WHITE STARS - BLACK OPS

SHADOWS ON STARLIGHT

A Dark Operations Sourcebook for the White Star RPG

HAZARD STUDIOS

WHITE STAR COMPATIBLE

I'll keep watch till dawn...

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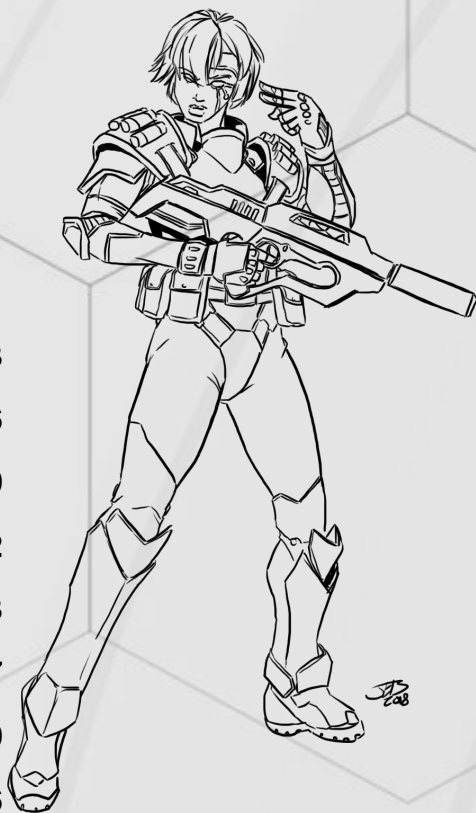Scot Ferdon
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WHITE STAR COMPATIBLE

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INTRODUCTION: **Shadows on Starlight** is a book for creating a clandestine atmosphere for your **WHITE STAR** games. The Agent sections of the book contain new classes, equipment, and vehicles to add a different flavor to a White Star campaign (with the referee's approval).

The Director's section of the book contains new monsters, mayhem, and galactic threats for the player character's to encounter. There is also a description of the Triton Expeditionary Service to give players a possible starting point in the seedy underside of galactic affairs. Advice for the referee to bring the campaign into the underworld is also available.

Welcome to a galaxy of shadows and secrets.

CASTING SHADOWS: Every great community has two faces. The face they show to the galaxy at large and the one they keep to themselves. The secret face has allowed many shadowy organizations to flourish.

Dark Operations / Black Operations are about stealth and secrecy. The missions are centered around achieving an objective without being discovered. While operators are usually armed with the best in tech and training, full scale combat is usually seen as the least, effective way to achieve an objective as it yields the highest risk of discovery. In a galaxy of secrets, stealth is key.

> *"Failure is firing your weapon."*
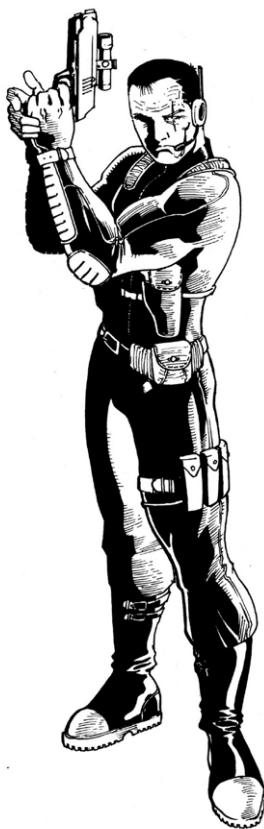> *– Old Special Forces saying.*

DOCTRINE & TACTICS: Shadow missions, no matter the initiating party, involves several key factors for success. When operating a dark ops team, Player Characters should take the following into account.

1. Anonymity: Dark Operators don't tell people who they are and what they do. Cover identities are the cornerstone of a secretive livelihood. A good cover will give a reason why the operator is away frequently, why they might appear in certain exotic locales, and might even explain lengthy hospital stays.

> *"That Kevin. Always jetting off to exotic locales*
> *for the coffee business to support that hoverboard obsession!"*

In the event that a cover is blown, the operator has two options. He can be extracted or if possible, he can execute the discovering party. This only works if the discovering party is a single person or small group. Having your cover blown in broad daylight, on video, and streamed over the Galactic Hyper-net is more than reason to suspect that everyone knows who you are.

2. Antiseptic: When teams of operators go deep into a mission, they should work like the ghosts they are trained to be. Any trace of them being there should be erased. Video feeds get hacked so they are not recorded. They move through uninhabited areas to avoid being seen. Any trash from the mission is packed out (this includes adhesive back-

ings from stick-on explosives, allied KIA, cigarette butts, weapon maga-zines, etc).

3. Deniability: Secret agents are often made aware that they serve at the whim of the client. Their highest responsibility is to keep their em-ployer a secret. Should they be captured or killed, their principle can deny any knowledge of their activities. There's no one coming to rescue them. They are *burned* and on their own to find a way out.

4. Everyone's Expendable: Dark Operators understand that the mission takes priority over any relationship or duty that might exist out-side of the contract. Agents have to be willing to sacrifice those closest to them so that the mission succeeds. This includes loved ones as well as colleagues and allies. Sacrifice might be as easy as walking away or as severe as the business end of a blaster.

5. Success is its Own Reward: As a shadow operative, no one can know that you had a hand in the downfall of a government or the rise of a party to power. While they are usually paid handsomely for what they do, agents do not get medals or recognition. They do not get promoted above being a field agent because there is no way to recog-nize their accomplishments without acknowledging the missions. The best they can hope for is a *rainy day fund,* and a retirement on a resort planet with no extradition treaties.

*Is it true that Papa Doc ended up on a frontier beach
earning 20%?"*
"Believe none of what you've heard and only half of what you see."

OPERATIONAL VARIANCE

For every secret an organization tries to hide, there is someone willing to pay to steal it. This has given rise to dark operators and sleeper agents who specialize in this type of work. There are as many options for training a Dark Operator as there are ways to accomplish their missions.

THE STRIKE TEAM – Clandestine strike teams serve a variety of purposes during covert operations. While they can be used in multiple roles, their primary purpose is to direct speed, surprise, and violence of action toward the target. Strike teams range from small fire teams to entire companies of troops positioned to maximize their effect. The more troops you add, the louder any confrontation will be, risking discovery of the mission and potentially the principle (the one who ordered it).

Most missions, the teams are used as a security element or as a quick reaction force. This allows the main element to accomplish their mission while having back up if it's needed.

Strike teams can consist of primarily trained combat personnel (**Mercenary**) or they can be diverse to accommodate a variety of circumstances once they are boots on the ground.

Diverse teams can include the standard hitters (**Mercenary)**, a medic (**Combat Medic**), a hacker (**Cypher**), a robot or two (**Robot**), a heavy hitter (**Alien Brute**), and sometimes a mystic (**Alien Mystic**) or Star Knight.

While diverse teams increase the chance that a mission will go undetected, they might not have the punch needed for more dangerous operations. Support units can always make up for deficiencies.

THE RECOVERY TEAM – Recovery teams are built and trained much like strike teams, except their have a much narrower focus. While a strike team can be used for recovery, it is rare for the role to be reversed. The name of the team says it all. Find it. Grab it. Bring it back.

Recovery teams tend to load heavy on tech and medical savvy personnel riding side by side with their gun slinging counterparts. This type of team is often seen recovering downed pilots and ships or as extraction teams for secure info sites or VIP's. Their job is to enter and extract the mission target to a safe location. Quick and quiet usually gets the job done, but much like the strike team, the pull teams aren't afraid to get into a fight.

SPECIAL AGENT – Singular agents and spies can serve a variety of functions in the shadows. They are as diverse as the missions they undertake. Whether working alone or as a part of a team, the Special Agent can be a force multiplier.

- The Assassin – Sometimes the galaxy needs a man dead. Assassins are typically well trained agents that can end a life to achieve some greater end. And sometimes they do it for money.
- Sleeper – An agent that assumes an identity and only accomplishes a mission when called upon. They may remain in place for as little as days or as long as years. Sleepers also excel in long term intelligence gathering.
- Special Missions Agent – Reach the target, achieve an objective, and get out. These operatives are the pinnacle of aggressive stealth. They are often used on short, high risk assignments where their training in security countermeasures and countersurveillance can be put to use.
- Undercover Agent – This person assumes a new identity in order to get close to a target. They are actor, improviser, and Ghost, wrapped into one.
- The Spy – gains entry by stealth or subterfuge, acquires the target, and completes the mission. The spy is a jack-of--all-trades and shares a similarity to the Sleeper.

SPECIAL AGENT

LEVEL	XP	HD	BHB	ST	PRIMOS	SMOS
1	0	1	0	15	2	-
2	1400	1+1	0	14	2	-
3	2800	2	1	13	3	-
4	5600	2+1	1	12	3	-
5	11200	3	2	11	3	-
6	22400	3+1	3	10	4	2
7	44800	4	3	9	4	3
8	89600	4+1	4	8	4	3
9	179200	5	4	7	5	4
10	358400	5+1	5	6	5	4

Weapons / Armor Restrictions: Agents may use clubs, daggers (Standard and Mono), firearms, grenades, laser pistols, laser rifles, staves, and swords (Standard, Snap, and mono). They can wear light armor, but do not use shields.

Class Skill: Athletics

Shadow Syndicate: The Special Agent has spent time cultivating a network of assets in different locales. When arriving in a new environment, the Special Agent has a 1-in-1d6 chance to have an asset that can get them gear, vehicles, or personnel tailored to the mission. If the Agent has worked with the asset before, they get a +1 to reaction rolls in their future dealings.

PRIMOS: Agents have a *Primary Occupational Specialty* that focuses their training. Agents choose one specialty at the time of character creation. They may choose a secondary at Level 6.

When the agent attempts to act within his specialty, he rolls 1D6. If he rolls equal to or under his Agent Rating, the action succeeds. If he fails, he can roll a saving throw to make a recovery roll. The recovery roll is an attempt to salvage a failing position, compromising his stealth or cover identity. The recovery roll is always made at a -1 penalty.

The Referee should reference the Situational Modifier tables to get suggestions for how to have the agent adapt to emerging conditions during

the operation. Should the agent seek to balance any disadvantages that might come up, have the player describe what he is doing to prep for the mission. If he has a well thought out plan, the referee can assign +1 to the roll.

- INFILTRATOR – Specializes in hiding within a place he doesn't normally belong. Common situations almost always include undercover work, forgery, impersonation, foreign language.
- INTRUDER – This agent excels at avoiding detection while sneaking in. Common situations include burglary, hacking security systems, avoiding guards.
- INVESTIGATOR – Find the clues and uncover the mysteries. Often used as a counter-agent. Common situations include assessing security breaches, counter-terrorism, and scene analysis.
- PROWLER – This agent is an expert thief in situations that don't involve massive stealth. Common situations include smash and grabs, vehicle theft, and kidnapping.
- SLICER – A technical wiz that can sneak through the digital ether, they can breach digital fortresses without leaving a mark. Common situations include data breaches, digital cloning, and identity theft. Unlike the Cypher, the Slicer is more concerned with stealing information and disappearing.
- SHADOW – Surveillance and Counter-Surveillance is this agent's specialty. Common situations include tracking a suspect, plotting a murder, or protecting a client from either.

Creating Your Own Specialty and Mods: The above list is, by no means, an exhaustive list of the types of Special Agents you can create. The highly trained nature of the agent means that they can constantly improve and update themselves to increase their value. It also means that they are prone to situations where being highly specialized can make them predictable. Agents should embrace their strengths while hiding their limits.

When creating a PRIMOS, look to a specific focus. A great example of creating one could be a *Get-Away Driver.* Their PRIMOS could allow them to operate a wide array of vehicles while being limited to ground, water, or Mag-Lev. Road conditions could alter the outcome of the rolls (such as -1 for heavy traffic or -2 for rough terrain). Have fun with any creation but always check with the Referee for final approval.

A PRIMOS should have more complications than advantages. Advantages should grant no more than a +1 to the roll.

Shadow Strike: An agent can perform a stealth kill of a person or system (computer, security, robot, etc). They must spend at least five rounds studying the target while hidden. Being discovered negates the attack. The victim gets a saving throw to avoid being killed. A successful save still results in 2d6 damage from the surprise attack.

AGENT	SITUATIONAL MODS	ADJUSTMENT
Infiltrator	Native look	1
Infiltrator	Overly suspicious Observer	-1
Infiltrator	Wrong info in conversation	-2
Intruder	Optimal sneak conditions	1
Intruder	Less than ideal conditions	-1
Intruder	Spotted	-3
Investigator	Uncooperative witness	-1
Investigator	Scene Trampled	-2
Prowler	Beefed up Security	-1
Prowler	Poor intel	-2
Slicer	AI Hardened security	-2
Slicer	Facing a Cypher	-3
Shadow	Optimal Stalking Conditions	1
Shadow	Prey has vigilant security	-1

Burned Assets – Operations don't always go as planned. During those times when an Agent has to scrub a mission, they might have to leave someone behind. In some cases, they might disappear so completely, their associates are on their own. In either case, that is going to make for some unhappy assets.

If your Player Character has a reputation for burning assets, you will get a -1 penalty to the reaction roll of any new contact you work with. If you are forced to work with someone you have already burned, you will suffer a -2 penalty. These penalties will continue until the Agent has gained a level after a positive mission outcome.

THE OUTLAW – Governments, corporations, and private security firms are not the only ones who can train and field elite teams for covert operations. Not one to be left out of the fun (or the profit), criminal cartels, syndicates, and families are quick to hire those with special skills who might not care about the jobs they take or where the credits come from.

Cartel operators are frequent fliers in the underworld and black markets of the galaxy. Their employers keep them well trained and even better paid to ensure their loyalties. The cartels learned long ago to cultivate military grade Dark Operators to increase their effectiveness against the governments that hunt them and their competition that wants them out of the way.

Teams of operators working for a crime syndicate are likely to have varied approaches and tactics as they won't rule out anything that would give them an advantage over an opponent. Alien mystics and fallen Star Knights are a fun way to scare your opponents. Players who come from a criminal covert background are likely to bring a lot of baggage into the game via enemies and possible bounties on their heads.

OUTLAW

LEVEL	XP	HD	BHB	ST
1	0	1	0	14
2	2100	1+1	0	13
3	4200	2	1	12
4	8400	2+1	1	11
5	16800	3	2	10
6	33600	3+1	3	9
7	67200	4	3	8
8	134400	4+1	4	7
9	179200	5	4	6
10	358400	5+1	5	6

Weapon / Armor Restrictions: Outlaws can wear light armor. They do not use shields. Their choice of weapons are limited to clubs, daggers, energy slings, firearms, grenades, hold out lasers, ion pistols, ion sticks, laser pistols, mono-axe, mono-daggers, mono-swords and snap blades.

Class Skill: Larceny

Get the Drop: Not as combat savy as the Mercenary, the Outlaw has to be good at the game to survive. They will often figure all the angles in a fight to garner every advantage. Before initiative, the Outlaw rolls 1d6. A result of 2 or less lets him take a free attack at a single target.

Test Your Luck: Once per session, an Outlaw can re-roll any attack, saving throw, or skill. The second roll stands, regardless of the result.

Looking Over My Shoulder: Outlaws live as wanted criminals. They are always on the lookout for being taken in or taken down. As a result, they are only surprised on a roll of 1 on a 1d6.

Saving Throws: Outlaws receive a +1 bonus on saving throws versus being influenced or trapped.

XP Bonus for High Dexterity: An Outlaw with a high Dexterity of 15 or higher receives a +5% bonus to all experience points they earn.

Gang Leader: Upon reaching 8th level, Outlaws may establish their own criminal syndicate. This may even be a branch of a family they already

serve. They will attract a body of loyal followers (as loyal as paid criminals can be) that will carry out missions, smuggle, bribe, and steal for the Gang Leader.

Those that create a branch of an established cartel, will have more access to resources than those that start their own. The referee should work with the player to construct an organization that makes sense for the campaign.

PLAYING WITH OPSEC:

Those coming from a clandestine origin will know the old mantra, "Loose lips sink ships." While not necessarily being a one syllable wonder, most operators understand that the most important part of covert operations is the covert part. Just because a mission is over does not mean you can talk about it. Operational Security is king.

Working with the referee to weave your character's story into the campaign should be a priority with shadow backgrounds. Your character should be evasive when questioned about things from his past while seeking to provide an alternate narrative.

> *"Our cook got lucky with that shot that took down the space pirate. What did she say she did before becoming a cook?"*
> – *"She said she was a cleaner."*

When the truth about your character does come out, there shouldn't be a light that shines on him, suddenly revealing he was a highly trained unstoppable agent. There should be an urgency to hide all the nastiness under the rug and get back to whatever the party was doing. They now know your capabilities but not all the backstory.

This is a great way to mine for plot elements that can be telegraphed to the Referee for use in the game. Off hand comments from the operator as well as NPC directed comments can do a lot to heighten the tension of the unknown.

"Remember that time on Teskedo when we got boxed in?"
–Trying to forget it...

OUR FULL SUPPORT: While the operators act as the tip of the knife in the dark, there is always a lot of support that goes into making them as dangerous as they are.

From equipment to transport, those that make the shooters ready to go out and face the dark can make or break a mission. Their involvement can be every bit as dangerous due to the highly secretive nature of the work. If knowledge of what they do reached the outside, they could be kidnapped, tortured, or worse, in pursuit of what they know. While they might not have boots on the ground, they share a large part of the risk.

Cyphers and **Two-Fisted Technicians** are the keys to gear and communications working in the field. While often left behind to monitor active missions, they can sometimes be drafted onto a team to support them in the field. The combat heavy operators do what they can to minimize their exposure, but sometimes waiting in a truck or drop ship isn't an option. They have to roll out with the team to share the same stakes and and fix what breaks under fire.

Pilots as well as **Mecha-Jocks** can be called on to move teams in and out of a battlefield. These same skilled personnel can be used as force multipliers when the time comes. Close air support from a Stunt Fighter or an air capable mech can balance the scales during a messy extraction. If a team's cover is blown, those who can field heavy weapons can mean the difference between going home to a reprimand or in a box.

In a galaxy of covert agencies with hidden agendas, nothing makes secrets more difficult to keep than those with special powers. The ability to read the energy flow of the universe and field teams based on that intel is an invaluable resource to Black Operations. **Alien Mystics** can search the Way for such secrets, pointing teams in the right directions of their targets. When even a Cypher can't hack their way to the best intel, it never hurts to work the Way to get what you need.

SPECIAL GEAR FOR SPECIAL MISSIONS:
Whether working for a government, cause, or for the almighty credit as a mercenary, Dark Operators are going to need the best in equipment. For standard gear, see the White Star Core Rulebook. For specialized equipment, see below.

STANDARD EQUIPMENT

GEAR	WEIGHT (lbs)	COST (in credits)
Cypher Mod	1	1,000
Det-Strips	3 / 10'	200
Hyper-Com	5	1000
Micro Drone	01/20	300
Night Vision Specs	1	50
Omni Vision Sight	2	500 / 600
Phasic Adheisve Harness	4	250
Phasic Destabilizer	1	100
Psychic Distortion Emitter	1	350
Scatter Scrambler	1	150
Spider Eyes	1	100

STANDARD EQUIPMENT DESCRIPTIONS

Cypher Module: An essential piece of gear for any strike team without a Cypher. The standard model appears as a clear, rectangular piece of poly-carbonate. Placing it on top of a device activates the holographic interface. The standard model can hack into any interface, giving the strike team access to any information or system they might need. The basic model hacks as a 5th level Cypher before being burned out completely after use. An advanced variant exists. Costing 5000 credits, the Advanced Mod can hack up to three systems before being burned out and works as an 8th level Cypher.

Detonation Strips: Adhesive Detonation Tape can be of varying thickness and payload. The average strip explodes at **3d6 per foot** of adhesive tape. The strips can be quickly applied to almost any surface for a quick breach or structural cut. While not strong enough to

penetrate blast doors, they can be used to blow in sections of one once some one has cut through with either a plasma torch or star sword.

Hyper-Com: Hypercast communicators are extremely bulky pieces of equipment, often carried in a back pack. Most cell and mini-coms have enough connectivity to communicate to orbital ships and platforms, but they have to pass through relays to do so. A Hyper-Com uses it's own power to bypass orbital relays to send secure messages through hyperspace. This allows teams of Dark Operators to send and receive messages on their own secure network while making hacking it nearly impossible.

Micro-Drone: These minuscule drones are roughly the size of a fly or bumblebee. They can be remotely piloted by the operator or turned over to its limited AI in order to track and surveil a target. The drone can send images and sound back to its handler. If the drone drops onto its target and hides, it can act as a locator beacon. As long as it has access to a Hypernet signal or relay, it can broadcast its location. The drone can withstand 2HP of damage before being destroyed.
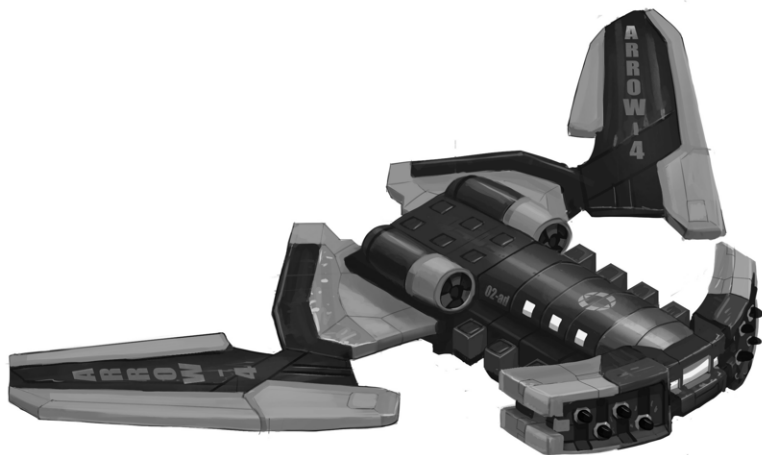
Night Vision Specs: Appearing as standard sunglasses, these specs have three visions modes. Polarizing modes allow for clearer vision in areas of intense light. They can also act as Darkvision, giving the wearer to the ability to see in darkness up to 120 feet.

Omni-Vision: Displayed as a set of goggles that can be worn by themselves or fitted to any combat helmet, OVD's grant the wearer more than standard night vision. Vision modes include: **Dark Vision, Echo Location, Image Intensification (Binoculars), Sonar (for underwater environments), Thermal Vision, and Particle Displacement Detection.** It is extremely difficult to hide from some one using an OV Device. A more expensive variant can be installed into the heads up display of a helmet or visor.

Phasic Adhesive Harness: Built into a set of skeletal harnesses for the hands and feet, this device alters the molecular bonds between the wearer and surfaces, along them to cling like a spider. The PHASAD Harness can even be used in a vacuum if the wearer doesn't have access to Magna-Lok Boots.

Phasic Destabilizer: The PHASiD is a small disk that bonds with any surface on a molecular level. It can be activated on impact when thrown, after being placed, or by remote. The disk causes the molecular structure of the surface to go into a state of flux, allowing people or objects to pass through as though it wasn't there. One cannot see through the structure when the destabilization field is active. Once active, the field remains open for **3 rounds**. After use, the disk is rendered useless.

Scatter Scrambler: Appearing as a shiny golf-ball, the Scambler is a necessary piece of kit for operators working in crowded urban environments or protected areas. The device works by emitting multi-angular beams that distort or erase video surveillance, sound capture, and distortion detectors (such as heat sensors). While active, the operator is effectively invisible to all but pressure sensors. Anyone Viewing video feeds will only see a ghostly blur.

Psychic Distortion Emitter: The PDE comes in two models, a torq-like band that sits around the neck and a set of two tabs that adhere to the temples. When worn, the emitter produces a distortion field that impedes psychic phenomenon directed at the user. When a mystic or psychic ability is used, the emitter grants a **+5 bonus** to the wearer's saving throw. It also acts as a cloaking device against psychic ability. Unless the attacker has line of sight with someone wearing an emitter, they cannot connect or level an attack against them.

Spider Eyes: These micro-bots are the size and shape of metal marbles. They can be rolled across a floor or thrown. Some inventive operators have launched them over walls with a wrist rocket slingshot. Upon command, they extend spider-like legs that allow them to walk or crawl along floors, walls, and ceilings. They can broadcast video and sound or act like a locator, similar in fashion to the micro-drone. The bot can withstand 2HP of damage before being destroyed.

RANGED WEAPONS

GEAR	DAMAGE	ROF	RANGE	WEIGHT (In lbs)	COST (In Credits)
Precision Explosive	8d6	1	0	3	300
SSE Pistol	1d6+3	2	75 ft	2.5	55
SSE Rifle	2d6	1	150 ft	7.5	90
Spider Mines	4d6	1	0	3	50

RANGED WEAPONS DESCRIPTION

Precision Explosives: The large bricks of plastic explosive are for demolitions and for setting vehicular traps. A 3 lb brick of demox can level most non-hardened buildings. Most PE Blocks are detonated by remote or timer although in low tech environments or prolonged emplacements, tripwires and pressure plates can be rigged by inventive operators.

SSE Firearms: In Dark Operations, silence is king. Blasters, Lasers, and Ion weapons are loud and very bright. These weapons trace themselves back to their source, giving away the location of the shooter. Silenced, Suppressed, and Enhanced weaponry gives the operator a new bang with some old tech. These firearms use chemically projected case-less slugs, using the cartridge up in the firing cycle. The muzzle of the weapon has special engineering, reducing the flash and sound of the gunfire to near zero. Shadow Operatives have taken to using explosive tipped ammo as the round of choice. They come in Pistol, Rifle, and Carbine (Reduce rifle range by 25 ft) variants.

Spider Mines: This weapon looks like a landmine with four crab-like legs. The mine can be set down or placed, detonating by remote, pressure, or by its on-board AI. If set on its AI, it can rush a target and jump on, grabbing with its legs. For man-sized targets, it can even latch onto the back, wrapping its legs like the straps of a backpack. The mine **attacks like a creature of 2HD and has an AC of 1 [18].** It does not need to hit the target to do damage. It just needs to get within a 30 foot radius before detonating. The mine can withstand 12HP of damage before being rendered inert. Combined with a brick of D-3 explosive (See Above – Precision Explosive- Demox), spider mines are an efficient way to take down buildings or bridges where placement would be difficult for the operator.

ARMOR & FRAMES

GEAR	AC [AAC]	WEIGHT (lbs)	COST (in credits)
Power Frame 1	-3 [+3]	25	150
Power Frame 2	-4 [+4]	31	175
SKEL-CR 1	-3 [+3]	42	200
SKEL-CR 2	-4 [+4]	55	300

ARMOR & FRAME DESCRIPTION

Power Frame 1: This set of armor is attached to a medium plate carrier, forearm guards, and greaves. It has a skeletal frame system that allows the wearer to bear and carry more weight than normal. The operator can carry an additional 200 pounds beyond what is typical for a character of their strength. This makes the armor ideal for using heavy weapons and carrying ammunition. This is an adaptation of a loader frame typical throughout corporate space.

Power Frame 2: A heavier version of the Mark-1, the Mark-2 can carry additional weight, up to 500 pounds. It is also built on heavier grade armor.

Skeletal Combat Rig 1: The SKEL-CR is an improvement on Power Frame technology. Increased cortical mapping systems combine with an on-board combat matrix to create an armor that allows humans and like species to fight against stronger aliens and bots. The armor doubles the movement speed of the wearer, while allowing for a running broad jump of **45 feet**. Striking while unarmed also can inflict **1d6+2 damage.** The wearers effective strength is increased, making them capable of holding open blast doors or carrying extra weight (up to 200 lbs).

Skeletal Combat Rig 2: The Mark-2 Combat Rig is a larger version of the Mark-1. Mark-2 sacrifices some maneuverability for added strength and protection. The rig is capable of carrying an additional 500 lbs of weight. It is slower than the Mark-1, allowing the wearer to only move at their normal movement rate. The real benefit of the armor is in its ability to carry on-board weapons.

- MK-2 A: An over the shoulder Plasma Caster mounted behind the non-dominant arm. The weapon is laser guided and can fire independently of a primary weapon. (**3D6 to target area** – 30 feet. Saving throw to avoid).
- MK-2 B: An over the shoulder Tangle Blaster
- MK-2 C: Infini-Core technology. An energy weapon corded into the frame can have unlimited shots and does not have to be reloaded. Once per combat, the weapon can be overcharged to produce a powerful shot. An OC-shot is **triple the damage** of a normal weapon. It also leaves the weapon to cool for a single round before it can be fired again. For every consecutive OC-shot taken during a combat encounter, there is a 25% cumulative chance that the weapon detonates. The Player Character must succeed on a saving throw or suffer 1d6 points of damage. The weapon exploding also saps the energy cell on the rig, powering down for 1-3 rounds while it recycles. Player Characters with a 15 or higher strength can move at half their normal rate with a de-powered SKEL-CR. PC's with a lower strength can only move at a quarter speed.
- Mk-2 D: Mini-Gun. An over the shoulder rotary machine gun mounted behind the non-dominant arm. The weapon is laser guided and can fire independently of a primary weapon. (**4D6 to target area** – 30 feet. Saving throw to avoid). The weapon carries limited ammo so is only good for 7 bursts before it has to be reloaded (1 turn to complete reloading).

VEHICLES & STARSHIPS

VEHICLE	COST (CREDITS)	MIN CREW	PASSENGERES
Armored Car	5000	1	4
Armored Throttle Hopper	2200	1	0
MOR-V	1000	1	5
Sea Thruster	1500	1	4

ARMORED CAR:

Armor Class:	3[16]	**Hit Points:**	45
Explosive Damage:	4d6	**Movement:**	25 Ceiling1500ft
Targeting:	0	**Reduction:**	12
Personal Protection:	Complete		
Attack:	None		
Modification:	Turbo Booster		

The armored protection vehicle is built on the chassis of a standard Sky Cruiser, with an upgraded engine and a heavy compliment of protective plating. While the vehicle looks and acts like a normal vehicle of its type, the added armor makes it nearly laser and impact proof. Clients who demand the very best in protection will often add vehicle shield arrays and special sensor and jamming suites so better protect their passengers.

ARMORED THROTTLE HOPPER

Armor Class:	5[14]	Hit Points:	35
Explosive Damage:	2d6	Movement:	30 [Ceiling 500ft]
Targeting:	+2	Reduction:	5
Personal Protection:	Complete		
Attack:	Light Blaster (2d6 – Pilot Linked)		
Modification:	Turbo Booster		

Used primarily as military scout bikes, the Throttle Hopper is a long range scout vehicle. Built on a Sky Bike frame, the Hopper adds an enclosed canopy over the saddle, fully protecting the rider.

MOR-V

Armor Class:	7[12]	Hit Points:	45
Explosive Damage:	2d6	Movement:	25
Targeting:	+4	Reduction:	12
Personal Protection:	+3		
Attack:	By Weapon Type		
Modification:	Turbo Booster		

The Multi-purpose Off-Road Vehicle is a staple for operators in remote areas. The old school design means that parts and repair for such a vehicle are common and easy to effect. The vehicle is all wheel drive on large, baster resistant tires. The canopy is open with a large roll-cage to protect occupants. Gyro mounts are present on all sides to let passengers use rifles on the move with increased stability. The top of the roll cage has a weapon mount for heavy weapons.

SEA THRUSTER

Armor Class:	5 [14]	**Hit Points:**	15
Explosive Damage:	2d6	**Movement:**	15 / 25 [in water only]
Targeting:	+2	**Reduction:**	3
Personal Protection:	+1		
Attack:	None		
Modification:	Sonar Package		

The Sea Thruster is a multi-role waterborne sled. Roughly manta shaped with a motorcycle-like seat, it can travel above and below the surface (One movement rate for below the surface and one for above). The outboard wings have securing rigs on it for two troopers to ride, while the saddle seat can hold two comfortably. The Thruster is often used for clandestine insertion by sea to avoid air and land based detection. The vehicle is equipped with a high end sensor system warning of environmental and hostile threats.

SLEEPER TRANSPORT

Armor Class:	4[15]	**Hit Points:**	75
Shield Strength	5	**Movement:**	12
Targeting:	+4		
Attack:	Laser Cannon x4 (4d6)		
Modification:	Faster-Than-Light Drive / Advanced Targeting		

The Sleeper is a staple of the Black Ops community. The worst thing a group of operators can do is to broadcast their intentions via traveling in a combat ready ship. The Sleeper looks like any type of transport or shuttle on the outside. On the inside, it has state of the art communication and sensors as well as a ton of armor and weapons.
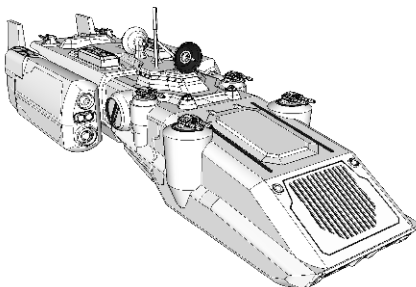
DIRECTOR: EYES ONLY

SHADOW CONTROLLER: As the Referee, you should discuss the tone and direction of the game you want to run with your players prior to launching any campaign. As games of shadows and intrigue might not be on everyone's wish list, a quick discussion could solve many problems down the line.

A Black Ops campaign is a bit different from the type that usually occurs at the table. There are times during a game session that players will ignore the hook, preferring to chase after something else that caught their attention. For a set of Black Ops agents, the mission is everything. Those that defy orders or routinely go, "*off book,"* will typically be put out to pasture or retired via a blaster.

While players should have the freedom to have the fun they want at the table, they should also remember the tone of the game so that even the Referee can enjoy. The Referee hands out the mission and the players should be able to tackle it as they choose, remembering that secrecy does not necessarily entail leveling entire planets to get the job done.
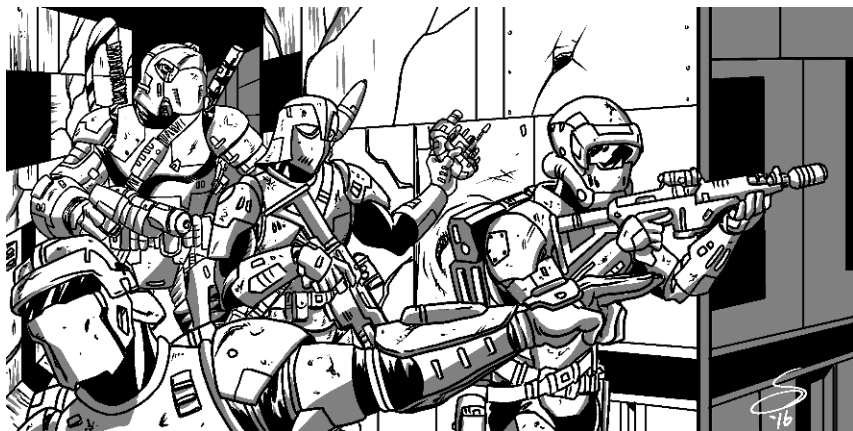
SET THE SCENE
Set in a world of intrigue and high stakes, Black Operations should feel tense. At any given moment, one wrong move could mean the difference between fortune or failure. At the same time, players should be made to feel that they are the top of the food chain. In a world of shadows, they should be the monsters that scare other monsters.

TECHNICAL AND TACTICAL PROFICIENCY:

The ground pounders that make up a team will be composed of people with complimentary skills. Although they might not all have the same training, they share one vital trait in common. They are all closers.

As operatives will be at the top of their game, the Referee should make the players feel as though their characters know their profession inside and out. Referees can do this through any of the following methods:

- **Character Levels:** Start the player characters 2 or 3 levels higher than any threat they might face. This will give the players a sense that they are more than a match for any normal threat, unless they are overwhelmed by sheer numbers (Operation Gothic Serpent in 1993 was a classic example of this. Members of 3rd Battalion, 75th Ranger Regiment were cut off from their support and faced a rolling firefight against an entire city out to get them.)
- **Black Ops Bonus:** Referees can cite that the special operatives in the campaign receive the best in training and gear. As such, they qualify for a +1 bonus on all attack and skill rolls.
- **The Best Toys:** Members of a special operations community have resources that are usually outside the reach of a standard adventuring party. While most gear is bestowed by their handlers, sometimes the crew will need to find the equipment they need outside of their network. They can find gear of the highest quality at 10% of the price.
- **Ace up my Sleeve:** At the beginning of each session, the Referee hands each Player a 20-sided die. That die is a special token that can be used in the game. Should the Player fail a roll, they can roll the Token Die to to attempt to salvage the action. Once used, the Token Die is handed back to the Referee.

TWO IS ONE AND ONE IS NONE:
Operators plan for the worst to happen. They know that night vision batteries will sputter out, some ammo will jam, and that flare they brought with them to signal extraction will get lost.

To a special operator, it pays to have an extra piece of crucial gear on hand in case one of them fails. The Referee can play this by either saying that they had an extra with them or, instead of hand waving, **the Referee can have the player make a saving throw.** If they succeed, the operator has an extra piece of kit with them to make up for the one they lost or broke.

This can be extremely fun for the player who rolled a 1 on an attack or a 6 on a skill roll. Instead of having a jammed rifle or loosing that lock pick device they were going to need at the top of a slippery climb, the saving throw can be the safeguard that is typical of mission critical kit.

A GOOD PLAN EXECUTED TODAY...:
To an operator, planning is like breathing. A mission can have so many variables, that planning and practice of the known can make all the difference. A good plan can mitigate a lot of danger when on mission. Players should be allotted the time to put together a solid strategy to help them win the day.

Players at the game table are just as insistent that they have every variable mapped out to avoid anything the Referee might have thought of. Over planning can be just as bad as under planning, sapping the energy at the game table. The players are running characters who are larger than life and who consistently defy the odds. The game at the table should let them feel that way while not giving them a guaranteed outcome.

A tried and true Referee tool is to set a timer. If the players enjoy the planning process, allot an hour or so for in depth strategy and team prep. If they are just as good outlining the bare bones of a plan, 15 minutes to a half hour is a good benchmark.

> "*A good plan, violently executed now, is better than a perfect plan next week.*"
> … General George S. Patton.

A FIRM HANDSHAKE BEATS A DYNAMIC ENTRY:
Covert Operations can be about the art of alliances as much as it is about combat. A Noble or Rocker on a team can be as valuable as the door kickers doing the shooting.

"No one prays for peace harder than a soldier"
...Old Military Maxim

Entering into an area and setting up allies, crafting partnerships, and brokering deals can make a mission every bit as successful as dropping a ton of blaster bolts. If the meetings go well, no one gets hurt and both sides win. These sessions are an excellent way to get the most out of the *Face* characters while taking the combat monkeys out of their element for some new twists on their characters.

SHADOWS ARE SEEN BUT IGNORED:
Insertion to an operations area can be one of the most crucial and exciting parts of an operation. To move in undetected is to be the hunter stalking prey that is unaware of its impending demise.

While High Orbital Low Opening (HOLO) insertions are all the rage on the entertainment vids, they are often dangerous and take extensive training. There are subtler ways to infiltrate a target.

One of the best entry methods is to make way in plain sight. The operators simply travel like normal people, disguising themselves and any equipment. Examples include but are not limited to:

- The team can gain entry by coming into the target area on a commercial star-liner. If they are dressed as normal folks taking a regular flight, no one is likely to question them coming in.
- The same goes for meeting up at safe houses and launch points. Normal modes of transport, such as individual cars and taxis, are often overlooked, allowing the team to come in separately to meet up later.
- Long term embedded personnel can typically take jobs that let them move about their target areas unnoticed. This affords them maximum mobility while maintaining anonymity.

MISSION FIRST

While Special Operators are often highly specialized, they are used in a variety of assignments. The following details the type of missions typically assigned to a Black Ops unit. **The Referee can use this as a guide to help build missions for the team or can roll a d6 and pick randomly (one from each table).** For complex missions, the Referee can roll twice on each table to spice things up.

1. INFILTRATE: Getting the team and its resources on target.

1. **Oracle Missions:** Intelligence is worth its weight in credits. Sometimes agents have to get creative in order to get what they need. Microscopic listening devices, sound capture devices, and placed video cams, can all be installed by trained operatives. Drone and robot technology has made placement less difficult as they can be piloted or directed into place without notice, especially if they are minute in size.
2. **Poser Entry:** These occur when an agent has to assume an identity in order to get what they need. Wait staff, trade laborers, brokers, and in some cases executives are all identities that the agent can assume in order to gain access to the target.
3. **Stealth Infiltration:** The team mission is to gain entry by covert tactical means. This could include High Orbital, Low Opening parachuting (HOLO), underwater entry, Rocket Pods (like a stealth escape pod – Often times disguised as a meteor shower or downed satellite), or a small ship designed for maximum invisibility.

4. **Smash Entry:** Sometimes, you just need a hammer for the job. While this category can be direct (an assault into a building to secure a target) or indirect (a stealth entry followed by quiet take downs of sentries), the Smash is all about forward aggression to target. The team or agent decides blunt is better and assaults the target directly to enter the mission area. This is often done in secluded areas to avoid attracting a lot of attention, although the occasional assault on a skyscraper or complex building is not unheard of.
5. **Sleeper:** The sleeper is a long con to gain entry into a target area. This agent or team is embedded and then left in place, sometimes for years. This type of extreme undercover takes special individuals to train as they have to assume an identity and act the part so as not to draw suspicion. Unlike the Poser which is very short term, the Sleeper has to live as someone else and still maintain combat readiness should they get the call.
6. **Indirect Entry:** This type of entry involves slipping through security through digital or alternate means. A Cypher can gain access and control of security systems by hacking in from the outside, giving the team or agent access. This type of intrusion can also occur by stalking personnel that belong to the target and leveraging them to work the entry. Bribery, coercion, kidnapping a loved one, and threats of violence all can be used to force an enemy to throw open the gates for the team.

2. OBJECTIVE: Zero Hour. The team is in place and the plan is set. Achieve the objective and move out so as not to get caught. Mission success is the only option.

1. **Sapper Mission:** The strike team is sent to destroy an item of infrastructure or mission critical target. The team enters, sets demo, and leaves before the target is demolished. Opposing forces are met with direct force to neutralize the threat.
2. **Target Mission:** The strike team is sent to eliminate a high value target. This is most often done during a time when the target is not alert to the danger. Large amounts of intelligence are often gone over prior to mission jump.
3. **Distraction Mission:** The strike team is sent to engage the enemy in a short term combat action to provide a distraction for a secondary team or agent. The ensuing chaos is over before it begins, providing just enough excitement to have the shadow slip in unnoticed.
4. **Recovery Mission:** This can be anything from intelligence gathering, to a downed pilot, or corporate espionage. The agency has called for a team to enter the mission area,

recover an objective, and re-turn it safely. In some cas-es, the person or package cannot be recovered, turn-ing a Recovery into a Sap-per Mission. The Recovery Mission encompasses a large pool of objectives. If a team is sent to sit down with a local warlord to negotiate for a missing or lost item, this still falls under this cate-gory.

5. **Defensive Mission:** Operators can be called upon to move to a secure location and ensure it doesn't fall into enemy hands. They fight to keep the enemy at bay and demand the losses are so heavy, taking the target would cost them more than they would gain.
6. **Reaction Mission:** One of the mission critical roles of many strike teams, Quick Reaction Forces (QRF) are for when things go from bad to suck. The strike team waits in a standby location until called for by the mission team or agent. They roll out, turn back the threat, and withdraw once the area is secure.

3. COMPLICATION: No plan survives first contact with the enemy. This maxim exists because of its universal nature to most things.

1. **Team Discovered:** The team has tripped a sensor, been seen by a guard, or had a psychic detect their presence.
2. **Exit Strategy Blown:** Whatever means of escape from the mission area the team had built into their plan has fallen through. This can be as simple as a shot down extraction ship or as complex as meeting at a safe house that's no longer safe.
3. **Casualty:** A member of the team has been injured or killed. This can also apply to the various NPC's that could be critical to the mission.
4. **Cracked:** A mission critical piece of equipment fails or is de-stroyed.
5. **Misinformed:** A crucial piece of the plan is flawed or blatantly incorrect.
6. **Double Cross or Renegotiate:** A contact or broker wants more than the agreed upon price or deal. This could also mean an ally has sold them out!

RANDOM PLOT EXAMPLE: The Referee is looking to generate a mission for the team. He rolls a 3, a 2, and a 2. He decides on the following mission:

> *A warlord on the planet Sandboxia is funneling weapons to the Black Cloud Rebels. The Rebels have been making trouble for the locals and destabilizing the government so the Evil Empire can take control of the planet.*
>
> *The Referee tells the players that Triton, the company they work for, wants the warlord very dead (The objective roll was a 2). Their mission requires a stealth infiltration (Referee rolled a 3) and the players choose rocket pods during a meteor shower (for which Sandboxia is known).*
>
> *After the mission, the players choose to escape Sandboxia by blending in with the natives and leaving on several commercial flights. The referee tells everyone that the local news is circulating pictures of them as well as having security screen all flights (The complication roll of 2). Touching base with their handler reveals a high level politician sold them out in return for a favor from the warlord's successor. Now they are being tracked by the warlord's people as well as the Black Cloud Rebels.*

The politician who sold them out could be the start of their next mission if they escape. The escape itself has taken on a whole new depth as now they are known and wanted men.

SHADOW CAST:
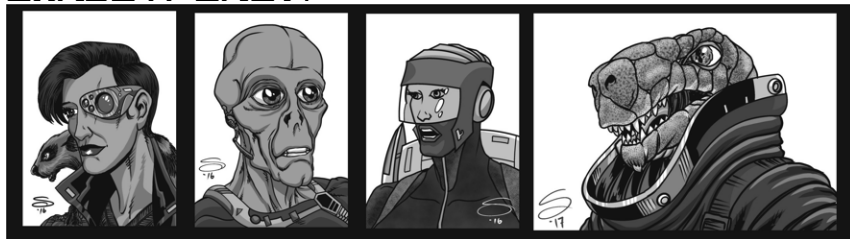
NPC's – EVERYONE HAS AN AGENDA

When playing the various cast your Players will encounter, you should assume that almost everyone has an angle for dealing with them. The world of Shadow Operations is dangerous and anyone they meet should be considered equally so, especially if they have been at the game a while.

Most NPC's that the players meet will try and gain something from dealing with them. Whether it is to their benefit or detriment, Dark Operators are conditioned to trust no one. They know that the only people they can trust are on their right and left. Everyone else is out to score a payday. While the Player Characters are not likely to run into NPC's with a shirt that says "Double Crosser" and wearing a long mustache that they twirl with evil glee, they should know that even the most helpful person they encounter could be out to get them.

NPC ARCHETYPES: This section is a sampling of character types that Black Ops professionals might encounter.

Local Contact: The Local is the person who will link up with the team for multiple mission types. This person can act as guide, facilitator, and in some cases liaison to all parties involved. The contact can steer the team away from difficult entries as well as point out the most dangerous and beneficial people to a mission.

The Face: This archetype is the deal maker to the players. They will often see the Face as the one to precede a meeting with a valuable local or dignitary. This person will be a smooth talker and know how and when to say all the right things. While they are eager to make the deal, they are not above a double cross, selling the team out to someone who can make it worth their while.

The Broker: Sometimes the Player Characters will need a thing for a thing. If the initiating agency doesn't have it on hand, they might have to get it on sight. The Broker is the local who can get the team all the black market items they need. They are keyed into the underworld and for the right price, they can have the item in hand and ready to go. The Broker is not likely to sell out a team as their reputation is everything.

The Defector: Whether corporate or political, this archetype is looking for a way out. They have likely contacted the agency the player characters work for and will do what he can to assist them. If captured, he is likely to save his own skin, choosing to sacrifice the team by making up a plausible story (they were sent to kidnap me!).

The Driver: This contact will pilot a broken down hunk of junk that miraculously still floats, flies, or drives its way in and out of the mission area. Many times the Driver will be an expat who will want to swap stories of home, all while evading gunfire or a bloodthirsty mob of locals. While often competent, it is typical for the driver to have a problem that follows them such as alcoholism or warrants from back home (or trouble with the local mob).

Agency Contact: An embedded member of the Agency the player Characters work for. The Agency Contact is a god send, especially when a mission goes wrong. This person will have access to a safe house, equipment and reloads, as well as possibly a staff to work multiple angles to help the team. While some contacts will be capable, some are resentful of being stationed in such a small time posting helping other agents. For those under deep cover, see the **Special Agent.**

The Baron: Whether called Warlords, Crime Lords, Sheikhs or politicians, the Baron archetype has control over some part of the teams operations area. Sometimes the team might have to set up a meeting to negotiate working through their holdings. Other times they might be there to buy what they need via money or intimidation. The Baron is usually a volatile character to deal with as they have access to money and power.

The Foot Soldier: Whether part of an allied or opposed organization, the rank and file of criminal and tactical organizations will often come into contact with Dark Ops teams. Whether they are lifelong criminals or mercenaries looking to make a quick buck, the Foot Soldier will run the

gamut of skill and ability. Personality traits will be varied as well. Agents will encounter everything from the calm and gritty veteran to the young tough trying to prove himself.

NPC's – TASK AND REPURPOSE

White Star has done a lot of the leg work in regards to the most common NPC's that one might encounter while on a mission. Use the Stat blocks to your advantage to create quick and interesting contacts or adversaries. The section on creating Better Aliens and Creatures can help to tweak standard stat blocks. The following can do in a pinch if you need an NPC and don't have the time to write up a full character class.

The SOLDIER: One of the most versatile stat blocks. Any type of militarized force can be represented with the Soldier. Gear and associated trappings will differentiate this NPC from one type to another (A Covert Ops force might wear a Battle Uniform with modern armor and carry blaster carbines while a pirate force might wear piecemeal armor and use scavenged weapons). See the Soldier Stats for more suggestions on varying this NPC. Some of the most common roles for the soldier are

- The Bodyguard
- The Criminal
- The Enforcer
- The Mercenary

- The Militiamen
- The Pirate
- The Sentry
- The Terrorist

The FIXER

Armor Class:	7[12]	Hit Dice:	1+1
HDE/CP:	2/30	Saving Throw	18
Total Hit Bonus:	+1		
Movement:	12		
Special:	Aristocrat Abilities (4th Level)		
Attack:	By Weapon (Usually Laser Pistol - 1d6+2)		

The deal makers of the underworld, the fixer sets up the right people with what they need. Be it equipment or an introduction, the Fixer keeps the flow of goods and services going in the darkest of places. While usually lightly armed, the Fixer typically relies on his own security to keep himself safe. They are the masters of the deal and as such have access to 4th Level Aristocrat Abilities.

The INFORMANT

Armor Class:	8[11]	Hit Dice:	1
HDE/CP:	1/15	Saving Throw	18
Total Hit Bonus:	+1		
Movement:	12		
Special:	One More Thing		
Attack:	By Weapon		

Whether a criminal looking for a better deal or a person on the inside, the Informant knows a secret is power and they have power to sell. If the Player Characters deal with the Informant well (Pay them for their information, look out for them, pay them extra for good information), this NPC will give an extra kernel of knowledge above what was promised. If they are treated poorly, their *One More Thing* might be to tip off the target so as to sabotage what the Player Characters are trying to do.

The SHADOW DOC

Armor Class:	8[11]	Hit Dice:	2
HDE/CP:	2 / 30	Saving Throw	17
Total Hit Bonus:	+2		
Movement:	12		
Special:	Back From the Brink, Cyber Surgeon		
Attack:	By Weapon		

There will always be a need to patch up a Dark Operator when they are on mission. Not all teams will go to the field with a medic and that is where the Shadow Doc comes into play. Whether they are waiting for the team at a safe house or are running a black market "body shop," the Shadow Doc can mean the difference between some down time for the team due to convalescence or job interviews for a new hitter. The Shadow Doc has the **Back from the Brink** ability and **Cybernetic Surgeon** ability as described in the Combat Medic description in White Star. As the Shadow Doc has access to a full medical bay, the time to reach the patient for the Back from the Brink ability goes from **rounds** to **turns**. Also, the saving throw required is at a -1 due to the hasty and sometimes cobbled together methods employed by these medics. You don't go to a Shadow Doc for long term care. Once the patient is ambulatory, the doc ships them somewhere to get real care.

THE ART OF THE DOUBLE CROSS

Working in the shadows comes with its own inherent set of dangers. One of them is betrayal. The employer (whether a government, private party, or Industry) uses clandestine operations to get things done off the books. Should things go wrong, they can deny any knowledge that the operators were doing bad things on their behalf.

Here are just a few ways to bring this into the story at the table:

A BETTER DEAL: The employer gets a deal from a party they are working with or against. Many times this has to do with snap alliances or political coups. Ties are immediately cut along with any support. Anyone on the support side who are loyal to the Player Characters might try to warn them but doing so could put them in the same position. Unless they can cultivate their own assets, they are responsible for their own escape.

DISCOVERY: The player characters are found out by the party they are working against. One of the tactics to stop the operators is to confront who they are working for. At this point, the handler disavows the Player Characters and they are scrubbed. Escape and evasion is now up to them.

NON-SANCTIONED: There are times when the Operators see something that needs doing but the powers that be decide that such jobs are non-mission critical. A non sanctioned operation is one that is not given to the players by their handler. Should they be discovered by their em-

ployer or caught in the act, the usual penalties apply.

THE PATSY: There are some employers that hire dark operators specifically to double cross them. These types of jobs usually involve a lot of smoke and mirrors where the employer is trying to make the situation appear a certain way. The Operators won't know they are being set up, which could lead to some interesting adventures.

SIDE JOBS: Many Shadow Operatives work on the side of the missions they go on to put away a "retirement fund" for when things go bad. This can be anything from selling the items they told their employer they destroyed, to selling information to a third party. Should they be caught, the Handler can blacklist or disavow them, leaving them to the authorities in whatever place they find themselves in.

DISAVOWED, BURNED & BLACK LISTED

Player Characters that have been cut loose from their parent organizations face a tough road. They have no access to the usual assets, they are most likely cut off from escaping whatever bad situation they are in, and in worst case scenarios, they may not be able to go home. While this is the situation that every operator dreads, it is not impossible to escape from.

Using disavowed characters can lead to a wealth of interesting and in depth stories at the table, allowing the Player Characters to explore who they are and what they might need to become. One of the worst aspects of a disavowed operator is to be cut off from all support They will have to be creative to stay alive and get back in the game (or seek revenge).

NECESSITY DEMANDS INNOVATION:

Need for Resources: The Player Characters are cut off from whatever money they had access to, except for any physical valuables they are carrying (Hard Currency, Untraceable Credit Chits / Cards, valuable tech, etc). Getting more will involve pulling an off book operation or worse. They will have to get a job (Many burned agents get jobs as mercenaries, muscle, or mayhem for various criminal elements).

Need for Shelter: Having no money means they have no access to living quarters or at least a place to hide. Some operators can disappear into the wilderness, but that will not keep them close to the action. Once they have a means of support, a safe house or living arrangements can be devised. If they have managed to get their hands on a "clean" ship large enough, that might suffice as a quick headquarters.

Need for Contact: Being burned means that agents from their old life will consider them PNG (persona non grata). They will have a hard time making contact with anyone unless they have a sneaky and encrypted means of doing it. It also helps if they have leverage on the potential contact. Making contact with old associates can be an invaluable way of gathering intelligence or an easy way to get smoked.

Need for Information: Gathering intelligence is the prime way to stay out of harms way once an agent has been burned. Knowing what their enemies know can keep them ahead of potential hit teams and agencies looking to take them down. Finding ways to stay informed also means they keep tabs on their enemies while finding the shortest route out of the fire that burned them.

Need for Secrecy: When an agent or team gets burned, one of the best things they can do is to drop off the radar for a bit. Faking a death, assuming a false identity, finding a way to disguise themselves, and hiding away are all methods for becoming invisible when necessary. Making themselves more difficult to find will increase the chances that the operator survives to get revenge or come in out of the cold (get off the disavowed list).

ON THE HUNT FOR THE ROGUES:

Whatever agency burned the Player Characters will be on the hunt to eliminate them. Whether this takes place through direct action (a kill team) or through the use of the locals, removing the disavowed agents from the board is of vital importance. Here are some suggested options for the Referee to kick the Player Characters while they are down.

- **Local Resources:** The Agency feeds their enemy the last known location of the team while also fabricating intel that they are too dangerous to be captured. The intent is to have enemy personnel take out the team and make them believe it was their idea.
- **Hunter Killer Team:** The agency sends a second team (or possibly had one in place already) to act directly against the Player Characters. The team will hunt them down in hopes of killing them outright and recovering any priority items or vital intel.
- **Attack by Drawing:** The Agency has some piece of leverage over the Player Characters and will dangle it in front of them in an attempt at exposure. If the Player Characters take the bait, they can send a HK Team or tip off the locals to end their interference.
- **Capture the Wolves:** The Locals have discovered the presence of the Player Characters and are bringing the full weight of their resources to capture them. The idea is to take them alive so they can be questioned as to their purpose or to recover vital items. This presents the best of the scenarios as Escape and Evasion adventures can be launched in this way. The danger for the Referee is to let this happen organically and not force it on the Players.
- **The Enemy of my Enemy:** The Locals have discovered the Player Characters and are on the hunt to bring them in while the Agency marks them for elimination. This is a tense way to continue a Black Listing as it pits the Player Characters against multiple factions at once. The burned agents might also not know that the locals want to bring them in (rescue) as defectors or as a way to accuse the agency of treachery. In this case the agents continue to fight both sides trying for a means of escape or survival. Things start to go the Player Characters' way when they find out the locals are trying to help.

TRIPLE PLAY:

Sometimes the Agency needs the operators to think they are burned. This happens when there is a double agent in the ranks or if the agency needs the enemy to focus their efforts on the team as a distraction.

This will go on long enough until the team figures things out or when the agency lets them in on the triple play. At this point, all their status is restored and they can join in the full operation to take down the objective.

ORACLE OPERATIONS:

BEYOND THE PALE:

Special Operators are known for using unconventional warfare to achieve their goals. None is more so than the use of psychics and mystics. While the use of these character classes and abilities are detailed in White Star, they would most certainly find there way into Dark Operations in any campaign where they exist.

Using a mystic approach to a covert action versus a technological one can have its advantages. If the target favors technology, having a mystic (like an Alien Mystic, Star Knight, or Untrained Initiate) or a psychic (Like the Psion or Psionic Warrior from the books PSION and PSION II by Mathew Skail) can greatly increase the odds of success. Remote viewing and psychometry can gain large amounts of information and not leave any of the digital footprints of a Cypher or Special Agent.

Interrogations that would normally take hours could be lessened by using a powerful mystic to probe thoughts and recover the information against the target's will. A simple touch by someone trained to read impressions from objects could dump mountains of data onto an analysts table about their intended targets while a psychic could erase their memory of them ever being taken prisoner.

40

Some of these abilities can also be used to thwart security systems and throw off trained guards or animals. Gaining access to a secure compound is not as difficult when you have an agent that can control and manipulate thoughts.

AGAINST THE OPERATORS:

As dangerous as a Shadow Cell of Player Characters with access to supernatural abilities is, their adversaries with the same are equally so.

Player Characters can be captured and interrogated in the same manner. A psychic who can track a target as an astral figure, could do so to the Player Characters,

Some special aliens are able to shape shift, and as such, would be able to follow the Player Characters through a bazaar or any number of locations, changing their appearance to increase the chances they don't know they are being followed, As a Referee, one should use both Character Classes and unique adversary / creature types to maximize the mayhem you level toward your Ops Team.

ORGANIZATION EXAMPLE:

TRITON EXPEDITIONARY SERVICE

BACKGROUND: During a run to the Outer Boundary of the Core Worlds, a small group of smugglers were pursued by a rival gang attempting to take their cargo. Looking to steal credit and credits for the run, they hunted the smuggler team through several systems, making dumping the cargo nearly impossible.

The captain decided to hide the ship on an asteroid while the rest of the crew went to the drop site to see how best to deliver the haul. Contact was made with the cartel broker, but the message was clear. "The other gang is your problem. You deal with it."

The crew devised a crazy scheme involving the Core Worlds Security Forces finding and impounding their ship. The smugglers infiltrated CORE-SEC, stole back the cargo, and got the other gang arrested in the process. While they were successful in making the drop, the smugglers had come to the attention of the CORAL (Core Worlds Alliance) Council.

Generations after mankind had integrated into the Alliance, remnants of Earth in "sleeper ships," arrived on the galactic stage. Brandishing wild technology and psychic phenomenon beyond measure, the attempted taking of a Core Worlds colony by a sleeper ship sparked off the first Exodus War. The CORAL became embroiled in systems wide conflicts as the Exo's tried to take over multiple colonies.

Under an Exo occupation, worlds were under stringent security, shutting out most, if not all off world traffic. The CORAL approached the smugglers who had made the CORE-SEC Run, hoping their ingenuity would find ways around the Exo-Fleet's lockdown. Re-branding themselves as MAC-G-SOG (Military Airlift Command – Galactic – Special Operations Group), the group became known for their ability to slip through enemy lines to deliver weapons, equipment, and support for indigenous anti-Exo forces. While posing as relief workers or food suppliers, the MAC-G's, as they were sometimes called, began to bring back vital intelligence.

Decades of warfare surrounding the Exo-Wars saw the implementation of the Hagen Accords. With the CORAL moving toward privatized militaries versus the standard government sponsored, MAC-G-SOG re-breanded themselves once again. Riding high on their success during the underwater conflict of Shilasa, the company took the name Triton, after an Old Sol god that was considered the messenger of the deep.

Triton is now seen as the premier company in covert intelligence and dark operations. They claim that they can get anything anywhere. No secret is too small and nothing is safe. While this might seem grim and aggressive to many, the company has developed many facets where an aggressive stance is just what is needed.

COMMAND STRUCTURE:

The only difference between Triton and a government sponsored Intelligence agency is who is handing out the pay checks. As such, they maintain a command and control format that loosely resembles that of secret agencies from Old Sol.

At the top of the pyramid, is the **Director of Galactic Operations**. The DGO is the prime head of the Hydra. Responsible for the entirety of the

organization, there are only a handful of agents that every work their way to such a lofty position.

The Assistant Director helps the DGO administrate the organization and fills in when the director's seat is vacant. When working with the CORAL Council or other foreign governments, it is the Assistant Director who often meets face to face.

The Chief of Staff is in charge of a three pronged advisory panel for the director. The three teams are **Critical Analysis, Executive Support,** and **Galactic Protocol.**

Below the Command Staff, the structure is usually the same with minor variations based on division. Each has a Director and Deputy Director. The various jobs then break down along whatever lines fit best for the occupation. Civilian based occupations are split into departments and sections while military ones are often defined by divisions and squadrons.

INFERNAL LEADERSHIP

The current DGO is Malcolm Turner. Malcolm was a dedicated agent who worked his way to being the Assistant DGO before being nominated for the top spot. While this all looks perfectly normal on paper, it is anything but.

While the faces change, the DGO always stays the same. Each person promoted to the position is always given a cloned body, aged much younger than their current state. Along with a generous "retirement package," the agent assumes the identity of the former DGO where they live out the rest of their lives in comfort. In the case of a person of a different gender, the current DGO fakes his or her death.

In reality, the DGO has been alive for generations. The original agent that would come to lead Triton made contact with an Exodus colony long before the rest of the Core Worlds. After observing the small colony, he noted how dangerous they were and had the entire group nuked from orbit.

He found his way to their Long-Ship, packed with amazing technology. After years of research, the agent became the first **Cypher-Mod** outside of the Exodus Fleets. With his mind imprinted onto a chip, he could effectively live forever in cloned bodies. The DGO keeps this technology closely guarded. There are only a handful of Triton agents who have benefited from it.

In cases of agents reporting back to the agency, despite the rank of the intelligence officer involved, they will always report to a **handler** so as to minimize contact and exposure. The handler's job is to record and report the activities of the agents beneath them as well as to direct them toward goals based on actionable intelligence.

DIVISION OF LABOR:

While the command staff works to run the organization, its the operations staff that interacts with a galaxy that loathes and fears them. Triton operators are the stuff of myth and legend, propagated by multimedia. The mere mention of a person working for the largest clandestine agency has everyone around them on edge, even if they say they, "just clean the bathrooms."

There are three main divisions within the organization.

INTELLIGENCE DIVISION: While most often home to bookworms and PhDs, this is also the service where all the exciting spy stories make their way into the entertainment vids.

The Intelligence Division is responsible for collecting information that will help further the organization's goals. Triton has contracts with some of the biggest governments and agencies among the stars and they keep their eyes on the skies for any juicy tidbit that will help their clients.

The largest part of the division is the **Research and Analysis Section**. Scores of buildings are dedicated to collecting information from the field and putting it into the context of the area. The information is then used for threat analysis, anticipating market trends, or for political forecasting. The most lucrative area of the section is the **Special Reconnaissance Squadrons**. Made up of academics guarded by military style operators, the outriders of the SRS explore and document natural and supernatural occurrences, geography, and creatures. More than one military campaign was successful due to the findings of an SRS outrider.

This division is also known for its covert agents. **Clandestine Security Officers** are

the backbone of the agency. Their job is to watch their assigned areas, reporting changes and trends back to their handlers. They usually serve in postings where the community they infiltrate overlook them. They are masters at blending in and observation, making them perfect spies. Should things go awry or the needs of the company change, that is when the CSO goes from observer to controller. Aside from being chameleons, they are usually exceptionally trained combatants. Deception and misdirection are the rule of law for a CSO. They use these same philosophies when they fight.

> *Anyone who complains about a fair fight has never been in a real one.*
> *-Old Military Maxim*

The most secretive branch of the Intelligence Division is the **Sigma Directorate.** Dedicated to psionic and mystical research and operations, the group uses its enhanced agents to affect missions that normal means can't address. The bulk of work for this section comes in the form of psychic reconnaissance. Remote viewing, telepathy and mind control are just a few missions that the Directorate undertakes.

Psychic potentials and mystics are put through a grueling training process to heighten their abilities and weed out those who are not agent material. The psi-agents are then apprenticed to a field agent before returning to the agency to work directly for the Directorate. Current agents include many Seconders (psychics) and more than a few mystics. Most sought after are Tier 1 psychics and trained Marshals Templar recruited into the agency.

SPECIAL ACTIVITIES DIVISION:
The least well known of the divisions, the SAD is Triton's military and enforcement arm. The bulk of the SAD's work comes down to security and paramilitary operations. An SAD squadron or platoon can be assigned to operators on the ground to act as combat support when needed or as direct action assets.

The SAD uses multiple pipelines for their recruitment. Those agents that come from support roles in the company are scrutinized as they advance. Individuals who show an aptitude for combat roles and for their competence are invited to join the division. The division runs their candidates through a grueling assessment and selection process known as the Mill. Those that make it through are assigned to branches of the division that best suits their talents. The ones don't make it are free to re-

turn to their old line of wok without prejudice, although the division tries to keep them, "in house," for support roles due to their familiarity with the nature of the work.

The bulk of the revenue brought in by the Division come from a section that bares many names. Often called the *Trident or Triple S*, The **Strategic Security Service** is the largest part of the branch. The Triple S can field as many as a regiment or more in defense of an area or site. They can also field as few as a single agent for personal security details for high value individuals. The most well known Trident mission was Operation Sentinel Smoke in which a Triple S company defended an embassy sight for fourteen hours against a Vex Hive. In the end, the ambassador was saved but the rest of the agents died to do it.

The **Direct Operations Group** serves as the backbone of the SAD. The Hounds (Operators) that make up the DOG were patterned after the American Special Forces units of Old Sol. Operational Detachment Alphas (A-Teams) are sent throughout the galaxy at the behest of Triton's many clients. The Hounds are extremely versatile, making them the company's go to force for direct action. Whether working behind enemy lines to destabilize a government or serving as light infantry strike units, the mobility and adaptability of Triton A-teams are difficult to match anywhere in or around the Core Worlds.

Considered the most important of the Special Activities Division is the **Military Airlift Command**. The branch is responsible for covert movement and recovery of all SAD assets. Originally created during Triton's first missions, the MAC has developed a reputation for being the most daring and reckless pilots in the galaxy. For their willingness to fly under the most extreme conditions and allow the operators of the SAD to assault almost any objective, they have been dubbed the **Night Hunters**.

SERVICE AND SUPPORT INITIATIVE:
The SSI is a giant part of Triton in that it encompasses a plethora of small branches all directed to the support of the other two divisions. While operators and intelligence agents draw some funds from the company, the amount of credits that pours into the SSI is staggering. From cooking staff and administration to special projects and research, the SSI is a massive and necessary system for Triton to exist.

The **Developmental Projects Team** is a massive branch that utilizes top minds in scientific research to create cutting edge technology. Once fabricated and put through its paces, the products can be pushed out to the teams on the ground to give them monumental edges against hos-

FOR DARK INTENTS AND PURPOSES.
DEVPRO scientists have their own team of operators assigned to them at all times. These operators are known as **Task Force Kraken**. TFK is responsible for acting on intel about special research and development throughout Core Space. Their mandate can have them sent out for asset recovery, scientist defection, and industrial espionage. While all these things are common in the CORAL, Kraken takes these direct actions to a level of art.

Current rumors around the office water coolers at Triton whisper of Kraken teams dispersing for various fact finding missions outside the Core Worlds. The teams are visiting the sites of ancient ruins that share common construction traits, even though they predate that civilization's ability to travel in space by millennia. While the exact nature of the project is unknown, the name has been heard occasionally through the halls: Project Rock Garden. Further rumor could suggest that Triton is looking for ancient alien research into extinction level super weapons.
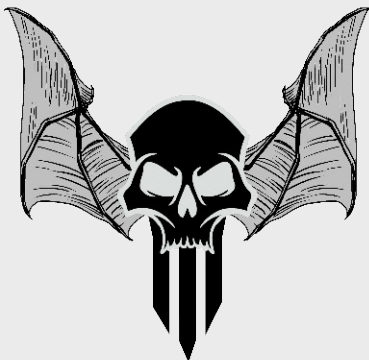
tile forces. When the tech is replaced by new and shiny versions, Triton sells it on the open market to further fund the company.

The **Covers and Identities Bureau** is a crucial branch within the SSI. CIB is responsible for creating and maintaining the false lives of their agents under cover. Those outside of Triton routinely hire the branch to create cover identities for all sorts of reasons. From criminals trying to start a new life on planets with no extradition treaties to special agents of other military companies looking to get embedded, the CIB can craft an entire new life in record time. The ID's are not cheap, and the level of scrutiny they will endure depends on the amount of money paid. Paying for a simple name change and no background information is quick and easy, but there will be no history for the character. It will be as if life started on the day the fake name was created. Buying a full cover identity is more difficult but will stand up to more scrutiny, especially when combined with complex encoding to make it look like authentic data or when paired with reconstructive surgery to change their appearance.

NEW IDENTITY	COST (CREDITS)	SCRUTINY
Name Change	100	Simple (0)
New ID – 2 Years Deep	1000	Hard (-1)
New ID – 2 Years /Combo	3500	Complex (-3)
New ID – Life Span	10000	Difficult (-2)
New ID – Life Span / Combo	12500	Complex (-3)
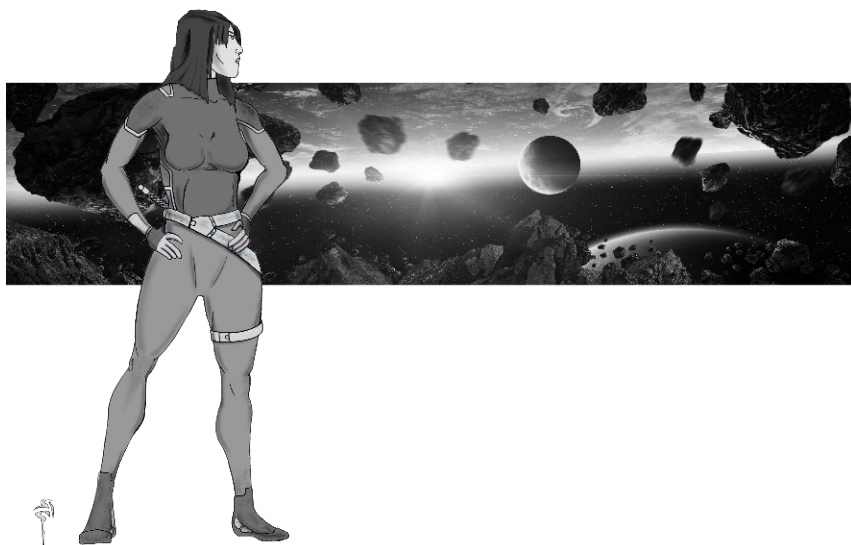
TRITON EXPEDITIONARY ASSETS:

The company is known for its extraordinary implementation of traditional assets. Sometimes unconventional missions require unusual measures to see them through to completion. Triton has assembled some of the most unorthodox methods for just such an occasion.

TRANSFERRED CONSCIOUSNESS ARMORED TROOPER

Armor Class:	2 [17]	Hit Dice:	4
HDE/CP:	4 / 150	Saving Throw	13
Total Hit Bonus:	+4		
Movement:	9 (12 w/ jump jets)		
Special:	+ 2 to save due to pilot's experience		
Attack:	By Weapon or 1d6 +2 (punch)		

T-CAT's are heavily armed and armored drone troopers serving as quick reaction forces for Triton. The troopers are often used in urban environments where large robot vehicles would be at a disadvantage. Unlike normal drones, the pilot's consciousness is uploaded into the robot body. While traditional drones are easy to take out with a simple disruption of the pilot's connection, T-CAT's suffer no such issue. Should the drone be destroyed, the pilot's consciousness reverts back to the pilot with no memory of anything after being loaded into the bot.

RAGE INDUCED PSYCHOTIC RAVAGER

Armor Class:	7[12]	Hit Dice:	2
HDE/CP:	2 / 30	Saving Throw	17
Total Hit Bonus:	+2		
Movement:	14		
Special:	Vulnerable to Ion weapons (like bots)		
Attack:	By Weapon or fists (1d6)		

Triton has been called upon to deal with uprisings where the need to preserve the landscape outweighed the need to preserve the people. The company developed a nanite delivered virus that could remain dormant and be activated by the client for up to two years. The people become hyper-violent, lashing out and killing anything in their path. They maintain rudimentary intelligence during the rage, allowing for pummeling or the squeeze of a trigger. When the RIPR's rage is complete or the client deactivates them, the populace that remains is often sullen and easier to control. RIPR's are susceptible to EMP attacks such as ion weapons.

SPECIAL ACTION CANINE OPERATIVE

Armor Class:	3[16]	Hit Dice:	2
HDE/CP:	2 / 40	Saving Throw	17
Total Hit Bonus:	+2		
Movement:	18		
Special:	Armored hide, Darkvision 90', Climb, Track by Smell		
Attack:	Duradium Teeth (1d6 +1)		

Triton has access to some of the most amazing technology in or out of the Core Worlds. It still recognizes the value of a good dog at your side. The SACO canines were bred from a hyrbid of working dog used for military operations in the Core Worlds. The animal was given genetic
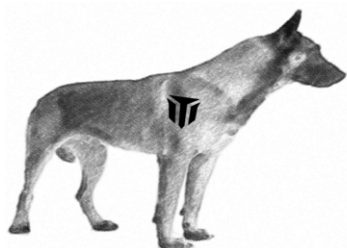
augmentation and cybernetic enhancements to make it the premier working animal and companion alternative to robots. Triton SACO handlers claim that the "Hell Hounds" are far superior to robots due to their instincts, which the mechs have yet to duplicate. Carrying on Old Sol traditions, the SACO always outranks his handler.

PSI-BONDED PROTECTION DETAIL

Armor Class:	7[13]	Hit Dice:	3
HDE/CP:	3 / 75	Saving Throw	16
Total Hit Bonus:	+3		
Movement:	12		
Special:	Detect Invisible, Detect Thoughts, Expanded Senses		
Attack:	By Weapon (Laser Pistol)		

PSI-BONDED EXECUTIVE PROTECTOR

Armor Class:	5[11]	Hit Dice:	6
HDE/CP:	6 / 400	Saving Throw	13
Total Hit Bonus:	+6		
Movement:	12		
Special:	Detect Invisible, Detect Thoughts, Expanded Senses, Initiative Bonus (+2)		
Attack:	By Weapon (Laser Pistol 1d6 or Carbine 2d6)		

While the Hagen Accords are strict on their handling of genetically modifying member races for combat, they are vague on the subject of defense. PBP's are rare in that the company takes a healthy psychic, and alters them to enhance certain traits. The result is a person that looks like the member species, but has the psychic potential of a practitioner three times their experience. The down side is that the PBP has the social graces of a guard dog. They are usually quiet until the principle needs protecting, at which time they transition to being overly aggressive.

SRS **THREAT ASSESSMENT**

FILE # 6832774183-B

The Special Reconnaissance Squadrons bring vital intelligence back to the Division where it can be analyzed and disseminated to agents in harms way. The following is a list of active threats the company is currently tracking.
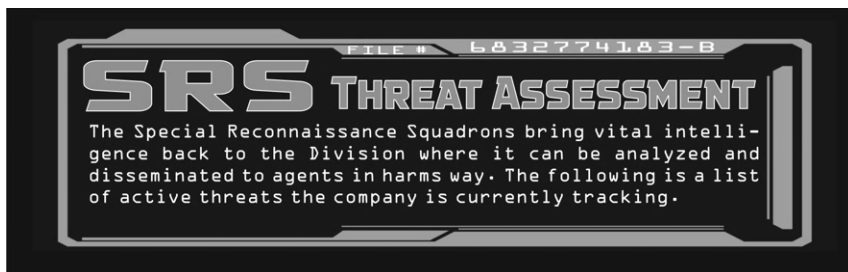
KULDAO – THE REAPERS

Armor Class:	5 [11]	Hit Dice:	4
HDE/CP:	4/ 150	Saving Throw	15
Total Hit Bonus:	+4		
Movement:	12 (Climb 9)		
Special:	Darkvision 90', Climb		
Attack:	By Weapon or fist (1d6+2)		

This galactic menace hasn't ventured far into the Core Worlds, preferring to focus their activities on the Frontier. The Kuldao are hulking humanoids with reptilian features and bad attitudes. They appear on war torn worlds, hunting down the strongest adversaries. Initially thought to hunt humanoids for sport, their current goals are unknown. The Reapers have been stalking DOG and Kraken operatives. The Kuldao's unique weapons and methods combined with their ability to withstand any psychic measures have made this species a priority target for any Triton operatives that encounter them.

RAZORBACKS

Armor Class:	6[12]	Hit Dice:	3
HDE/CP:	3 / 75	Saving Throw	16
Total Hit Bonus:	+3		
Movement:	12 (Climb 9)		
Special:	Codeslinger = 5TH level Cypher		
Attack:	By Weapon (Laser Pistol 1d6 or Carbine 2d6) or Vibro blade / claws		

A **Black Tasker** unit is one where the entire mercenary team is composed of robots with a human handler. CORAL law states they must be distinguishable from liv-ing beings. In violation of the Ha-gen Accords, an agent started a mercenary company composed of androids. When this was discov-ered, the CORAL sent in Vagabonds (bounty hunters) to bring her in, killing her in the process. Distraught over her loss, the androids slaughtered all the hunters in retaliation. Shedding their human appearance for a more grizzly skeletal one, the an-droids appear as thin, black ar-mored, bipedal robots. They have hit several DEVPRO outposts looking for T-CAT and similar tech that would be able to let them clone their former master. TF Kraken has a standing order to eliminate them on sight.

THE SOVEREIGN SISTER

Armor Class:	2[17]	Hit Dice:	7 [27hp]
HDE/CP:	9/ 1700	Saving Throw	12
Total Hit Bonus:	+4		
Movement:	12		
Special:	Star Knight abilities (7TH level), Charm Person 3/day		
Attack:	By Weapon (Star Sword 1d6+4)		

A renegade Vosi exile, the woman known only as the Sovereign Sister has been tracking down Triton agents to execute them for war crimes. The Vosi government has disavowed the Sister and has even placed a bounty on her head. She is presumed to be an ex-Vosi Justiciare' (Star Knight) but she has not been encountered long enough to confirm. She travels on a ship called the *Whisper of Justice* with a Turvani crew. The government of Khamera has not released her identity, although she has been branded a terrorist. Her reasons for targeting Triton and similar agencies is unclear.

The Turvani Stalkers that the Sister has amassed were freed from a penal colony. In exchange for their service, she promised them liberation from the prison, as well as fair treatment and mountains of credits. She has forged them into a superior fighting force, always appearing with at least two of the warriors close by.

TURVANI STALKERS

Armor Class:	4[15]	**Hit Dice:**	2 +2
HDE/CP:	3 / 60	**Saving Throw**	14
Total Hit Bonus:	+3		
Movement:	12		
Special:	Initiative Bonus (+2), Atmospheric Sensitivity (Damaged Rebreather -2 to save, -2 THB)		
Attack:	By Weapon (Laser Pistol 1d6 or Carbine 2d6)		

WHITE STARS - BLACK OPS

SHADOWS ON STARLIGHT

A Dark Operations Sourcebook for the White Star RPG

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HAZARD STUDIOS

WHITE STAR

COMPATIBLE