alien minds of the Gaim as a weapon against the telepaths later on. If the Gaim ship is detected – which seems likely, considering that the three Omegas are regularly scanning the system – there will be a brief pause in the wargames while it is decided what to do. It is eventually decided that the games will continue – a single Gaim ship is no threat to the EarthForce ships, it does not seem to be doing anything to either help or hinder the situation and the games may serve as a demonstration of power to the insectoid race.

## The Survivors of Janos VII

Seven years ago, EarthForce crushed the raider stronghold on the planet of Janos VII. Most of the raiders there were killed or captured, but a few survived and vowed revenge against EarthForce.

The commander of the task force that took Janos VII was General Franklin, and he is now overseeing Operation Blue Orchid. One group of survivors, led by a human raider called Reach, intend to sabotage the wargame.

They have allied with the fanatic Faithful of Katun, trading genetic secrets once held by the Dilgar in exchange for the help of the Elect – the few telepaths who are still part of the cult. They know that the beacon is the ‘McGuffin’ for the wargame, and that General Franklin will be waiting in Canyon City for the winning team. They are going to replace the beacon with an identical-looking beacon, which contains a powerful bomb. When Franklin sends the ‘operation over’ command that deactivates the beacon’s pulse, it will explode, killing the Scourge of Janos VII along with half of Canyon City.

## Research Team 24

Unknown to most of the crew of the *Cuchullain*, not to mention General Franklin, that particular Omega has been outfitted with an experimental sensor system – the product of EarthForce research into the technologies recovered from Isaili. Research Team 24 members are on the staff on board Northwind Station, and desperately need the *Cuchullain* to win the pennant to prove to their superiors in EarthForce that their research into the alien organic technology is having real results.

During the game, the team members may feed information to the *Cuchullain* to tip the balance to the Attackers. The *Cuchullain* has a +6 bonus to its sensors.

## (Optional) Scene Zero: Denver Station

If the player characters are only now joining the crew of the *Eurystheus*, then you can introduce them to each other on board a shuttle from Denver Station to Northwind Station. The characters come through the Beta 9 jumpgate, and then head onto the EarthForce station via the trade station. The long flight to Northwind gives them plenty of time to get to know each other.

Also on board the shuttle are two other people – a woman dressed in a corporate suit and middle-aged, nervous man dressed in a tech's fatigues. The woman is Rose Swade, formerly Lieutenant Rose Swade of the *Eurystheus*. She is considerably more confident and self-possessed than she was during the Minbari War. She is now employed by IPX, but heard that her old ship was in the area and took a few days off to visit the ship and Captain Foster. Swade will happily chat with the characters, but she will carefully avoid giving away anything important and she certainly will not mention anything that happened at Isaili. She will give some gossip about Foster and Chavel. She will *not* mention Turley/Turhan at all, as his status is an official secret.

The man will try to avoid all conversation. He is Gerik, one of the Faithful of Katun. He is an unregistered telepath (P5), but he will sleep for as much of the journey as possible. If questioned, he will claim to be a civilian contractor assigned to help Northwind Station cope with the demands of Operation Blue Orchid.

### Gerik

**2<sup>nd</sup> Level Human Telepath (P5)**

**Hit Points:** 6 hp

**Initiative:** +0

**Speed:** 30 ft. (6 squares)

**DV:** 10

**Attack:** +1 melee or +1 ranged

**Special Qualities:** Accidental Scan, Mind Shield, Sense Telepathy, Surface Scan

**Saves:** Fort +2, Ref +0, Will +5

**Abilities:** Str 10, Dex 10, Con 14, Int 12, Wis 15, Cha 8

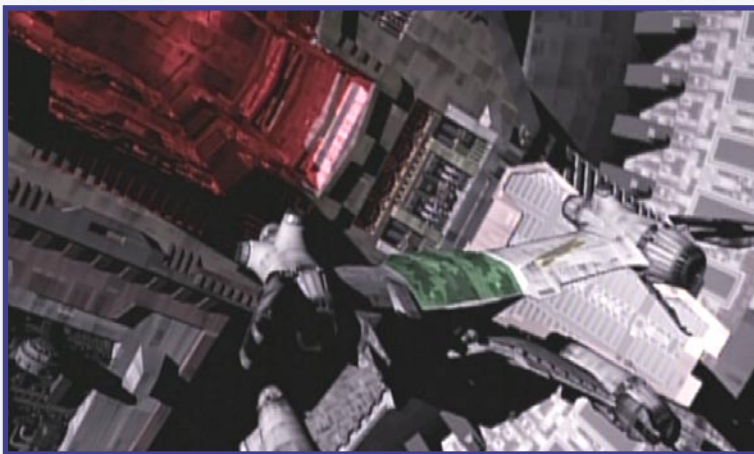
**Skills:** Bluff +2, Computer Use +6, Concentration +7, Knowledge (telepathy) +4, Listen +7, Sense Motive +7, Technical +4 and Telepathy +4

**Feats:** Meditation and Ability Focus (mind shield)

## Scene One: Introductions

The characters arrive at Northwind Station. Already, the lines are being drawn – the three Omegas are on one side of the station (only the *Apollo* is actually docked), while the *Eurystheus* and her three allies are holding station on the far side. The station is crowded, with crews from all seven ships as well as a support Tender present.

When they report to the *Eurystheus*, they will be met and interviewed by Commander Chavel, who will be as welcoming and friendly as possible. He will explain the basics of the Blue series of wargames (scenarios to test creative thinking, which the *Eurystheus* crew has won several times before) and the command structure of the ship. He will also briefly introduce them to Captain Foster (who is busy speaking



to Swade) and to their respective COs. Foster will inform the characters that she will be assigning them to the team responsible for coming up with a plan to win the wargame, so she expects great things from them.

## Scene Two: The Brawl

The characters have a few minutes after stowing their gear and exploring their duty stations on board the ship to visit Northwind's station's small and crowded rec deck. To drag them there, have one or more of their Commanding Officers be in the bar, and have Chavel send them there to report. The crews of the *Apollo* and *Charon* are present, and the characters will clearly overhear a group of pilots from the *Charon* laughing at the outdated *Eurystheus* and crowing about how the Defenders are going to get utterly, utterly crushed.

If the characters want to stand up for their ship, this is the time. Higher ranking officers from both ships have agreed to 'look the other way' in the event of a brawl – such behaviour is expected at this point in the wargames. As long no one is seriously wounded (or killed) there will be no repercussions later.

### Charon Pilots

**1<sup>st</sup> Level Human Officers**

**Hit Points:** 7 hp

**Initiative:** +2

**Speed:** 30 ft. (6 squares)

**DV:** 12

**Attack:** +2 melee or +3 ranged

**Special Qualities:** Branch Specialisation (pilot)

**Saves:** Fort +0, Ref +2, Will +2

**Abilities:** Str 12, Dex 15, Con 10, Int 12, Wis 10, Cha 10

**Skills:** Computer Use +5, Diplomacy +4, Pilot +6, Sense Motive +4, Spot +4, Technical (spacecraft) +5

**Feats:** Spacecraft Proficiency, Vehicle Combat, Vehicle Dodge, Weapons Proficiency (spacecraft weapons)

**Equipment:** PPG, Link

## Scene Three: The Briefing

After the characters have found their feet – and possibly been knocked off them in a brawl – then they are ordered to report for a briefing. Higher-ranking characters might be physically present at the briefing, which is held in a large hall on Northwind; lower-ranking officers might just watch from their quarters or stations.

The briefing is given by General Franklin. The Captains of the seven ships are seated on either side of him. The general is obviously looking forward to the game, seeing it as a welcome break from normal EarthForce activities. The first order of business is taking the Blue Pennant back from Captain Foster – the pennant was in the *Eurystheus*' trophy cabinet since the last wargame.

After that painful duty, Franklin goes onto explain the new wargame. A beacon has been hidden somewhere in the Beta 9 system. In four hours, the beacon will activate, sending a pulse out every hour, on the hour. The Defenders must locate the beacon and get it to the research lab in Canyon City. Six hours after the start of the game, the Attackers get to jump in-system and begin their hunt.

If the Defenders get the beacon to the lab, they win outright. If they keep it for 48 hours, they get a partial victory.

Once the briefing is complete, the Captains shake hands, and the Attacker crews depart. The *Charon* opens a jump vortex and the three ships enter hyperspace.

Captain Foster contacts the Player Characters. They have four hours to come up with a plan. The four ships should be able to locate the beacon easily enough – what the characters need to do is work out how they will get it to New Colorado through a blockade of three Omegas.

## Scene Four: The Plan

While Foster does have other officers working on strategies, it is easiest to assume that she goes with whatever the players come up with? So...what do they do? The beacon only pulses once an hour, so it is possible to misdirect the Attackers as to which ship it is on. Do they try and punch through the Omega lines with the *Eurystheus* and the two Hyperions, or split up? Do they try to sneak past on a shuttle? Or go for the partial victory and just hide the beacon?

Once the players have come up with a plan they are vaguely happy with, move onto Scene Five.

Meanwhile, the raider Reach ambushes the shuttle containing the beacon, and swaps it for the bomb. As the shuttle was supposed to maintain radio silence to maintain the secrecy of where the beacon is, this attack goes unnoticed by everyone apart from the Gaim observer ship.

## Scene Five: The Hunt Begins

From this point in the scenario until the characters figure out that something is wrong, events are largely dependant on the characters' plan to get the beacon to Canyon City. When the beacon first pulses, the *Eurystheus* must make a Sensors check to detect the beacon. The fake beacon has been placed in a polar cave on the volcanic planet of Dante – characters who are sent down to retrieve it must make their way across the dangerous ashen wastes to find the cave.

While the characters are scanning for the beacon, they may also detect the Gaim ship that is lurking in the system. The Gaim vessel is currently in orbit of Dante, on the far side of the planet from Northwind station, examining the place

where the shuttle carrying the 'real' beacon was attacked by Reach's ship. Reach's vessel has begun to make its way back to New Colorado, through the wargames area (the Beta 9 system has not been closed to shipping, although automated beacons inform all civilian traffic that EarthForce are conducting wargames).

## Reach

Reach's vessel – a humble Civilian Trader (*Babylon 5 Rulebook*, page 92) – has the real beacon on board. One of Reach's technicians believed that the codes provided by Faithful of Katun telepaths were enough to shut it down, but he actually only reset it. Six hours after the first beacon activates, the second one also switches on. It takes 1d4 hours for Reach's technician to notice that, at which point he puts the beacon within a jammer box or destroys it if he believes that EarthForce are onto them.

Unless intercepted, Reach's ship (the *Harrison*) will head onto the moon of Tumbleweed and seek refuge there. Reach may make a run for the jumpgate if chased by EarthForce. He can also use the 'operation over' code to detonate the nuclear beacon prematurely, but the range of his transmitter is relatively short – his ship must be within ten squares of the beacon.

Reach has one other advantage – he has the crew of the shuttle as hostages.

## The Attackers

The Attackers' plan to locate the beacon is as follows: The *Cuchullain* jumps back into the middle of the system, midway between the two planets. It then scans for the beacon and the presence of ships. Meanwhile, the *Apollo* takes up a blockade position at New Colorado, waiting for any ships to make a run on Canyon City. The *Charon* remains on station in hyperspace, waiting to jump back in to support either of the other two Omegas in case they engage the Defender fleet.

The Attackers want to get into fights – they heavily outgun the Defender group. Resolve the space battles as normal, but all damage is simulated. A ship that is crippled or destroyed will basically have to float there until the end of the war game. However, the simulated damage can be overridden with a Technical (electronics) or Computer Use check at DC 10.

### The Curse of Eurystheus

The small amount of prototype Shadow technology on board the *Cuchullain* may trigger the dormant nanotech embedded in the *Eurystheus*' hull, which is still connected to Greyson on Isaili. At this stage in the campaign, the connection should be subtle – perhaps the ship reacts in a strange way towards the Omega, or the hull ripples momentarily in an oddly organic way. Telepathic characters may feel uneasy, as if they are being watched...

The best result, as far as the Attackers are concerned, is to cripple all four Defender ships, storm the one carrying the beacon, and then head onto Canyon City in triumph.

## The Gaim

The *Descending Spiral Abrogation Yellow Unregret* will basically shadow the wargame, observing as best it can. The Gaim will initially refuse communications, but contact can be established if the characters persevere. The Gaim have assumed that Reach's attack on the shuttle was part of the games - the whole exercise is quite incomprehensible to the insectoid race.

## Scene Six: Working Out Something Is Wrong

Between the second beacon pulse, possible testimony from the Gaim, the missing shuttle, and the potential odd behaviour of the *Harrison*, the players should realise that something is up. If they are being absolutely clueless, the Games Master can prompt them by having something weird (see *The Curse of Eurystheus* sidebar) happen in the room with the beacon.

Examining the beacon shows that it is a standard casing, but it has some old scarring and damage, suggesting it has been used before. Scanning it reveals that it is radioactive, and that there is a bomb inside. Opening the case will detonate the bomb, but a successful Technical check (DC 25) can disarm it. Alternatively, the characters could just dump it out an airlock and shoot it.

If the characters bring their suspicions to Captain Foster, and present some proof or are convincing, then she will contact Northwind Station and ask them to run a security check. This will swiftly (1d4+1 hours) reveal the problems with the missing shuttle and the civilian technicians (the Katun telepaths sent to Northwind).

As soon as General Franklin is informed of the problem, he will stop the exercise. Seeing as the Katun are involved, he will order the fleet to Tumbleweed to investigate there.

Ideally, there should be plenty of cat-and-mouse action between the Attackers and Defenders before the alert is raised. Try to keep the players' attention on the wargame part of the scenario while the real threat slowly builds. The whole middle section of the scenario should play out something like a submarine drama.

## Scene Seven: The Assault on Tumbleweed

By this point in the scenario, the raider Reach should be on or near Tumbleweed. The characters may or may not have realised that he has hostages. The Katun cult has been expecting to be attacked by the unbelievers - the Alliance - for decades and are quite welcoming to the idea of a Waco-style siege and a fiery death.

Captain Foster will ask the characters for options on getting the situation resolved peacefully, or at least non-lethally. While the assembled fleet probably has enough firepower to crack Tumbleweed open, which would kill hundreds of people. Ideally, if the *Eurystheus* gets there before any of the

Omegas, she will ask the players to get Reach as quickly as possible just to embarrass the Attackers.

Tumbleweed is a tough target. While the asteroid is unarmed, there are some 300 Katun cultists living there. There are four main airlocks leading into the interior of the moon, as well as a ship-docking bay inside a large crater. All life support and power generation is carried out deep within the caves within the rock. The Katun are armed with black-market PPGs and outdated slugthrowers. The vast majority of them are not telepathic, but they do have a few Holy Ones who have some level of psychic abilities. These will all be within the main temple in the heart of the moon, which will also be where Reach brings his hostages. Possible solutions include:

- ⑤ **Divide Reach and the Telepaths:** The two are allied only thanks to Reach's offer of Dilgar genetic secrets. If the characters can destroy Reach's credibility - say with testimony from General Franklin on how the raider base on Janos VII had no such secrets - they can drive a wedge between the telepaths and the raider. They can also threaten the Katun with the Psi Corps.
- ⑤ **Use the Gaim:** While the Katun telepaths are a threat to human troops, the alien minds of the insectoid Gaim are much harder to scan. The Gaim could be used to distract the telepaths.
- ⑤ **Sneak Onboard:** A small commando team could, say, inject morph gas into the asteroid's life support system and knock out the cultists. The Katun cult is armed, but is no match for trained EarthForce officers. The tricky bit would be getting past the telepaths.
- ⑤ **Storm the Asteroid:** None of the ships involved in the exercise have a full complement of marines; they do have the personnel to launch an assault on Tumbleweed. This is the most costly option in terms of bloodshed, but is the simplest solution for rescuing the hostages.

### Katun Guards

#### 1<sup>st</sup> Level Human Worker

**Hit Points:** 7 hp

**Initiative:** +1

**Speed:** 30 ft. (6 squares)

**DV:** 11

**Attack:** +2 melee or +1 ranged

**Special Qualities:** Blue Collar

**Saves:** Fort +1, Ref +1, Will -1

**Abilities:** Str 14, Dex 12, Con 12, Int 10, Wis 8, Cha 8

**Skills:** Climb +6, Computer Use +2, Jump +6, Knowledge (religion) +2, Listen +3, Spot +3, Technical (electronics) +4 and Tumble +3

**Feats:** Latent Telepath and Point Blank Shot

**Equipment:** PPG, Link

### Katun High Telepaths

#### 4<sup>th</sup> Level Human Telepath (P9)

**Hit Points:** 8 hp

**Initiative:** -1

**Speed:** 30 ft. (6 squares)

**DV:** 10

**Attack:** +1 melee or +2 ranged

**Special Qualities:** Accidental Scan, Mind Shield, Sense Telepathy, Warning, Surface Scan, Pain

**Saves:** Fort +0, Ref +0, Will +8

**Abilities:** Str 6, Dex 8, Con 8, Int 12, Wis 15, Cha 15



**Skills:** Concentration +3, Diplomacy +5, Knowledge (telepathy) +6, Knowledge (religion) +6, Sense Motive +6 and Telepathy +9

**Feats:** Ability Focus (Pain), Ability Focus (Surface Scan), Iron Will and Meditation

### Captain Reach

4<sup>th</sup> Level Human Lurker

**Hit Points:** 12 hp

**Initiative:** +6

**Speed:** 30 ft. (6 squares)

**DV:** 15

**Attack:** +4 melee or +5 ranged

**Special Qualities:** Lurker's Knowledge, Survivor's Luck, Multiskilled (pilot)

**Saves:** Fort +5, Ref +5, Will +2

**Abilities:** Str 12, Dex 15, Con 12, Int 12, Wis 13, Cha 13

**Skills:** Balance +7, Bluff +6, Escape Artist +7, Gather Information +6, Hide +7, Intimidate +7, Listen +6, Move Silently +7, Sense Motive +6, Pilot +7 and Technical (spacecraft) +6

**Feats:** Improved Initiative, Lightning Reflexes, Spacecraft Proficiency and Weapons Proficiency (spacecraft weapons)

**Equipment:** PPG, padded armour (DR 1), morph gas grenade

### Ending the Scenario

Once the hostages are rescued, the scenario ends. General Franklin cancels Operation Blue Orchid for this year, but may still choose to award the pennant if the characters and the *Eurystheus* really distinguished themselves. Captain Foster may also privately reward the characters.

### Adventures in 2258

- ⑤ The exploration program is still in full swing during this era, so the *Eurystheus* will find itself on the Rim. It might possibly run across the first signs and portents of the Shadows.
- ⑤ In the wake of the Deathwalker incident, the *Eurystheus* is sent to investigate the ruins of the Dilgar worlds in search of any relics of the immortality research.
- ⑤ 2258 saw a spate of Raider attacks; the *Eurystheus* could be sent to hunt these raiders down.

## Splinters in the Whirlwind

The year is 2259. The Narn Regime has virtually collapsed under attack from the Centauri Republic, and many of the League world are either at war or preparing for a conflict with the Centauri. The Earth Alliance, however, has reconfirmed its pact of non-aggression with the Republic. President Clark continues his radical reforms of EarthGov, while EarthForce steps up its patrols of the Alliance border.

**The Eurystheus has been assigned to watch Narn space, to ensure that none of the surviving Narn forces dare use Earth space as a staging ground from which to launch fresh attacks on the Centauri...**

*Splinters in the Whirlwind* sets the characters on a course back to Isaili. It also tries to put a positive spin on the Clark regime, as the characters fight to prevent Earth from being dragged into the Narn-Centauri War. The scenario revolves around the former EarthForce officer, Victor Dahl. Following the incident at Isail, Dahl became disillusioned with EarthForce. He became a mercenary for hire, fighting on a dozen alien worlds. He was hired by the Narn at the start of the war, and is now committed to the Narn cause. Dahl has become alarmingly amoral, willing to do whatever is necessary to win.

Dahl is currently on board the Narn freighter *Tear of G'Quan*, which is fleeing the war. On board the *Tear of G'Quan* are three high-ranking members of the military (according to the Narn) or wanted war criminals (according to the Centauri), as well as numerous refugees from the destroyed Narn colonies. The *Tear* is trying to get sanctuary in the Earth Alliance.

However, Dahl has a plan. He intends to provoke a clash between EarthForce and the Centauri, bringing Earth in on the side of the Narn. He has been communicating with the Centauri secretly under a false name, pretending to be a turncoat among the Narn. He has been funding his war against the Centauri with the very money the Centauri were paying him for his secrets. His original plan was to head to an Earth colony along the border, but the *Eurystheus* – his old ship – has even more potential for chaos.

The other complication is Dahl's knowledge of the Shadows. He has seen ships that resembled the technology encountered at Isaili during the war, and knows where they are going...

*Splinters in the Whirlwind* is for 4<sup>th</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup> level characters.

## Scene Zero: The Political Officer

This scene is not formally part of the scenario, and should be run as part of an earlier scenario in the campaign. As part of Clark's reforms, new political officers have been assigned to various key ships in the fleet, and the *Eurystheus* is no exception. The officer assigned to the ship is Benjamin Crosse, an elderly human from Earth.

The political officer should arrive by courier ship or civilian transport at the worst possible time during an earlier scenario, either when the characters are doing something of legality or are simply too busy to come up with a coherent, co-ordinated front to deal with the political officer. He will then question the characters individually, asking both about their previous adventures and their commanding officers. Crosse knows, for example, about the true status of Turley, so he may try to catch characters who are less than truthful to their new Political Officer.

Crosse is a retired veteran of the Line, who claims to be more amused and irritated by his new assignment than anything else. Play him as a kindly but slightly cantankerous grandfather. He will refer to caustically to 'those bureaucrats in EarthDome' and how it is an insult to the honour of EarthForce for watchdogs to be assigned to spy on the crews. However, Crosse is also a patriot and is utterly loyal to the President. As soon as the characters begin to trust and confide in him, they are in trouble.

Throughout the rest of the scenario and the campaign, Crosse will be the voice of the Clark Regime in the game, pushing the characters to conform with Clark's policies and beliefs.

## Scene One: The Distress Call

The *Eurystheus* is on patrol along the Narn border, in Quadrant 15. At this stage, the defeat of Narn is certain. While the mass drives have not yet begun to pound the planet into dust, the Narn fleet has been shattered by the Centauri and Mr Morden's associates. Earth has signed a non-aggression pact with the Centauri, but other relations between the two have degenerated. President Clark has put numerous new trade and traffic systems in place, which have made alien goods vastly more expensive in the Alliance, thus boosting human industry.

The *Eurystheus* receives a distress call on an open channel. *'This is the Narn ship Tear of G'Quan...calling any vessels in Quadrant 15. We are in desperate need of assistance. Our engines are damaged, and our reactor core is leaking. Life support systems are failing. We are not a military ship, we have pouchlings and non-combatants on board. We beg you, help us! This is the Narn ship Tear of G'Quan calling any vessels in Quadrant 15...'*

If the Player Characters are bridge officers, then have the distress call come in on their shift, ideally when one of them is in command and Captain Foster is off-duty. The engineering data on a sub-channel of the *Tear of G'Quan*'s distress call confirms the Narn vessel's report – they are in serious trouble and need immediate assistance. Looking at



the damage reports, it is obvious that the *Tear of G'Quan* was hit by weapons fire from a Centauri warship.

There is a human colony in this system, but it is not part of the Alliance. It is technically under EarthForce protection, although the colonists are not friendly to the Alliance or EarthForce and just want to be left alone.

Under the terms of space law, the *Eurystheus* is bound to give aid to any vessel in need. However, the Narn vessel has not registered any flight path, and the ship would be within its rights to deny the Narn entry into Alliance space proper.

The Player Characters can just wait for Captain Foster and their superior officers to show up and make the call, or they can go to aid the *Tear* immediately.

The Captain of the *Tear* is a Narn merchant called Na'vril, but she will defer to the three Narn generals on board, G'var, H'roth and G'non. The three generals are travelling in disguise and pretending to be ordinary refugees, but everyone on the ship knows who they really are, and at least one of them will be with Na'vril whenever possible to guide her.

## Scene Two: The Shadow of the Past

As soon as the *Eurystheus* reaches the *Tear*, Captain Foster will order the launch of all shuttles, to take the passengers off the stricken freighter – the reactor's radiation leak is reaching harmful levels. She orders the characters to head over to the *Tear* and search the ship for weapons or other items. The Centauri are doubtless on the trail of the Narn ship, and Foster wants to know where she stands.

Inside, the *Tear* is a wreck; the ship was pounded by Centauri guns. Narn refugees, mostly women and children, are huddled beneath bulkheads and in cargo holds that have been hastily converted into shelters. Everywhere, radiation-sensitive stickers flare a warning orange, showing that radiation is at a dangerous level.

As the refugees pile onto the shuttles, only a handful of people are left on board the *Tear*. As it is likely that Scene Three will devolve into a sort of whodunit over the identity of the Centauri spy, the handful consists of:

- 5 Captain Na'vril, a merchant who is rather shell-shocked at having her little freighter turned into a refugee ship, then occupied by high-ranking military.
- 5 G'var, the most senior of the three generals. Committed to defeating the Centauri by any means necessary, he is Dahl's closest ally among the Narn. He does not know about Dahl's identity as the Hammer (the Centauri spy's codename), nor does he know about Dahl's plan to attack a human colony.
- 5 H'roth: A fat, diplomatic military commander, H'roth believes the war is lost and that the Narn will soon be enslaved by their old oppressors once more. He has fallen in love with Na'vril, and dreams of starting a new Narn colony on the far side of Earth space, out on the Rim. H'roth spends most of his time advising Na'vril.
- 5 G'non: Severely wounded in the war, G'non is more an assembly of cybernetic parts than a Narn. He is barely lucid and in great pain.
- 5 T'sho: Na'vril's chief engineer, who really wants to keep the *Tear* running above all else.
- 5 G'Mal: A Narn preacher/philosopher, a follower of the obscure radical sect of G'Bur, which preaches that all aliens are enemies of the Narn race and that contact with beings not of Homeworld brings only chaos and pain.
- 5 The Boy: A Narn child who stowed away on the *Tear* months ago, when it first fled the Centauri attack. The Boy has not spoken since, but sees everything on board ship by hiding in the air ducts.
- 5 Victor Dahl (see below).

### Victor Dahl

**8<sup>th</sup> Level Human Soldier**

**Hit Points:** 31

**Initiative:** +0

**Speed:** 30 ft. (6 squares)

**DV:** 15

**Attack:** +10 melee or +10 ranged

**Special Qualities:** Covering Fire, To the Limit, Weapons Training

**Saves:** Fort +7, Ref +5, Will +2

**Abilities:** Str 15, Dex 14, Con 13, Int 12, Wis 10, Cha 10

**Skills:** Bluff +5, Climb +4, Drive +3, Hide +4, Intimidate +5, Listen +4, Medical +4, Move Silently +9, Spot +7, Survival +2 and Technical (demolitions) +6

**Feats:** Alertness, Lightning Reflexes, Point Blank Shot, Rapid Shot, Weapon Focus (PPG Rifle) and Weapons Specialisation (PPG rifle)

**Equipment:** Link, Narn battle armour (DR 3), PPG rifle

Soon after the characters board the ship, they spot a strange sight on board – a human. He is obviously a military man by his bearing; he is dressed in a salvaged partial suit of Narn battle armour, and carries a rifle. He hails the characters and introduces himself as Victor Dahl, and wants to know if they really came from the *Eurystheus*. Dahl will tell the characters some of the truth – he is a mercenary working with the Narn, who formerly served in EarthForce aboard the *Eurystheus*.

He will tell the characters that there are several high-ranking members of the Narn military on board, on the run from the Centauri, and it is his job to get them to safety. He is not asking the characters to do anything that would put the

*Eurystheus* in danger or that would go against their duties, but wants them to promise, one EarthForce officer to another, that they will not impede the Narns' escape. The Centauri are using mass drives, for heaven's sake, they have used biological weapons and are committing war crimes and other atrocities. Dahl also suspects that they have support from another alien power. Narn bases have been destroyed when there were no Centauri ships nearby, and he has glimpsed strange black shapes moving through space.

If the characters mention Foster, Dahl will immediately ask if they mean Lieutenant Alice Foster, and claim truthfully to be an old friend of hers. If they confirm that the *Eurystheus* is now commanded by Foster, Dahl will say that he has information for her ears only, but wants a promise that she will help him in exchange for the information.

What Dahl will not reveal, and which he will try to hide for as long as possible, is that the *Tear of G'Quan* has a secret cargo. Dahl has tanks of a Centauri bioweapon hidden in the ship's escape pods. He intends to bomb an Earth colony like Quadrant 15 or Vega with the weapons, framing the Centauri for the attack. It is a desperate plan, but Dahl is running out of options for the war. With the arrival of the *Eurystheus*, attacking a colony has become a backup plan.

### The Centauri Bioweapon

The bioweapon in the escape pods on the Narn ship is called Daskulo-II, a genetically engineered bacteria created by the Centauri to affect as many species as possible. The disease was used to soften up populations for conquest, so it is not especially lethal, but is quick acting. A character reduced to 0 Strength by the disease dies. It does not affect Centauri, but can affect Humans, Narn, Brakiri, Abbai and most of the more human-like League races. Minbari are immune to the disease. In case the bioweapon is ever released, it has the following effects:

Disease	Infection DC	Incubation	Damage
Daskulo-II	Inhaled 20	1d6+1 hours	2d4 Strength

If the characters do get in touch with Captain Foster about Dahl, she will confirm that he is a former EarthForce officer and a friend of hers, and that the characters should keep him safe but ensure he does not go anywhere until she has had a chance to talk to him. She intends to drop the Narn refugees off at Babylon 5, as it is the nearest port with the capacity to deal with such a group. Before this can be done, the situation becomes much more complicated.

### Scene Three: Stage Left

A jump point opens, and the Centauri Vorchan-class warship *Jainor* emerges into the system. The *Jainor* has been hunting the *Tear of G'Quan* for over two weeks. The Captain of the *Jainor* is called Malu Ferdus, and he is very, very tired of chasing a troublesome Narn freighter through border systems. He would not have bothered, only a Centauri spy codenamed the Hammer has been passing them information about the ship's complement, and there are at least four wanted criminals on board – the Narn generals G'var, H'roth and G'non, and a mercenary who has been responsible for several vicious and illegal attacks on Centauri bases. The mercenary is responsible for atrocities, including jamming

### What If Dahl Succeeds?

It is entirely possible that Victor Dahl succeeds in triggering a clash between the *Eurystheus* and the *Jainor*. Unless the characters can track down Dahl's transmitter (either by observation, deduction or scanners), then he can just keep lying to Captain Ferdus, who forces the issue by threatening to fire on the *Eurystheus*. Dahl may also end up bombing an Earth colony. If such a clash does occur, it does not draw Earth into the war – President Clark has no intention of getting involved. However, punishments and scapegoats will be demanded by the Earth senate, and the characters may be blamed for the whole disaster. In extreme cases, the characters may even be forced to flee Alliance space to avoid life imprisonment.

the guidance systems on a transport vessel which then crashed into an orbiting military base, killing dozens.

By the time the Centauri arrive, most of the Narn refugees are on board the *Eurystheus*. The Centauri demand that all the Narn be put back aboard the *Tear*, which will then be taken back to Centauri space by the *Jainor*. Captain Foster begins to negotiate, claiming that most of the Narn are non-combatants. Meanwhile, she orders the characters to find out what the hell Dahl wants and knows.

Dahl knows that his tale of black ships and killer aliens is his ace-in-the-hole. No other Captain in EarthForce but Foster would ever believe such a tale, but thanks to her experiences on Isaili, Dahl is gambling that the lure of an explanation about what happened on that strange world will be enough to get Foster to bend the rules in Dahl's favour. He will string the characters along as much as possible; emphasise Foster and Chavell's desire to get their hands on the information. In addition, the political officer Crosse knows about the incident at Isaili and would like to control knowledge of the black ships thanks to EarthForce's involvement with the Shadows.

The actual story is fairly short – Dahl was on board a Narn station in Kotak when it was destroyed by black ships. He barely caught a glimpse of the vessels themselves, but managed to escape from the collapsing base on board a shuttle and followed the ships, picking up on rumours and spaces' stories; they were making for the system of Quadrant 37. Optionally, the flashback to the prequel scenario *Eyes in the Gulf* can be run now.

### Scene Four: The Brink of War

From this point, the timing of the scenario varies depending on what the characters and Dahl do. Dahl wants to provoke a clash between the Earth Alliance and the Centauri Republic, thus breaking the non-aggression pact. His first plan is to use his double-agent status with the Centauri, by informing the Centauri that the three wanted Narn generals are on board the *Eurystheus*. If that fails, he will reveal his information about the mysterious dark vessels, which brings events onto the Chasing Shadows scene below. His final plot – using the bioweapon in the *Tear's* escape pods – is unlikely to work

with an EarthForce ship hanging over the freighter, but he may make a run for it if the opportunity presents itself.

Dahl's left arm is a cybernetic replacement, and he has hidden a transmitter inside it. He has patched a relay into the *Tear's* communications system, allowing him to send out coded messages. He uses an outdated encryption code that was used by EarthForce during the Minbari war, but which has never been cracked by the Narn.

Foster will order the characters to find the three Narn generals being demanded by the Centauri. While the characters are questioning the Narn left aboard the *Tear*, the Centauri will again contact the *Eurystheus*; Ferdus will smugly claim that he has a spy on board the *Tear* and that the spy has assured him the generals are in EarthForce custody on board the *Eurystheus*. Foster will then add 'finding the spy – NOW' to the characters' assignment.

Unless the characters can convince the Narn generals to give themselves up, or come up with some other solution, Foster will be forced to hand all the Narn over to the Centauri, even the obvious non-combatants.

### Scene Five: Chasing Shadows

This scene can be run later in the campaign, when or if the characters follow up on Dahl's tip that something strange is happening in Quadrant 37. The system was formerly occupied by the Narn, but they were driven out by the Centauri early in the war. Now it is used as a staging post by the Shadows. The purpose of this scene is not to reveal EarthForce's involvement with the Shadows; it is to give the characters a clue that the *Eurystheus* is not what it seems.

When their ship jumps into the system, they immediately notice an EarthForce transport moving away from the jumpgate. This transport is met... or engulfed... by a black spiny ship that seems to melt out of the darkness between stars – a Shadow Ship. Cargo pods (containing frozen telepaths, but the characters will never discover this) are plucked from within the transport by the Shadow Ship.

As soon as the *Eurystheus* does anything, another two Shadow ships appear around it. They do not fire, however. They spin around the *Eurystheus* as if recognising a kindred spirit. The hull of the *Eurystheus* ripples blackly for a few seconds, then the jump engines come online by themselves and the ship jumps out. If they return to the system, the Shadows are gone...

### Adventures in 2259

The Narn-Centauri War dominates this year.

- 5 The *Eurystheus* is sent to carry the diplomats to Centauri Prime who will finalise the non-aggression pact, and the characters are drawn into the intrigues of the court.
- 5 Desperate Narn warriors unleash some ancient weapon, which the characters have to deal with and contain.
- 5 The rising Clark regime begins to exert its strength on the *Eurystheus* – as one of the best-known ships in the fleet, its crew must be paragons of good behaviour and good thoughts...

## The Hunt

**Earth is at war. Several key colonies have been subverted by alien aggressors and have revolted against EarthGov. The Babylon 5 station, Proxima, Orion, Mars...all are in either open revolt or carrying out acts of terror against Earth. Beyond the borders, the aliens are at war too, and rumours of strange hostile blackships and massacres in the void are everywhere. The year is 2260.**

The Hunt brings the Great War into sharp focus for the characters, as they become involved in an EarthForce plot to limit and control Shadow influence. They have to choose whether they are going to help Clark's regime stop the Shadows, or hope that both sides destroy each other. The scenario initially centres on the bioweapon used by the Vorlons on the Isaili centuries ago, a nano-organic plague that prevented the Isaili from being used in Shadow technology. Elements within EarthGov want this plague as an insurance against the Shadows – if they cannot be implanted within Shadow vessels and therefore cannot be made to serve against their will.

The *Eurystheus* is assigned to work with IPX in recovering artefacts from a dead moon, but it soon transpires that there are numerous parties interested in the artefacts. The scenario ends up turning into a four-way chase after the plague sample between the Rangers, Shadow agents, EarthForce and the Thieves' Guild.

The Hunt is for 6<sup>th</sup> to 9<sup>th</sup> level characters.

### Scene One: Associates and Old Friends

The *Eurystheus* is ordered to rendezvous with another vessel, the IPX explorer *Mortlake*. The *Mortlake* is currently beyond the edge of human space, in the Beta 4 system. The *Eurystheus* is to meet with the *Mortlake*, and then open a set of sealed orders that can only be decoded with the authorisation codes of the Captain and political officer. Beta 4 is a neutral trade post administered by a Human-Brakiri Guild, and owes no allegiance to any other governments.

When the characters reach the Beta 4 system, they see the *Mortlake* waiting for them, an IPX survey ship. The *Mortlake* has been waiting for them for three days. As soon as the *Eurystheus* contacts the IPX ship, Rose Swade appears on the screen. IPX has discovered the location of another ancient alien base, but needs the massive power of the *Eurystheus*' engines to fight to the co-ordinates described in an old Minbari scroll acquired by IPX.

### Optional Scene: Beta 4

The lawless frontier trading post of Beta 4 is an interesting place to set a scenario or two. It is a dangerous, chaotic place where strange races and rumours congregate. It is a perfect place to let the characters know about the growing war, or the Rangers, or even Thenothk, the 'Casablanca of Darkness' set up by the Drahk as a city for agents of the Shadows.

Send the characters down on shore leave to Beta 4 and see how much trouble they get into.

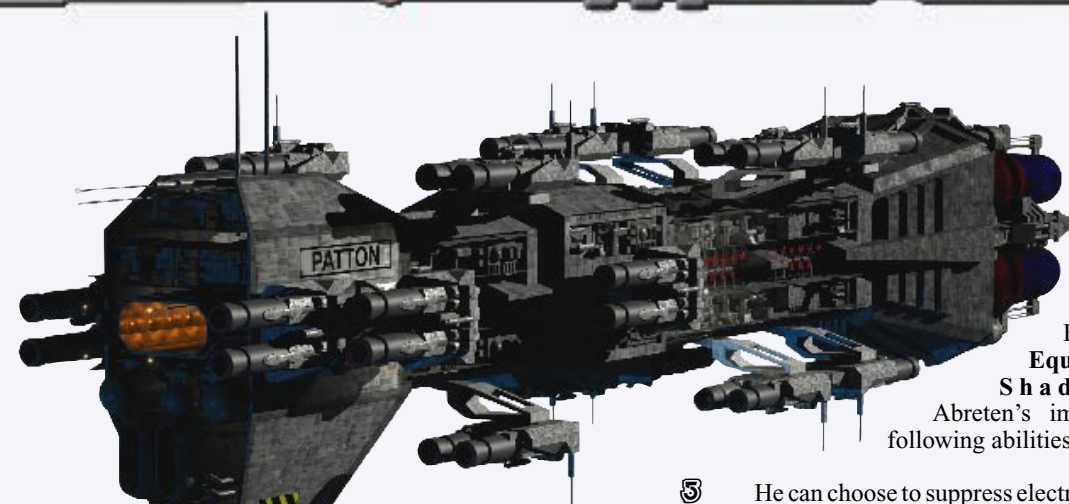
According to the sealed orders, the *Eurystheus* will offer whatever help IPX needs to get to the base and retrieve the target artefacts. Only a handful of IPX scientists come aboard the ship, bringing with them massive containers of tools and scanners. They are led by Dr Rose Swade.

Swade explains to the characters and the command crew about their mission – there is an ancient military base located coreward of the Minbari Federation, and she knows the way thanks to an old Minbari scroll. The target of their efforts is a biological agent used on the Isaili race centuries ago – run *Eyes in the Gulf* now if it was not run during *Splinters in the Whirlwind*. EarthGov wants a sample of this agent, in case hostile aliens use it on Humanity. Swade expects the base to be defended by automated weapons, but should not present a significant threat to the *Eurystheus*.

Two (or three) other important characters come on board at this point. The first is David Abreten, a newly hired IPX labourer and agent of the Shadows. The second is a thief, an insectoid from Thrakalla named X'gil (the Thrakallans are the same species as N'Grath, the insect crime lord of Babylon 5's Downbelow).

X'gil is a member of the Thieves' Guild, an interstellar order of bandits and rogues that has strong ties to Beta 4. The Guild is aware of the massive wealth of IPX, wealth that is often tied up in small, easily portable ancient items or data crystals. The Guild has made a habit of trailing IPX vessels. X'gil's vessel is little more than an escape pod with an engine – the insect is capable of slowing its metabolism down to a fractional rate, and can take months to cross a system. X'gil's ship is currently hidden in the struts of the Beta 4 jumpgate – when an interesting ship passes through the gate, X'gil's ship will take advantage of the sensor blindness caused by the opening vortex to magnetically grapple the hull of the passing ship and ride along to its destination. Now that the IPX team has transferred to the *Eurystheus*, X'gil will follow them instead.

David Abraten is a Shadow agent, sent to spy on EarthForce. He was originally a member of the Homeguard, and was quite senior in the Ministry of Peace before being recruited by the Shadows. He still has his old clearances, and will use the *Eurystheus*' political officer if necessary, but his true loyalty is to the Shadows.



Abraten will be quite fascinated by the *Eurystheus*, as he can perceive the Shadowtechnology that permeates the hull of the cursed ship. He will explore the ship, going into areas that he is not cleared for, touching

and tasting the metal of the ship. The third newcomer is Abraten's Shadow.

## X'gil

11<sup>th</sup> Level Thrakallan Agent/1<sup>st</sup> Level Diplomat

**Hit Points:** 27

**Initiative:** +4

**Speed:** 30 ft. (6 squares)

**DV:** 22

**Attack:** +10 melee or +11 ranged

**Special Qualities:** Carapace (DR2), Crippling Strike, Security Systems, Sneak Attack +2d6, Skill Mastery (Move Silently), Skill Mastery (Technical (electronics))

**Saves:** Fort +8, Ref +12, Will +5

**Abilities:** Str 16, Dex 18, Con 14, Int 14, Wis 12, Cha 5

**Skills:** Balance +10, Climb +9, Computer Use +8, Concentration +8, Drive +10, Escape Artist +10, Gather Information +10, Hide +10, Jump +9, Listen +7, Move Silently +10, Pick Pocket +10, Pilot +10, Search +8, Sense Motive +7, Spot +13, Swim +9, Technical (electronics) +8

**Feats:** Blind Fight, Contact, Great Fortitude, Improved Trip, Improved Unarmed Strike, Run

**Equipment:** Gill implants (oxygen)

## Abreten

8<sup>th</sup> Level Human Lurker

**Hit Points:** 21

**Initiative:** +6

**Speed:** 30 ft. (6 squares)

**DV:** 16

**Attack:** +6 melee or +8 ranged

**Special Qualities:** Lurker's Knowledge, Multiskilled (pilot, tumble), Shadowtechnology, Survivor's Luck

**Saves:** Fort +7, Ref +6, Will +4

**Abilities:** Str 10, Dex 14, Con 13, Int 12, Wis 14, Cha 15

**Skills:** Appraise +7, Balance +10, Bluff +11, Gather Information +8, Hide +10, Listen +12, Move Silently +8,

Pick Pocket +8, Sense Motive +10, Spot +10, Survival +8, Technical (electronics) +9 and Tumble +8

**Feats:** Alertness, Improved Initiative, Lightning Reflexes, Point Blank Shot, Quick Draw and Skill Focus (bluff)

**Equipment:** PPG

**Shadowtechnology:**

Abreten's implants give him the following abilities:

- ③ He can choose to suppress electronic systems within ten feet of him. These systems simply stop working. Only relatively low-powered systems can be deactivated – he could snuff out an electronic lock or a computer console, but not a jump engine or reactor.
- ③ He automatically stabilises when reduced below zero hit points, and heals one hit point of damage every ten minutes.
- ③ Once per round, he may make a melee touch attack. If he hits, the target must make a Fortitude save (DC 16) or be knocked unconscious by a pulse of energy from Abreten's skin.

## Scene Two: Voyage to the Unknown

The *Eurystheus* departs the Beta 4 system via jumpgate, which is when X'gil's ship latches onto the hull. Characters are unlikely to spot the tiny stowaway unless they are specifically looking for foreign objects attached to the hull. Optionally, the Games Master can have one of the *Eurystheus*' trademark weird events happen that hints to the players that something strange is on the hull – this would also attract the attention of Abraten and show them that he is not just another IPX labourer.

The Shadow accompanying Abraten will only reveal itself in dire need, but feel free to drop hints of its presence. Telepathic characters will definitely feel uneasy around Abraten.

Use this long voyage and period of isolation to discuss recent events in character with the players. The political officer, Dr Takashi and Captain Foster herself are all supports of the Clark regime, while Swade, Winters and N'Guma are more liberal.

After jumping to the isolated system of Dorac, the *Eurystheus* locks onto a previously uncharted-by-Humanity beacon described in the Minbari scroll. This next jump will bring the ship alarmingly close to the forbidden Vorlon border.

## Dorac

As described in the *Galactic Guide*, Dorac VII has recently been settled by separatists from Earth and Mars, in a move that was arranged by that charming Mr Morden. Dorac VII conceals a Shadow listening post similar to the installation at Isaili, only newer and located on the Vorlon's very doorstep.

## Scene Three: The Ruins of Ancient Powers

The target system is known only by a code, DS-192. The Minbari scroll calls it En'bar'os, the Meeting of Angels. During the last Great War, it was one of the few places where the Vorlons walked openly among the Minbari.

The system consists of a star orbited by a solitary gas giant. A complex system of moonlets and asteroids surrounds the gas giant, however. The jumpgate is also located in orbit of the giant. It is operating on minimum power, sending out a weak beacon signal. It can still be activated, but obviously has not been used in centuries.

A successful Sensors check (DC 20) locates an artificial structure in the same orbit as the jumpgate, but nine hours ahead of it. The station is of an ancient Minbari design (and vaguely similar, oddly, to the shape of Babylon 4, although much smaller). It is broadcasting a warning signal in Minbari, which translates as *'We are impure and insane. Those truly born of Minbar must stay away.'*

As the item sought by Swade is *sensitive* as far as EarthGov is concerned, Swade will insist on only a small team going on board. Foster will send the Player Characters, backed up by any of the command crew who are needed. Swade brings one other scientist, a xeno-archaeologist called Smith, and a labourer. She asks Abraten to come along, but he claims to be unwell (he is fine; his Shadow has no intention of setting foot on board a station touched by the Vorlons).

Long-range sensors cannot penetrate the hull of the station, but once the characters get closer in a shuttle, they pick up life-signs – lots of them. They appear to be human-like. The station also shows a veritable riot of plant life. Once the characters dock, they find what amounts to a jungle on board. There is dirt on the floor, which from the look of it was once asteroid rock, pulverised by weapons fire and infected with micro-organisms to turn it into soil. The ceiling – that can be seen anyway – is a mesh of lights connected to solar crystals on the hull. Vine-like plants grow everywhere. Then the first wave of killer hybrids attacks.

### Killer Hybrids

#### 6<sup>th</sup> Level Aberrations (Genetic Mutations)

**Hit Points:** 15

**Initiative:** +3

**Speed:** 30 ft. (6 squares)

**DV:** 14

**Attack:** +6 melee

**Special Qualities:** Claw attack in melee (damage 1d6+3)

**Saves:** Fort +6, Ref +7, Will +2

**Abilities:** Str 14, Dex 14, Con 14, Int 3, Wis 10, Cha 7

**Skills:** Climb +5, Listen +3, Jump +5, Spot +3, Survival +3, Tumble +5

**Feats:** Dodge, Great Fortitude, Power Attack

Some 700 years ago, a Minbari religious-caste leader called Ruven discovered he was genetically impure – some strange, non-Minbari elements were present within his DNA. In truth, he was a descendant of the human-hybrid Valen, but Ruven had no idea of his ancestry. He went mad and gathered a cult around him of those who were also genetically impure, but wanted to be freed of this curse.

They were exiled from Minbar and went here, to En'bar'os, where scientists had worked with the Vorlons in centuries on medical experiments.

Here, in the station, Ruven and his followers attempted to unravel the mystery of their genetic impurities. He ended up creating clones based on genetic material extrapolated from the non-Minbari traits in his own DNA sequences. The earliest of these clones were hideously non-viable, but soon he succeeded in creating living creatures. These lifeforms were essentially Human-Minbari hybrids, but were animalistic and feral, on a par with the distant ancestors of both races. As these hybrids were – at least on some level – Minbari, Ruven's followers forbade him to kill them as he experimented with them. After all, Minbari do not kill Minbari. The cult converted most of the abandoned station into a habitat for the hybrids.

Given time, Ruven might have worked out a way to remove the human 'taint' from his own DNA, but unfortunately his time ran out before he could complete his work. Minbari might not kill Minbari-hybrids, but the primitive hybrids showed no compunction about not killing Minbari. Over six hundred years ago, the hybrids attacked and killed their creators. By then, the hybrids had begun to breed true. Ever since then, the tribes of feral hybrids have been lurking in the station, feeding off the imported vines and each other. The artificial ecosystem has slowly wound down and is now on the verge of collapse, so the hybrids are even more aggressive and hungry.

Physically, the heritage of the hybrids is obvious, as they have the wild hair and gait of humans, but have the bone crest of Minbari. They also have the fearsome Minbari strength and speed wedded to human ferocity. However, they are undernourished and can be seen off with a blast of PPG fire. As long as the characters keep their nerve and stay alert, they can make it through the station. Run this scene as a *Babylon 5* dungeon crawl – the hybrids are not the only danger here. Sections of the station have decayed, so there are coolant leaks, radiation hot spots, gravity failures, airless corridors, automated traps set by Ruven's followers to stem the tide of hybrids.

The Vorlon plague is located in Ruven's laboratory, which was never reached by the hybrids. Once the characters have it, they can pull back to the *Eurystheus*.

### Optional Complication: Winters' Conscience

Optionally, Commander Winters may be so disturbed by the revelation in *Splinters in the Whirlwind* that EarthForce is working with the Shadows that she suggests the characters steal the plague. If it can be used to stop creatures being taken over by the aliens, then perhaps it should be in the hands of someone other than EarthForce. She has contacts in the Martian Underground – if the characters could get the plague into their hands, they would make good use of it.

## Scene Four: The Heist

Once the characters have retrieved the plague sample, Takashi and Swade analyse it and confirm that it is the bioweapon used on the Isaili race centuries ago. It only affects the Isaili race, but theoretically could be re-engineered to work on a different species.

As the *Eurystheus* jumps out, another vessel begins to follow it. Detecting this ship requires a Sensors check against DC 30, as the ship is actually part of the White Star fleet. The En'bar'os system was once a Ranger stronghold – as the Shadows return to their places of power, so too do the Rangers. *White Star 9* will continue to follow the *Eurystheus* until Dorac, when it automatically gets detected.

The White Star design has not been encountered by EarthForce since *White Star 1's* attack on Ganymede, but it has been tagged as belonging to an unidentified hostile race. When the *Eurystheus* detects it, Foster orders the crew to battle stations. There is then something of a face off between the Rangers and EarthForce. X'gil takes advantage of the chaos to crawl from his still-attached pod, climb in through an airlock and sneak into the laboratory. He overpowers the scientists there and steals the sample. The *Eurystheus* assume that the boarders and attackers are from the White Star, who somehow managed to get a breaching pod over without anyone noticing. Chaos breaks out.

This scene will depend on what the characters' duties are on board ship. Bridge crew will be involved with second-guessing the movements of the Ranger ship (and the Games Master should make sure never to call it a 'White Star', but always describe it as an alien vessel), while security or science staff might be involved in trying to stop X'gil.

Use Abreten and his Shadow as a wild card to ensure X'gil escapes. The insectoid thief is skilled enough to get past most Player Characters, but if he is in danger of being caught, then have Abreten use the White Star attack to break into the laboratory to find out what EarthForce took from En'bar'os. If Abreten is in danger, then his Shadow companion can easily get him to an escape pod. At this point in time, the Shadows still want to manipulate EarthForce and Humanity, so it will not use its destructive powers to wipe out its enemies.

X'gil steals an environmental suit as it flees with the plague sample. He crawls out the same airlock he entered the ship by, and then remotely commands his own pod to detach and fly to the jumpgate. Ideally, the *Eurystheus* follows and destroys the decoy pod, while X'gil just wants onto the hull until the *Eurystheus* reaches Beta 4, where he gets picked up by an ally waiting at the jumpgate.

## Scene Five: The Hunt

The plague sample has been stolen, and it is up to the characters to get it back. They do not know that X'gil is hiding on the hull of the *Eurystheus*, so they need to work out where an insectoid thief would go. Obvious destinations are known markets for stolen goods like Beta 4 or Babylon 5, but X'gil's real destination is Mars and the headquarters of IPX. The insectoid has connections in the Martian underground and can find a broker there.

One obvious solution is to head to Beta 4 and start asking questions there. Gather Information checks there reveal the following information:

Check Result	Rumour
15	There's an Thrakallan called X'gil who's a skilled thief...
20	...he targets IPX, as they're rich and have expensive small items to steal. IPX is based on Mars.
25	X'gil is notoriously tricky, never doing what you might expect. He delights in misdirection.
30	He's said to be heading for Mars to cash in a big score.

While the characters are hunting for X'Gil, so too are the Rangers from *White Star 9* – and as soon as Abreten finds out about what was stolen (either from the initial theft or from accessing records on board the *Eurystheus*), he will jump ship and go hunting too. X'gil's route is as follows:

Origin	Destination	Mode	Notes
Duroc	Beta 4	Stowaway	
Beta 4	Sinzar	Thieves' Guild vessel <i>Blackthorn</i>	Picked up at Beta 4 jumpgate; <i>Blackthorn</i> jumps out immediately.
Sinzar	Proxima	Mining ship <i>Fenchurch</i>	Bribes Captain
Proxima	Sol system	Commercial liner <i>Wells</i>	Stows away in cargo bay
Io Jumpgate	Mars	Commercial liner <i>Wells</i>	Stows away in cargo bay

Once he reaches Mars, X'gil makes contact with the Martian underground in Capital City. More Gather Information checks are needed to follow him there:

Check Result	Rumour
10	A Thrakallan landed on Mars a few days ago...
15	He bought access to a computer system and some fairly advanced security gear.
20	He's hiding somewhere in the tunnels below MarsDome.
25	Actually, he's hiding in the tunnels <i>above</i> MarsDome – there are hidden compartments in the dome structure, and he's in one of them...
30	Dome Sector 12, to be precise.

## Scene Six: Negotiations

X'gil's hiding place is inside the superstructure of the dome above Mars City. The section has only one approach stairwell from below, which is guarded by X'gil's hired thugs. It is possible to climb over the surface of the dome and enter

through one of the old external airlocks, or even climb over the inner structure of the dome and enter that way, but X'gil has chosen his hideout well and it is very difficult to reach.

X'gil uses his computer system to contact the head of IPX anonymously, claiming to possess the plague from the Minbari scroll. He demands a quite staggering amount of money in exchange for the sample. Unless IPX pay up, X'gil will sell the sample to another corporation or alien government.

Several groups are after X'gil and the plague. These are:

- ⑤ The characters themselves, either working for EarthForce or as Winters' agents.
- ⑤ The Rangers.
- ⑤ The Martian Mafia, who have heard of X'gil's big score and are interested in taking it off him.
- ⑤ Possibly, Abreten and his Shadow, although they will work from within EarthForce for as long as possible.

**The Rangers:** Three Rangers from *White Star 9* have managed to track down X'gil using the same channels as the characters. These three Rangers are:

- ⑤ Gail, second-in-command of the White Star and a former Intelligence agent for EarthForce. She joined the Rangers after quitting EarthForce, as she could see where Clark's regime was going.
- ⑤ Marvin, another human ranger. He was severely injured in a Shadow attack on a freighter, of which he was the sole survivor. He was healed thanks to advanced Minbari technology.
- ⑤ Tucale, a Minbari ranger. She is an expert in bioscience, so she has risked coming down to a human city in the current climate in case the plague sample gets damaged and needs to be recovered.

### Gail

**5<sup>th</sup> Level Human Agent/4<sup>th</sup> Level Ranger**

**Hit Points:** 19

**Initiative:** +2

**Speed:** 30 ft. (6 squares)

**DV:** 21

**Attack:** +8 melee or +9 ranged

**Special Qualities:** A Ranger's Authority, Denn'bok damage 1d8, Fearless, Garb of Honour, Places Unseen, Security Systems, Sneak Attack +1d6, The Application of Terror, Die for the One

**Saves:** Fort +2, Ref +11, Will +6

**Abilities:** Str 12, Dex 14, Con 10, Int 13, Wis 14, Cha 15

**Skills:** Bluff +10, Climb +7, Computer Use +7, Concentration +6, Disguise +10, Drive +8, Gather Information +12, Hide +8, Jump +7, Listen +10, Move Silently +10, Pilot +8, Speak Language (Minbari) and Spot +10

**Feats:** Denn'bok Parry, Exotic Weapons Proficiency (denn'bok), Improved Unarmed Strike, Lightning Reflexes, Mark of Fire (+1 DV), Weapon Focus (denn'bok) and Weapon Specialisation (denn'bok)

**Equipment:** Denn'bok

### Marvin

**7<sup>th</sup> Level Human Soldier/1<sup>st</sup> Level Ranger**

**Hit Points:** 29

**Initiative:** +5

**Speed:** 30 ft. (6 squares)

**DV:** 14

**Attack:** +8 melee or +9 ranged

**Special Qualities:** Covering Fire, Garb of Honour, Places Unseen, To the Limit, Weapons Training

**Saves:** Fort +7, Ref +4, Will +3

**Abilities:** Str 17, Dex 12, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 12

**Skills:** Concentration +5, Drive +3, Hide +5, Intimidate +4, Listen +6, Medical +4, Move Silently +6, Speak (Minbari), Spot +7 and Survival +3

**Feats:** Alertness, Harm's Way, Improved Initiative, Point Blank Shot, Weapon Focus (PPG) and Weapon Specialisation (PPG)

**Equipment:** PPG, denn'bok

### Tucale

**5<sup>th</sup> Level Minbari Scientist/3<sup>rd</sup> Level Ranger**

**Hit Points:** 29

**Initiative:** +5

**Speed:** 30 ft. (6 squares)

**DV:** 16

**Attack:** +6 melee or +5 ranged

**Special Qualities:** The Application of Terror, Die for the One, Fearless, Garb of Honour, Peripheral Studies (Knowledge - alien life), Places Unseen, Primary Area of Study (Medical), Use Alien Artefact

**Saves:** Fort +2, Ref +6, Will +11

**Abilities:** Str 14, Dex 14, Con 10, Int 17, Wis 14, Cha 7

**Skills:** Computer Use +14, Concentration +11, Disguise +11, Hide +7, Knowledge (alien life) +14, Knowledge (history) +13, Listen +12, Medical +16, Move Silently +10, Speak Language (English), Speak Language (Centauri), Spot +12 and Technical (electronics) +13

**Feats:** Great Fortitude, Nerves of Steel, Skill Focus (disguise), Skill Focus (medical), Weapon Focus (denn'bok)

**Equipment:** Denn'bok

**The Martian Mafia:** There has been a long-running underground war between elements of the Martian Mafia and the Thieves' Guild. X'gil is a rather infamous member of the



guild, and the Mafia consider Mars Dome to be their turf. The Mafia have no idea what X'gil has stolen, but would rather like to squash the bug and take whatever he has. Use the Thug stats from page 145 of the *Babylon 5 Roleplaying Game and Fact Book*.

**Abreten and his Shadow:** Abreten will try to use the player characters to do his dirty work for him, leaving them to find X'gil. If he feels confident they do not suspect him, he may even wait until they return to the *Eurystheus* before destroying the sample. However, if they have already grown suspicious of him, then he will leave the ship and head to Mars himself to find X'gil and destroy the sample.

The Shadow is very much a plot device here – it will try not to reveal itself openly, and use minimal force. At most, it will phase in, slash at a character (attack +15, damage 2d8+4) and vanish again, or fire an energy blast at the plague sample. It will let Abreten take the lead and do most of the work, although it can act to protect him – it can block one shot a round using the Harm's Way feat, and is immune to any weapons the characters can reasonably deploy against it.

**The Confrontation:** If the characters managed to track X'gil from Beta 4, then they have a major advantage as they can plan their attack on X'gil's hideout. However, if they failed, then the first time they hear about X'gil's extortion attempt will be when IPX contacts them. If the characters have completely failed to track X'gil down at all, then the Rangers get the sample and show up again in the next scenario.

X'gil's hideout can be reached only by a single stairwell. The hideout consists of a single chamber, originally used as a support hardpoint during the dome's construction. Now, it is regularly used by thieves and smugglers. The chamber has been sub-divided into rooms using scavenged metal panels and hanging cloths. In addition, the hideout has been adapted for a methane breather (X'gil's natural environment), so the Player Characters will require breather masks or similar equipment if they plan to invade.

The stairwell is lined with explosives (Search DC 15 to find, Disable Device DC 20 to remove safely, deals 4d6 damage if triggered). He has four hired thugs from the Thieves' Guild working with him as bodyguards – two watch the stairs, one patrols the small set of rooms, and the fourth accompanies X'gil. X'gil himself is seated at the computer console he has installed. The console is wired into the MarsDome network and is constantly running a stealth program to prevent X'gil's communications with IPX from being traced.



Ideally, the characters encounter the Martian Mafia as they approach X'gil's lair, and confront the Rangers while dealing with X'gil's henchmen.

## Ending the Scenario

The scenario ends as soon as the final fate of the plague sample is determined. It will probably get destroyed by the Shadows unless the characters do very well; if it survives, then it can fall into the hands of the Rangers or IPX/EarthForce with equal ease.

## Adventures in 2260

As the Great War rages, the *Eurystheus* could be drawn into many dangers.

- 5 A conspirator against President Clark discovers that the president will be taking a tour of the new *EarthForce One*, and that the *Eurystheus* will escort Clark's ship on its maiden voyage. A single shot could end Clark's tyranny...
- 5 The Psi Corps enlist the *Eurystheus* in tracking down rogues, but the characters soon discover that the alien technology integrated into their ship makes it unique vulnerable to the renegade telepaths.

## Breaking Points

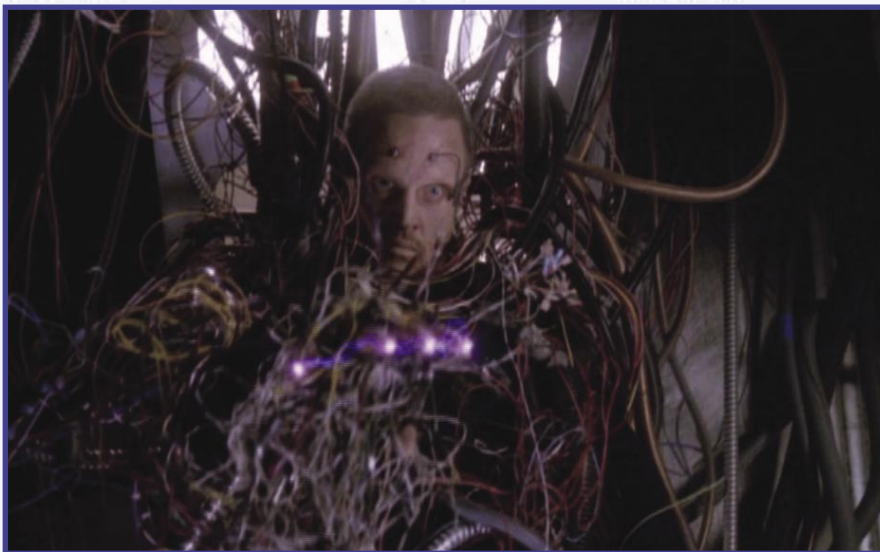
**The year is 2261. With the revolt in the outer colonies still not under control, President Clark has had to continue his martial law edict. The alien races are rumoured to be at war; the Vorlons are on the move, while their mysterious Shadow adversaries strike at a dozen systems. With chaos on the border, EarthForce must hold the line, no matter what. The purity of humanity depends on them.**

Ever since Quadrant 14 last year, Captain Foster has been pushing the *Eurystheus* closer and closer to Isaili. Whenever an exploratory mission or patrol passed through the Spinward border, the ship would jump as close to the Isaili cove as possible, as if searching for something.

Within the Isaili system, buried in what was once the ruins of a temple is the ruins of what was once Serge Greyson. Grafted to a decayed Shadow defence system and experimented on by EarthForce for nearly 15 years, Greyson is now very far from human. Still, he dimly remembers the concepts of pain and freedom, and knows he is denied one but has an excess of the other – but greater, much greater than this is the song of the machine. He knows his masters are out there, gathering their forces for the great war. He wants to join them.

## Isaili

In the years since the Minbari war and the discovery of the Shadow technology beneath Isaili, the planet has changed



greatly. EarthForce has taken over the capital city and now uses it as a research base. A great pit has been opened where the temple once stood, exposing the buried Shadow outpost to the light. Greyson is still locked in the organic cocoon that absorbed him fifteen years ago, although a second web of life support cables and chemicals now surrounds him. EarthForce has kept him alive where the raiders died, tending to the machine.

Now, the Shadows are gathering their forces for the final battle, and Greyson heeds their call. As far as the Shadows are concerned, he is a runt, a forgotten and useless aberration. However, he cannot deny his connections to the Shadows, and so he turns to the only means of transport he has – *Eurystheus*.

## Scene One: The Distress Call

The *Eurystheus*, on patrol near the Minbari border receives a distress call on the Gold channel coming from Isaili. The message is text-only, and reads ‘Emergency. This is the human outpost on Isaili, calling any EarthForce ships within range. Emergency. We need immediate evacuation, repeat immediate evacuation.’ Riders on the message carry emergency codes used by EarthForce during the Minbari War.

Foster orders the ship to head for Isaili at full speed. Attempts to hail the base meet with no response. As soon as the ship reaches orbit, the full extent of the changes on Isaili can be seen. The centre of the capital city is now cordoned off with razor wire and sonic screamers, to keep the degenerate natives out. Prefab buildings and laboratories have replaced the temple precincts, and a huge pit has been dug in the ruins of the central temple.

Foster sends the characters down on a shuttle to investigate. They immediately notice that the Isaili are even more sickly and degenerate than the last time they were encountered in *Eyes in the Dark*. The EarthForce base’s power supply seems to have been shut down, but the characters soon encounter human security forces, who demand to know what they are doing there.

It seems that Isaili base sent no distress call. The commander of the guards, Major Tobin, explains that the secret research base here has suffered a power loss, which seems to have been caused by Subject Zero – Greyson. They have been trying to restore power to the base, but have not yet been successful. They have also had to put up with attacks from the natives, which they have mostly managed to turn away without significant loss of life on either side.

If the *Eurystheus* received a distress call, then Tobin speculates that it came from Subject Zero, and brings the characters into the pit. Tobin’s eyes flick open as they approach.

Immediately, the characters’ links beep as they receive a call from the ship overhead. The Cloud that drove away the Minbari 15 years ago is back and enveloping the *Eurystheus*. A voice comes from both the figure in the black cocoon and from their links, as Greyson speaks from both the *Eurystheus*’ communications system and through his dry, cracked lungs.

*You will bring me... to the ship... or I will destroy it. They’re calling me. I must go. You will bring me.*

## Scene Two: Problems and Bigger Ones

If the characters do not react immediately, then Greyson proves that he can back up his threat as the black cloud closes on the *Eurystheus*. Feel free to kill off a Non Player Character or two as systems on board the ship explode and the shadow cloud permeates the whole vessel. The cocoon containing Greyson detaches from the organic floor of the pit; if the characters do not start transporting him to a shuttle and then to the *Eurystheus*, or if they try to attack or incapacitate him, he breaches a section of the ship’s hull and kills the crew in that area. Greyson will keep doing that until the ship is destroyed (which ends the scenario) or until he is brought on board.

As the characters are transporting Greyson up on their shuttle, the *Eurystheus* contacts them again. A jump vortex is forming, a massive one, bigger than *anything ever recorded by humanity, ever*. Something vast emerges over Isaili, blocking out the sun.

It is a Vorlon planet killer.

The incredible alien ship hangs over Isail for a few long minutes, while hundreds of smaller Vorlon ships swarm around it. Massive energies begin to build deep within the titanic machine as it prepares to cleanse Isail of its Shadow taint.

There are still several dozen EarthForce personnel below, as well as thousands of Isaili. If the characters think of it, they can have the *Eurystheus* turn its guns on the base below and blast the Shadow base themselves, destroying it. If they do

so, they save Isail from being destroyed. If they do not think of it... then they get to witness the awesome destructive power of a fully operational planet killer.

The planet killer and its fleet does not pursue the *Eurystheus* when Greyson's cocoon reaches the ship. Instead, they turn and jump out again, heading towards the Earth Alliance.

### Scene Three: Prisoners!

As soon as the character's shuttle approaches the *Eurystheus* and the cloud that is wrapped around it, they see that the hull has become weirdly warped, with organic growths sprouting all over it like cancerous polyps. Black tentacles seem to reach for the shuttle as it approaches, waving in sync with the twitching of Greyson's fingers.

As soon as the cocoon is onboard, it merges partially with the floor of the docking bay. Greyson, though his Shadow technology and the curse of *Eurystheus*, is now in control of the ship. The *Eurystheus* jumps out, heading for uncharted space in the direction of Z'ha'dum.

The voyage will take around a week. During this time, the characters are essentially prisoners on board the *Eurystheus*. Only the engines and jump drives are under Greyson's conscious control, although he can attempt to take over any system he wishes.

#### Greyson

**Hit Points:** 50

**Initiative:** +0

**Speed:** Immobile

**DV:** 5

**Attack:** +7 ranged (electric bolt, damage 2d6)

**Special Qualities:** Electrical Bolts, Shadow thing, Telepathy

**Saves:** Fort +8, Ref +0, Will +8

**Abilities:** Str 5, Dex 0, Con 5, Int 14, Wis 13, Cha 6

**Skills:** Intimidate +10, Sense Motive +6, Telepathy +10

**Notes:** Given that Greyson is an immobile near-corpse held in a cocoon of Shadow technology and life-support systems, he has little in the way of conventional statistics. He has the following abilities:

- ⑤ **Shadow Thing:** Greyson's cocoon gives him DR 5. He is interfaced with the technology on board the *Eurystheus* and can alter the molecular structure of the ship more-or-less at will.
- ⑤ **Electrical Bolts:** Greyson can fire a bolt of electricity once per round, with a range of 50 feet, while on board the *Eurystheus*.
- ⑤ **Telepathy:** While on board the *Eurystheus*, Greyson counts as a P10 telepath with the following powers: Accidental Scan, Deep Scan, Locate Mind, Mind Shield, Pain, Jamming, Second Sight, Sense Telepathy, Surface Scan, Warning

The characters can just ride along as Greyson heads for the Shadow muster, or they can take action. Options include:

⑤ **Killing Greyson:** This will have to be done very carefully, as he has almost complete control of the structure of the ship, a measure of telepathy and Shadowtech at his disposal. The best approach would be to distract him with a crisis elsewhere on the ship, then kill him with a melee attack that bypasses his armour.

⑤ **Retaking the ship:** While Greyson has considerable influence over the *Eurystheus*' systems, clever characters might be able to come up with a plan. Breaching the docking bay doors and treating Greyson to a sudden vacuum bath is one option, as is sabotaging the engines.

⑤ **Reasoning with Greyson:** When Greyson first comes aboard, he is little more than a shell of the man he was; he is a part of the Shadow machine, a living component that desires nothing more than to serve his masters. However, the familiar surroundings of the *Eurystheus* do bring back some of his memories of his past existence. If the players can roleplay well enough, they may be able to reason with him. They might suggest that he let his old friends leave the *Eurystheus*, or that he continues on in a shuttle, or that he turn away from the dark side and leave the cocoon.

⑤ **Getting the Hell out of There:** The characters can just bug out and run for the escape pods and Starfuries. Of course, the *Eurystheus* is in uncharted space now, so the characters have a choice between being lost in hyperspace and ending up in the maw of a Shadow fleet. Optionally, the characters can get picked up by the Ranger ship (see below).

### Scene Four: The Political Consequences of the Abyss

Even if the characters kill Greyson, they have little choice but to continue on the course Greyson was following – his Shadow-enhanced systems can navigate through hyperspace off the beacon, but human crew of the ship cannot. As the *Eurystheus* approaches its destination, it detects a beacon and can jump to realspace.

#### The Rangers

If the Rangers got hold of the Vorlon Plague in *The Hunt*, then their White Star shows up and contacts the *Eurystheus* before it reaches the Shadow moon. In this version of the adventure, Sheridan's forces have yet to stop the fleet from being activated. The Rangers have a redesigned version of the plague on board, one that will prevent humans from being used as components by the Shadows. However, the moon is protected by the Shadows, so they cannot get close enough to stop the transport containing the 'weapons components'. They want the characters to take the plague, infiltrate the moon – the *Eurystheus* is an EarthForce ship and Shadow-tainted to boot, so it can get past the patrolling Shadow vessels – and dock with the transport vessel *Kerridwen*, which is packed with political prisoners and dissidents destined to be used by the Shadows.

The dilemma faced by the characters is the same – do they wake the Shadows to stop the Vorlons or doom an Earth colony – but the structure and setup is different depending on the result of *The Hunt*.



It emerges into a system on the Rim, a recently charted world close to Jericho. Scans reveal that it is a fairly unremarkable system – three gas giants, a handful of smaller worlds, an antique jumpgate in orbit of the fourth world. That fourth world is the most interesting, however, and is the one the *Eurystheus* is heading towards. In orbit of that nameless world is a moon, once verdant and rich in life. Now it is quite dead. There are structures on it, like black pustules, which sit over huge excavations. As the *Eurystheus* approaches, the characters can see that there are hundreds of Shadow vessels writhing in the pits – a whole *strata* of living warships lies beneath the dusty surface of the moon.

If the characters failed to retrieve the Vorlon plague in *The Hunt*, then use the Ranger sidebar. If they got their hands on the virus, then continue with the scenario as outlined below.

Orbiting the moon is a smaller human vessel, a small cutter of a design commonly used by EarthForce Intelligence. It hails the *Eurystheus* as soon as the characters are within range, identifying itself as the EAS *Walsingham*, commanded by General Verret. He wants to know what the hell the *Eurystheus* is doing there, but he is grateful for their presence. They have arrived just in time to prevent the worst disaster since the Minbari War.

Verret explains that Earth has been working with the Shadow aliens for some time; the aliens have been supporting EarthGov with new technologies and making Humanity a stronger race. However, the Vorlons and Minbari are ancient enemies of the Shadows, and now the renegade Sheridan has incited the Vorlons into attacking openly. The Vorlons are *destroying whole planets* to get at the Shadows. A Vorlon planet killer – the one that attacked Isail – is heading into Earth space. Within two days, it will be within range of the colonies of Cyrus, Beta Durani and Jericho. Soon after that, it will be within range of Earth. EarthForce cannot stop the Vorlons, only the Shadows can.

The moon below contains a Shadow armada of living ships. However, thanks to Sheridan and the Rangers, the ships cannot be activated. They need weapons components, which were intercepted by the White Star fleet. If the ships could be activated, they could make it to Alliance space in time to destroy the planet killer.

So, what do the characters do? There are Streib scientists in the domes below, who could prepare... suitable candidates for the ships. There are enough crew on the *Eurystheus* to activate the ships below. Another alternative lies at Jericho Colony – there are space liners and transports passing by constantly. Verret is prepared to authorise the *Eurystheus*

to capture a liner and bring its passengers to the moon for processing. Something must be done to stop the Vorlons reaching Earth.

## Scene Five: Shadow Armada

The climax of the scenario depends on the characters. They have two days to work out what they are going to do about the Vorlon Planet Killer and the Shadow Armada. In three days time, the battle at Coriana 6 takes place and both Shadows and Vorlons depart the galaxy, but between then and now, millions of people could die.

General Verret knows what Shadow technology is where, so the characters could conceivably race to Beta Durani, fight their way past the EarthForce defenders and destroy the laboratories just before the Vorlons wipe out the colony. The Beta Durani colony is defended by a network of eight Prometheus-class satellites, as well as the EarthForce vessels *Croesus* (Hyperion) *Pericles* (Omega) and *Medusa* (Hyperion). The Shadow technology – a number of organic-technology artefacts – are held in an IPX corporation dome outside the main city. Note that while Verret knows where the artefacts are held, he does not have the authorisation to retrieve them – the characters will have to take them by force.

Alternatively, the characters could get the Vorlon plague and use it on Beta Durani, proving to the Vorlons that the planet has been cleansed.

A safer – but bloodier – option is activating the Shadow fleet. There are enough ships sleeping on the moon to take out the planet killer, but they need humans to act as living control units. Do the characters heroically sacrifice themselves and make the same sacrifice Greyson did back in *Eyes in the Gulf*, or do they condemn a transport full of passengers to that fate? Do they destroy a Shadow fleet and let the Vorlons take Beta Durani, or prolong the war?

# New Prestige Classes

The following prestige classes should not be taken by any high-level EarthForce personnel – most EarthForce personnel go through their entire careers without becoming part of the special forces, while only a handful of pilots ever become advanced pilots. A character who wants to take one of these prestige classes must deliberately seek out the advanced training and qualifications necessary.

## Advanced Starfury Pilot

The advanced Starfury pilots are graduates of the Starfury program's advanced school. There, they are taught to push the Starfury space fighter to its uttermost limits and beyond. The advanced pilot can skirt the edges of blackout in the face of incredible g-forces, enduring pain and oxygen deprivation for those few metres of tighter turning or speed that make all the difference in a dog-fight. While the Starfury may be technologically inferior to alien fighters such as the Nial, there are no pilots who can match the sheer skill and bravado of the advanced Starfury pilots.

Advanced Starfury pilots are permitted to add a gold star to their squadron neckerchiefs and fuselage decorations, a mark of pride and prestige that shows they are the best of the best. All members of the elite Supernova Squadron are graduates of the Advanced Handling School.

**Additional Hit Points:** 2.

### Requirements

To become an advanced Starfury pilot, a character must fulfil all of the following criteria.

**Race:** Human only.

**Skills:** Computer Use 4 ranks, Concentration 6 ranks, Pilot 6 ranks and Technical (electronics) 6 ranks.

**Feats:** Dogfighter, Evasive Action, Spacecraft Proficiency and Weapons Proficiency (spacecraft).

**Special:** The character must be recommended for the Advanced Handling School by his commanding officer and pass the gruelling entrance exams. He must then attend the school for one year.

### Class Skills

The advanced Starfury pilot's class skills are: Balance (Dex), Computer Use (Int), Concentration (Con), Intimidate (Cha), Knowledge (astrophysics, military)(Int), Pilot (Dex), Spot

(Wis), Technical (electronics, space travel)(Int) and Tumble (Dex).

**Skill points at each level:** 4 + Int modifier.

### Class Features

All of the following are class features of the advanced Starfury pilot prestige class. All these features only work when the character is piloting a Starfury, and do not generally work in other models of fighter.

**Push the Envelope:** The character can go beyond the safety tolerances of both his fighter and his own body. When a character Pushes the Envelope, he gains a +2 circumstance bonus to a single Piloting check or attack roll, at the cost of 1d4 points of subdual damage. The bonus from this ability increases to +3 if the character has ten or more ranks in Concentration, and to +4 if he has 15 or more ranks.

**Advanced Dogfighting:** The competence bonus from a character's Dogfighting feat increases to +6.

**Advanced Evasion:** The competence bonus from a character's Evasive Action feat increases to +6.

**Advanced Targeting:** The character gains a +2 competence bonus to all attack rolls made while within a Starfury.

**Best of the Best:** The pilot's mastery of his craft is such that he can intimidate other pilots in a dogfight. The character makes an Intimidation check as normal for demoralising an opponent in combat.

## Special Forces Operative

EarthForce Army and Navy have numerous Special Forces units, specialising in a particular field of operations. From the medical teams of the Combat Search and Rescue units to the elite SAS or Ravedchiks, these forces do the missions and go where conventional forces would never survive. These exalted bands of brothers draw recruits from the best the Armed Forces have to offer – the units are kept small because every member of a Special Forces unit must be able to utterly and completely trust and rely on his fellows.

The different Army forces modelled by this prestige class are: Special Assault Service (SAS), Combat Swimmer Flotillas (CSF), Razvedchiks (FCRU), Assault Rangers (CAS), Combat Search and Rescue (CSR), Forward Air and Space Combat Control (FASCC), Special Air Wings (SAW), Blue Berets, Special Action Teams (SATs), Counter-Terrorism/ Hostage Rescue Regiment (CTHR), Hostile Environment Forces (HEF). Each unit has its own unique skills and requirements.

The following Naval forces can also be modelled by this class: Long Range Strike Force (LRSF), Heavy Assault Group (HAG), Jump Combat Team (JCT), Starhunters. Not every crewman on board, say, a Heavy Assault Group

### Advanced Starfury Pilot

Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special
1	+1	+1	+1	+0	Push the Envelope
2	+2	+2	+2	+0	Advanced Dogfighting
3	+3	+2	+2	+1	Advanced Evasion
4	+4	+3	+3	+1	Advanced Targeting
5	+5	+3	+3	+1	Best of the Best

vessel would have the Special Forces Operative (HAG) prestige class – only the commanding and elite officers on board. Each unit has its own unique skills and requirements.

## Special Forces Operative

Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special
1	+1	+2	+2	+2	First Special Ability
2	+2	+3	+3	+3	To the Limit
3	+3	+3	+3	+3	Second Special Ability

**Additional Hit Points:** 3.

## Requirements

To become a Special Forces Operative, a character must fulfil all of the following criteria.

**Race:** Human.

**Skills:** Knowledge (military) 4 ranks and see below.

**Feats:** Weapons Proficiency (any) and see below.

**Special:** Each of the different Special Forces units has its own added requirements:

- ⑤ **Special Assault Service:** Hide 6 ranks, Move Silently 6 ranks, Spot 6 ranks, Survival 4 ranks; Weapons Proficiency (pistol, rifle, heavy).
- ⑤ **Combat Swimmer Flotillas:** Drive 6 ranks, Hide 6 ranks, Move Silently 4 ranks, Spot 4 ranks, Survival 4 ranks, Swim 6 ranks; Great Fortitude, Weapons Proficiency (pistol, rifle).
- ⑤ **Razvedchiks:** Computer Use 4 ranks, Hide 6 ranks, Move Silently 6 ranks, Spot 6 ranks, Survival 4 ranks, Technical (electronics) 6 ranks; Data Access, Stealthy, Weapons Proficiency (pistol, rifle).
- ⑤ **Assault Rangers:** Balance 4 ranks, Drive 6 ranks, Jump 4 ranks, Medical 4 ranks, Search 6 ranks, Spot 6 ranks; Point Blank Shot, Rapid Shot, Weapon Focus (rifle or heavy), Weapons Proficiency (rifle, heavy).
- ⑤ **Combat Search and Rescue:** Concentration 6 ranks, Drive 4 ranks, Gather Information 4 ranks, Hide 4 ranks, Medical 6 ranks, Move Silently 4 ranks, Pilot 4 ranks, Search 6 ranks; Nerves of Steel, Weapons Proficiency (rifle).
- ⑤ **Forward Air and Space Combat Control:** Computer Use 6 ranks, Concentration 6 ranks, Drive 4 ranks, Gather Information 4 ranks, Hide 4 ranks, Pilot 4 ranks, Search 4 ranks, Spot 4 ranks, Technical (electronics) 4 ranks; Fire Control, Nerves of Steel.
- ⑤ **Special Air Wings:** Balance 4 ranks, Concentration 4 ranks, Pilot 8 ranks, Spot 6 ranks, Tumble 4 ranks; Spacecraft Proficiency, Vehicle Combat, Vehicle Dodge.
- ⑤ **Blue Berets:** Bluff 4 ranks, Concentration 6 ranks, Disguise 4 ranks, Drive 4 ranks, Hide 4 ranks, Move Silently 4 ranks, Telepathy 6 ranks; Character must be a Telepath with a rating of P5 or higher.
- ⑤ **Special Action Teams:** Climb 4 ranks, Disguise 4 ranks, Gather Information 4 ranks, Hide 6 ranks, Intimidate 4 ranks, Listen 4 ranks, Medical 4 ranks, Move Silently 4 ranks, Pilot 4 ranks, Search 4 ranks, Spot 6 ranks, Survival 4 ranks, Swim 4 ranks, Technical (any) 4 ranks; Alertness, Blind-fight, Improved Initiative, Weapons Proficiency (pistol)
- ⑤ **Counter-Terrorism/Hostage Rescue Regiment:** Bluff 4 ranks, Concentration 4 ranks, Climb 4 ranks, Diplomacy 4 ranks, Disguise 4 ranks, Gather Information 4 ranks, Hide 4 ranks, Listen 4 ranks, Medical 4 ranks, Sense Motive 4 ranks, Spot 4 ranks; Marksman, Negotiator, Precise Shot

⑤ **Hostile Environment Forces:** Balance 4 ranks, Climb 4 ranks, Medical 6 ranks, Survival 6 ranks, Technical (mechanical) 4 ranks; Athletic, Great Fortitude.

⑤ **Long Range Strike Force:** Computer Use 6 ranks, Diplomacy 4 ranks, Knowledge (astrophysics) 8 ranks, Medical 6 ranks, Pilot 6 ranks, Technical (electronics) 8 ranks; Fire Control, Spacecraft Proficiency, Veteran Spacehand.

⑤ **Heavy Assault Group:** Computer Use 6 ranks, Knowledge (military) 8 ranks, Pilot 4 ranks, Technical (electronics) 10 ranks; Spacecraft Proficiency, Fire Control, Improved Fire Control, Weapon Proficiency (spacecraft), Weapon Focus (spacecraft), Weapon Specialisation (spacecraft).

⑤ **Jump Combat Team:** Computer Use 6 ranks, Knowledge (astrophysics) 4 ranks, Pilot 8 ranks, Technical (electronics) 6 ranks; Alertness, Fire Control, Spacecraft Proficiency.

⑤ **Starhunters:** Computer Use 6 ranks, Knowledge (astrophysics) 6 ranks, Knowledge (military) 6 ranks, Pilot 6 ranks, Technical (electronics) 6 ranks; Fire Control, Spacecraft Proficiency, Weapon Focus (spacecraft), Weapon Proficiency (spacecraft).

## Class Skills

The Special Forces Operative's class skills are: Computer Use (Int), Concentration (Con), Spot (Wis), Survival (Wis) and Tumble (Dex). The Operative also gains any skills listed above in the Special Skills requirement for his unit as class skills. For example, a Starhunter gains Knowledge (astrophysics), Knowledge (military), Pilot and Technical (electronics) as class skills.

**Skill points at each level:** 4 + Int modifier.

## Class Features

**Special Ability:** Each special unit has two unique special abilities bequeathed by the extensive training given to unit members, as follows. The first ability is gained at the 1<sup>st</sup> level of this prestige class, the second at 3<sup>rd</sup> level.

### Special Assault Service:

1. **Covert Operations:** The SAS member gains a +2 bonus to Hide and Move Silently checks. Furthermore, he gains the Blind-Fighting feat when fighting alongside another SAS member, thanks to the unit's co-ordination.
2. **Heavy Assault:** The SAS are shock troops. When attacking from surprise, the character can shock any enemy targets. Up to three enemies can be targeted in this fashion, as long as they are all within ten feet of each other. No attack roll is made, but the enemies must make a Will save (DC 10 + half the character's soldier and special forces class levels, plus the character's Charisma modifier, rounded down) or be forced to miss their next action. This can be performed with any ranged attack.

**Combat Swimmer Flotillas:**

1. **Endurance:** The character gains the Endurance feat for free, and may increase the amount of time he can hold his breath without drowning by 50%.
2. **Underwater Combat:** The character gains a +4 bonus to his DV while underwater.

**Razvedchiks:**

1. **Superior Stealth:** The character is incredibly adept at staying unseen. If spotted by an opponent, the character may immediately make another Hide check at a -10 penalty against a DC of the opponent's Spot check result. If successful, the character stays hidden.
2. **Fast In, Fast Out:** Razvedchiks are trained to act under fire. A character with this ability may make a Concentration check (DC 15) to perform an extra action each round while in combat. This extra action cannot be an actual attack or move action, but the character could access a computer terminal, plant an explosive, give medical aid and so on while fighting and moving. If the Concentration check is failed, the character gets no extra action and suffers a -4 penalty to any attacks made that round.

**Assault Rangers:**

1. **Death From Above:** The Assault Rangers are trained to drop from orbit and clear a landing zone for other dropships and paratroopers. An Assault Ranger may choose to gain a +2 competence bonus to all attack rolls made in the first three rounds of a combat. However, the character then suffers a -2 penalty to all attack rolls made for the rest of the combat, as he is mentally and physically exhausted.
2. **Inspiring:** Assault Rangers are well regarded by GROPOS. The presence of an Assault Ranger gives a +1 morale bonus to all saving throws made by human soldiers within 30 feet.

**Combat Search and Rescue:**

1. **Superior Trauma Medics:** No-one is better at saving lives than the CSR. The character restores 1d6+2 points instead of 1d6 when making a Medical check to give first aid.
2. **Expert Search:** The character gains a +2 competence bonus to all Search and Spot checks.

**Forward Air and Space Combat Control:**

1. **Raining Fire:** The character is skilled at co-ordinating fire from air and orbital assets. He can give the Fire Control or Improved Fire Control feats to a single pilot who is obeying his orders for one round, but only when that pilot is firing at ground targets within sight of the character.
2. **Know Where To Hit Them:** When the character is using his Raining Fire ability, the pilot gains a +2 bonus to attack rolls and damage rolls.

**Special Air Wings:**

1. **Master Pilot:** The character may increase the DV of any Gargantuan or smaller vehicle he is piloting by +3.
2. **Keep 'em alive:** The character always gets his cargo safely to the destination. He may reduce the severity of any critical hits on his vehicle by one rank (two ranks if the hit was on the cargo section). For example,

a Severe Damage result could be reduced to Heavy Damage (or to Moderate damage if the hit was on the cargo section).

**Blue Berets:**

1. **Telepathic Ability:** The character gains a Telepathic Ability.
2. **Telepathic Ability:** As above.

**Special Action Teams:**

1. **Years of Experience:** The character gains a +2 competence bonus to all skill checks.
2. **Elite Forces:** The character may permanently increase any one ability score by +2.

**Counter-Terrorism/Hostage Rescue Regiment:**

1. **Protect the Innocent:** The character never accidentally hits a civilian, except in the most extreme of circumstances. The character may ignore the rules for Stray Shots (see page 62 of the *Babylon 5 Roleplaying Game and Fact Book*) unless he rolls a natural 1 on his attack roll.
2. **Takedown:** Once per day, the character may make a Takedown attack. This works just like the attack made using the Marksman feat, but in addition to being an automatic critical, the target must make a Fortitude save (DC = 5 + the damage inflicted) or be stunned for 1d4 rounds.

**Hostile Environment Forces:**

1. **Endurance:** The character gains the Endurance feat for free, and may increase the amount of time he can hold his breath by 50%.
2. **Extreme Gravity Training:** The character may halve the Dexterity, Strength and Speed penalties (rounding down) caused by high or low gravity.

**Long Range Strike Force:**

1. **Jury-Rig:** LRSF staff are trained to recycle and make do with a limited number of space parts, so they are experts at making repairs without the proper tools or parts. The character may make one repair attempt without any parts or supplies (and hence, for no cost). See page 76 of the *Babylon 5 Roleplaying Game and Fact Book* for repair rules.
2. **The Long Dark:** The character is trained to spend long periods of time out in space. He has used this time to sharpen his skills. He gains a +2 competence bonus to any two skills of his choice.

**Heavy Assault Group:**

1. **Master Fire Control:** The character gains a +2 competence bonus to any attacks made with spacecraft weapons.
2. **Improved Critical:** The character gains the benefit of the Improved Critical feat for any attacks he makes with spacecraft weapons.

**Jump Combat Team:**

1. **Hyperspace Engagement Training:** The character gains a +1 bonus to all attacks and a +1 bonus to DV for any vessel he pilots when in hyperspace.
2. **Drift Combat:** The character has learned to use the drifting currents and fluxes of hyperspace to his

## Political Officer

Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special
1	+0	+0	+0	+2	Protocols of Command
2	+1	+0	+0	+3	Aid from Home
3	+2	+1	+1	+3	Bodyguard
4	+3	+1	+1	+4	Government Standing
5	+3	+1	+1	+4	Control Dissent

advantage. He may make a Knowledge (astrophysics) check (DC 15) at the start of any engagement; if the check is successful, the character gains a +4 bonus to Initiative and a +2 bonus to DV.

### Starhunters:

1. **Improved Lock-on:** The character gains a +4 competence bonus to Technical (electronics) checks made to get a targeting sensor lock on an enemy ship.
2. **Targeted Critical:** Whenever the character deals a critical hit on an enemy ship, he may choose which section of the ship it applies to.

**To the Limit:** Special Forces operatives are literally the best and boldest that the EarthForce has to offer. By the time he reaches 2<sup>nd</sup> level, the character is able to make an almost superhuman effort in order to achieve his objectives. Once per day, the Special Forces operative is able to add a +6 circumstance bonus to any one skill check on a class skill.

## Political Officer

The political officer is associated by most with the Clark Regime, where loyalty to the government and the new order outweighed ethical or moral behaviour or loyalty to the ideals of the military. However, political officers have been a part of the military for centuries. The army is a tool of the state and enforcer of government policy, after all; so political officers are often required to ensure that the desires of the state and the actions of the army are in accord.

Political officers can be unpopular, as they are seen as civilian interlopers into military affairs. However, having a good political officer can be useful to a military commander, as the political officer has considerable sway with the government back home and can get results that are otherwise unavailable to the military. Furthermore, political officers are well suited to dealing with local politicians and civil leaders on alien worlds.

**Additional Hit Points:** 1.

## Requirements

To become a political officer, a character must fulfil all of the following criteria.

**Race:** Human, Narn, Centauri or Brakiri.

**Skills:** Bluff 4 ranks, Computer Use 4 ranks, Diplomacy 8 ranks, Gather Information 8 ranks, Knowledge (law) 8 ranks, Knowledge (military) 4 ranks, Sense Motive 4 ranks.

**Feats:** Negotiator, Investigator

**Special:** The character must be in excellent standing with his government.

## Class Skills

The political officer's class skills are: Appraise (Int), Bluff (Cha), Computer Use (Int), Concentration (Con), Diplomacy (Cha), Drive (Dex), Forgery (Int), Gather Information (Cha), Intimidate (Cha), Knowledge (any)(Int), Listen (Wis), Perform (Cha), Speak Language (any) and

Spot (Wis).

**Skill points at each level:** 6 + Int modifier.

## Class Features

All of the following are class features of the political officer prestige class.

**Protocols of Command:** The political officer is trained to discern the structure of power and influence within a group, especially within a military unit. The officer gains a +2 bonus to Sense Motive and Gather Information checks made within a formal structure.

**Aid from Home:** The political officer can request aid from EarthGov (or whatever civil authority he works for). To make a requisition check, the officer rolls 1d20 and adds his political officer level. The DC of the check varies depending on the scale of the request.

### Sample Requisition Check DCs

Requisition	DC
Supplies from the local government	10
Access to Gold Channel	15
Changing orders sent to a unit	20
Intervention of the joint chiefs	25

**Bodyguard:** At this level, the political officer is assigned a bodyguard, usually a soldier who is three levels lower than the officer (use the officer's character level, not class level). The bodyguard may be assigned by the government or by the unit that the character is attached to.

**Government Standing:** The political officer's sway with the government increases due to his long service and influence. He gains a +2 bonus to his Requisition checks, as well as a +2 bonus to any Diplomacy or Intimidation checks made against other members of his government.

**Control Dissent:** The political officer can now subtly influence morale within a military unit. By speaking to key leaders and opinion leaders within the unit, he can stir up or reduce dissent. Doing so takes a week of effort. If the officer stirs dissent, then the unit commander suffers a -2 penalty to all Charisma-based checks made on the unit. If the officer controls dissent, then all members of the unit gain a +2 resistance bonus to Will saves and skill checks to resist disloyalty, temptation and subversion.

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## BABYLON

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# EarthForce Campaign Book

*'Stay in formation. Hold the Line. No one gets through, no matter what.'*

The Earth Alliance has risen from an obscure minor race to one of the powers of known space, the equals of the old Lion of the Galaxy or the Narn Regime. Even the mighty Minbari failed to defeat the Alliance.

The Alliance's strength is founded on EarthForce. The fleet's Hyperions and Omegas patrol the human colonies, while Explorers push out towards the Rim. GROPOS troopers have fought on a hundred alien battlefields to keep humanity safe. Starfuries patrol the space above every world from Ceti Gamma to Sinzar. As the Alliance grows and the alien races grow more jealous of humanity, the need for military strength grows ever greater.

EarthForce needs you.

The EarthForce Campaign Sourcebook describes the history, deployment and organisation of EarthForce, complete with ranks, regulations, equipment and missions for everyone from the lowliest groundpounder to the Joint Chiefs. It also includes a full campaign structure that can be used as a once-off adventure or a fully-fledged epic campaign centred on EarthForce.

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