

TRAVELLER

NAVAL ADVENTURE 1: SHAKEDOWN CRUISE



SCIENCE FICTION ADVENTURE IN THE FAR FUTURE

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CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	2
INS SHARSHANA	5
REFeree'S INFORMATION	9
SHAKEDOWN	15
APPRAISAL AND SPACE TRIALS	19
THE MISSION: GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS	21
EN ROUTE	24
ON STATION	27
AID TO CIVIL POWER	31
STRIKE MISSION	33
RETURN TO BASE	36

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Printed in China



T R A V E L L E R INTRODUCTION

Shakedown Cruise is a complete naval mission for Traveller. It is intended for use with the Naval Campaign Guide, and provides extensive guidance on the use of the mechanics within that book. The mission as presented is a framework of course; like any adventure it can be derailed by the actions (or inaction) of Travellers, and may be sent in an entirely unexpected direction. However, the referee should remember that whilst a Traveller game is always an interaction between the Travellers and the referee, the naval mission is a special game environment in which the Travellers have very specific objectives to pursue and will face penalties if they decide to ignore them.

In this mission, a new captain and senior crew take over INS Sharshana. She is an older vessel, just out of her second mid-life refit, and has picked up a few quirks and traits in her long service. Her crew are, for the most part, properly trained but have no experience of working together. The Travellers are given a fairly simple mission on what is to be a shakedown cruise for INS Sharshana. This is their opportunity to teach the crew how to work well together, to identify any problems missed by the dockyard evaluation officers, and to turn an old ship into an efficient fighting unit.

Of course, nothing is ever simple, and along the way the Travellers will face some tough situations. Not all of their problems can be solved by gunplay; naval officers must be diplomats, warriors, lawyers and anything else that may be required by the situation. Assistance will usually be several weeks away, and in any case a navy crew are expected to get the job done without yelling for help every time they encounter a setback.

HOW TO USE THIS BOOK

This book presents the framework of a naval mission, with guidance on how to use the rules presented in the Naval Campaign Guide. It differs from a conventional Traveller adventure in that the mission can spawn a multitude of adventures, some of which could be quite lengthy. Most will, however, be quite short.

There is no requirement to play out any given incident or situation as an adventure. The entire mission can be abstracted using the Naval Campaign Guide if this is desirable. However, most Traveller groups will want to play out at least some of the situations. Each such incidence is referred to as an 'adventure'.

Adventures are resolved using a combination of the normal Traveller rules and the Campaign Guide. Whenever an individual crewmember or officer performs a task, the normal rules are used. The actions of larger groups are dealt with using the Campaign Guide rules. By way of example, if the captain's bodyguard takes a shot at an attacker with his sidearm this is resolved with the normal rules, whereas a skirmish between a band of raiders and the ship's marines can be resolved in detail, but the Campaign Sourcebook provides a quick resolution system for such encounters.

REFeree'S OUTLINE

This mission is presented as information for the referee, along with a set of objectives the Travellers are expected to complete. These will give some structure to the flow of events, but it is the Travellers who will decide what they want to do. The Travellers may decide to completely ignore some of their goals, or may make bad choices that do not leave sufficient time to complete their objectives. This is their choice; indeed it is what a naval campaign is all about. The Travellers are given a mission and have to decide how to go about accomplishing it. The referee might offer some advice – perhaps by way of a non-player officer – but ultimately the Travellers make their own choices. If those choices give them no chance for success then the Travellers will have to accept the consequences and learn from them.

The upshot of this is that naval missions can be very 'freeform'. The referee has information on the places the Travellers will visit and the activities of rivals and enemies, but how these will intersect with the plans of the Travellers will have to be determined as it happens. Thus this outline is an overview of the events of the mission, but not necessarily in the order they will happen. It should be considered to be no more

than guidance; the referee's judgement is of vastly greater importance than adherence to a pre-scripted adventure outline.

The mission has three main segments, each with its own flavour. The setup phase takes place in a safe environment – at least as far as enemy action is concerned – and with both advice and oversight available. The main mission is very freeform, with little guidance from the Travellers' superiors. The mission finale has fewer options but plenty of opportunities to go horribly awry. The return to port and assessment of the Travellers' performance can be considered an epilogue, perhaps with some learning opportunities.

The referee should give the Travellers some guidance during the setup phase, possibly offered in a fairly subtle manner by way of senior officers or peers in port. If the Travellers choose to ignore the advice on offer, they can take their chances. There is an old military maxim that 'victory breeds complacency; defeat leads to innovation'. In other words, a disastrous mission might be a vital learning experience for the Travellers, leading eventually to excellence.

A New Command: This is a short introduction, in which the Travellers are ordered to report aboard *INS Sharshana* to lead her crew. Some of the Travellers may not have worked together before, so this is a chance for them to get to know their new colleagues and establish working relationships.

Appraisal and Preparation: The Travellers report aboard their new command and form their initial impressions of the crew's capabilities. The captain will then reveal the mission orders – or as much of them as necessary – to the officers and crew, who then begin preparing their ship for its mission.

The Travellers will need to assess their ship's potential and any issues that might arise, and establish the supply situation. To be fully ready for the mission the Travellers will need to be a little creative; their ship is not particularly important in the grand scheme of things and has not received a full set of supplies or even a full crew complement. How well the Travellers do here will determine their chances of success in later operations.

Once the Travellers begin their mission they must work with what they have. If they need anything extra, they will have to come up with a way of getting it during the mission.

Showing the Flag: The Travellers' orders require them to 'show the flag' in five star systems. 'Showing the flag'

means being a visible presence, and can be achieved in a variety of ways. At the very least the ship is expected to announce her presence and let passing merchant traffic see her. Putting a few smartly uniformed personnel into the starport bars is another common tactic, which also serves the useful purpose of allowing the crew some liberty time. The Travellers are also expected to carry out routine enforcement operations, boarding suspect craft and searching for contraband. Needless boardings can cause resentment, but they also serve to remind everyone in the area that 'the navy's here'. The Travellers will be expected to deal with any emergencies or requests for aid that may arise during their mission.

The order in which the Travellers visit their target systems, and how long they spend there, is for them to decide. A wise captain selects an efficient route that maximises time on station relative to that spent in jump. However, taking this to an extreme can make patrol routes predictable, enabling smugglers and other wrongdoers to dodge the patrols. Thus captains have a certain amount of discretion about their route; on some missions nobody outside the ship knows where the vessel will be at a given point in its deployment. A useful tactic is to visit a system and move on, but to return later in the hope of catching any clever miscreants who reason that no patrol will be through for a while. Of course, the time to carry out this additional visit and its associated jumps must be found by shortening time on station elsewhere, but making this sort of choice this is part of a captain's duties.

During this section of the mission the Travellers will encounter some incidents and situations that must be dealt with at their discretion. The referee should try not to give much away about the importance of any given incident as it begins to develop. The Travellers may miss their best chance to deal with a problem out of complacency, or leap to action stations over some trivial matter. The referee should give the Travellers the information they would reasonably have and let them make their choices. If this leads to mistakes, they will have to deal with the outcome.

The Zeglaashshish Incident: The Travellers encounter a merchant ship in distress. She has been attacked by pirates, who are making off just as the Travellers arrive. It would be difficult to both chase the pirate vessel and rescue the merchant crew, though it might just be possible. The Travellers will need to come up with a plan and carry it out. This incident should be used by the referee to show the Travellers that they can't have it all ways; they will sometimes have to choose between imperfect outcomes or let one objective go in order to accomplish another.

Aid to Civil Power: The Travellers are requested to provide assistance during unrest planetside. The task may be distasteful, since the government are oppressive and the rebels have a legitimate grievance. However, the navy has a clear duty in these matters and the Travellers are expected to carry it out no matter how much personal sympathy they may have for the opposition. There are additional complications during this mission segment, since some of the crew will also sympathise with the rebels and may be reluctant to obey their orders. This mission segment is as much about leading the crew and if necessary forcing them to do their duty as it is about the Travellers making choices about what to do.

Intelligence Gathering: The Travellers will become aware of a pirate ring as a result of the *Zeglaashshish* incident. There is no intelligence at present on the strength of this group or any location they may be using as a base. If the Travellers wish to move against the pirate ring they will need to obtain information. This will be an ongoing task, carried out as the Travellers show the flag in the local systems or undertake routine patrols.

Strike Mission: The Travellers receive orders to proceed to the location of a supposed pirate haven and eliminate it. However, if their intelligence gathering has been efficient they will realise that there are complications. Their ship is sufficient to overwhelm most opposition but the Travellers will have to make their choices under pressure in a rapidly developing situation.



CHAPTER-ONE

INS SHARSHANA

INS *Sharshana* is a Ghalalk class heavy cruiser, one of the earliest of that class to enter service. Several years ago she suffered serious damage, including the near-complete destruction of her central pod mountings and significant structural weakening throughout her frame. Budgetary concerns resulted in her being placed in reserve, then patched up and deployed as a defence monitor at Depot/Deneb. Deemed too expensive to repair, she was cannibalised for spares, losing her jump drive in the process.

Eventually, the Admiralty found sufficient money to repair the old cruiser. This was initially to have been little more than a cosmetic refit and reinstallation of a minimal jump drive, allowing her to become a heavily armed troop transport for the Imperial Marines. However, as is the way of things the Admiralty decided that for just a little more money they could get another cruiser out patrolling the spaceways, and authorised a major rebuild.

Costs spiralled as the work continued, and for a time INS *Sharshana* lay incomplete on the ways waiting for spares that would likely never come. She was then transferred to a private yard at Zeng for finishing at the expense of the Duke of Zeng. This was a political gesture intended to increase the duke's standing in the local region, and came with the condition that INS *Sharshana* would be deployed to the Zeng and Gulf subsectors for not less than ten years. Thus the area gained additional security, the Imperial Navy got a cruiser back at no cost and the Duke of Zeng gained a reputation as the protector of the region.

The outcome of all this is that INS *Sharshana* became a politically charged project. There are those who would like to see the Duke of Zeng embarrassed by having 'his' cruiser fail in some spectacular manner. Others merely watch with interest as the old cruiser leaves her berth and begins a shakedown cruise in Gulf subsector.

Political interference and the intense scrutiny the mission will be subject to meant that good officers

looked elsewhere for advancement when the chance to crew INS *Sharshana* emerged. A shakedown cruise in the backwaters rarely has much chance for career-making exploits, and any mistakes will be thrown into sharp relief by the duke's political opponents.

Thus INS *Sharshana* is to be taken over by a relatively junior band of officers. These promising but unproven candidates are ordered to report aboard their new ship at Zeng and commence a patrol operation in the Gulf subsector. This is to be a 'shakedown' cruise, in which any defects with the vessel will be identified and recommendations submitted upon return to port.

The Travellers may or may not have worked together before. They have all held important posts, but probably not aboard such a large vessel, and should view the chance to command and crew a heavy cruiser as a real career opportunity – providing all goes well. The previous experience of the Travellers will take one of two forms:

- The Traveller has held a similar post but aboard a smaller ship. For example, the Chief Engineer may have been Chief Engineer of a destroyer in the past.
- The Traveller has served aboard a heavy cruiser, but in the next post down. For example, the commanding officer may have served as Executive Officer of a Ghalalk class cruiser in his last deployment.

Thus all of the Travellers are stepping up onto a wider stage, and have some learning to do. If they can grow into their new roles, they may find themselves ahead of the curve for future promotions and assignments. Or INS *Sharshana* might be the graveyard of their careers....

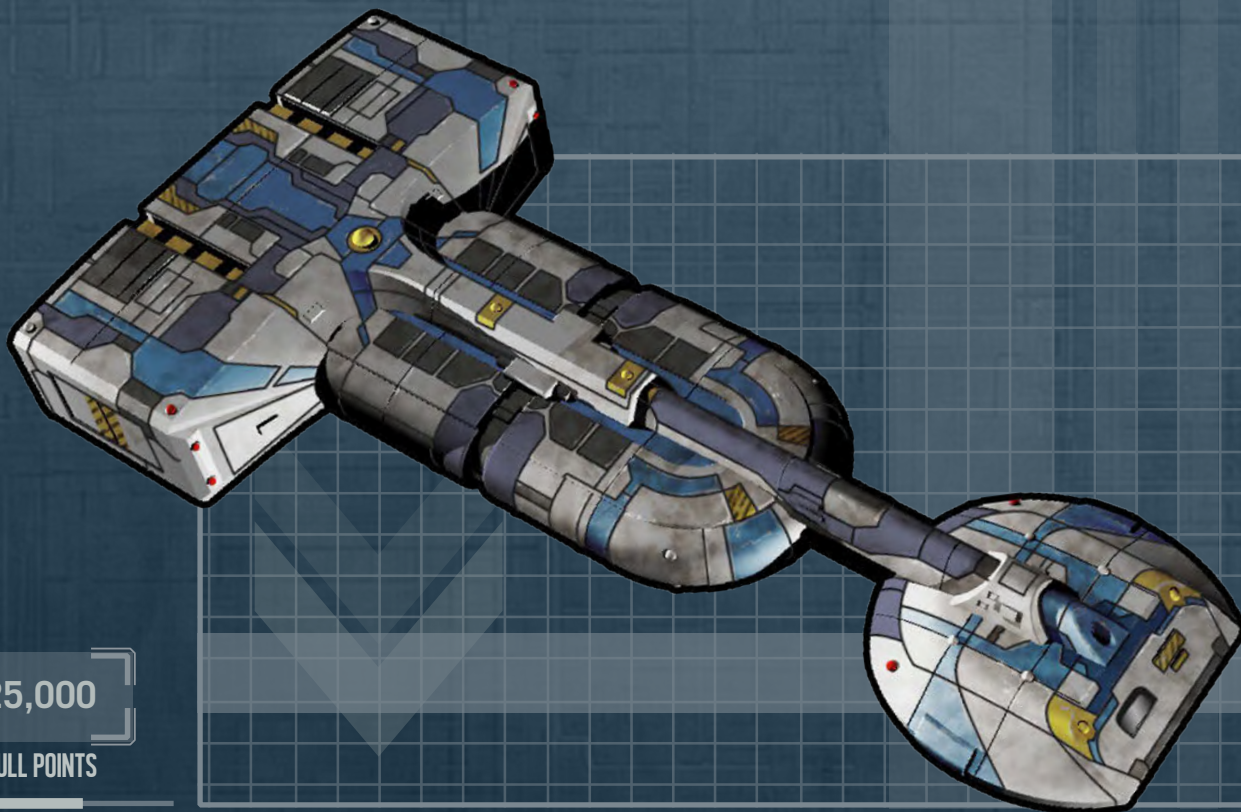
INS *Sharshana* has picked up some traits and quirks in her long and hard service life. These are drawn from the Naval Campaign Guide, but as always the referee can replace them with others, perhaps of his own devising. Most ships will have at most one or two traits and quirks, but *Sharshana* is carrying old wounds and as had a patchy repair history.

INS SHARSHANA

GHALALK CLASS
W/ 4 MISSILE PODS

TL15		TONS	COST (MCR)
Hull	50,000 tons, Standard	-	2500
	Reinforced	-	1250
	Radiation Shielding	-	1250
Armour	Bonded Superdense, Armour: 8	3,200	3,360
M-Drive	Thrust 6 (assumes 50,000 tons)	3,000	6,000
Jump Drive	Jump 4 (decreased fuel, assumes 50,000 tons)	5,005	8,315
Power plant	Fusion (TL15), power 68,000	3,400	6,800
Fuel Tanks	J-4, 8 weeks of operation	18,680	-
Bridge	Bridges x2, Holographic Controls	120	937.5
	Command Bridge, Holographic Controls	80	703.125
	Small Bridge x4	160	520
Computer	Core/100 x2	-	260
Sensors	Advanced (distributed arrays) x2	30	31.8
	Military Countermeasures Suites x2	30	56
	Enhanced Signal Processing x2	4	16
Weapons	Spinal - Particle Accelerator (improved, 1DD)	2,700	1,300
	Fusion Barbettes x12	60	48
	Triple Turrets (sandcasters) x20	20	35
	Triple Turrets (beam lasers) x68	68	170
	Point Defence Batteries (type III) x2	40	40
Weapons	Medium Missile Bays x 48	4,800	6000
Ammunition	Missile Storage (4 x 5,760 Missiles)	1,920	-
	Sandcaster Barrel Storage (800 barrels)	40	-
Screens	Meson Screens x10	100	200
	Nuclear Dampers x10	100	100
Armoured Bulkheads	Meson Screen	10	5
	Nuclear Damper	10	5
	Bridge	10	5
	Command Bridge	8	4
	Sensors	3	1.5
	Missile Storage	192	16
Craft	Full Hangar (240 tons)	480	96
Systems	Repair Drones	500	250
	Sensor Stations x8	8	4
	Briefing Rooms x8	32	16
	Armoury	50	12.5
	Brigs x4	16	1
	Fuel Scoop	-	1
	Fuel Processor (4,000 tons/day)	200	10
	Medical Bays x6	32	12
	Additional Airlocks x12	24	2.4
	UNREP System (200 tons/hour)	10	5
	Workshops x4	24	3.6
Staterooms	High x3	18	2.4
	Standard x450	1,800	225
	Barracks x200	400	20
Common Areas		2,200	220
Cargo		652	-

TOTAL: MCR 39909.82



25,000

HULL POINTS

CREW

CAPTAIN, PILOTS X 15, ASTROGATORS X 2,
ENGINEERS X 137, MAINTENANCE X 40, MEDICS X 3,
GUNNERS X 259, STEWARDS X 10,
ADMINISTRATORS X 12, OFFICERS X 74,
MARINES X 70

RUNNING COSTS

MAINTENANCE COST

Cr3325818/month

.....

PURCHASE COST

MCr39909.82

POWER REQUIREMENTS

30,000

MANOEVRE
DRIVE

12,000

BASIC SHIP
SYSTEMS

10

FUEL
PROCESSOR

20,000

JUMP DRIVE

32

SENSORS

2,220

WEAPONS

INS SHARSHANA: STATUS AT DEPLOYMENT

The refit has been carried out to an acceptable standard, but the vessel does still have some idiosyncrasies as a result of her age and previous damage, and has a slightly weakened frame. She has been fitted with four standard missile pods; these cannot be swapped before the mission begins.

Greyhound: This quirk is beneficial. As a result of her refit, INS *Sharshana*'s M-drive is unusually responsive. This manifests itself in a roleplaying context as a feeling of mild surprise at how quick she is on the throttle, so to speak. In game-mechanic terms, once in the mission the pilot can claim a +2 DM on any Pilot check, whether this is precise manoeuvring or a headlong charge at an enemy.

Smooth and Precise Fuel Flow: This is an example of the 'unsupported reputation' quirk. The ship's engineers get the impression that the new fuel-feed system is really excellent, and that they have better and more precise control over feed and venting systems. There is no hard evidence that this is the case, but the engineers will soon be convinced that their systems are well above average. This has no direct game mechanic effect, but could lead to a range of complexities – perhaps the engineers object to outsiders messing with their system, or brag about it a bit too much and annoy personnel from other ships.

Redoubtable: INS *Sharshana* just plain refused to give up and die even when she was gutted by enemy fire. She got her crew home that time and she'll do it again. All checks connected with emergency damage control (but not proper repairs) gain a +1 DM. There is no physical reason for this; it is a manifestation of the crew's confidence in their ship's ability to survive anything. Thus the crew will approach damage control with greater confidence and attempt tasks that might otherwise be given up as impossible.

User-Unfriendly: Several rounds of repairs have led to equipment being in odd places, floors gaining a curious ripple and a host of trip and snag hazards throughout the ship. In roleplaying terms this is simply annoying, but over time it can reduce efficiency. All checks to see if Crew Efficiency Index (CEI) is reduced suffer a -1 DM.

The above are quirks. They are likely to be minor in effect but will give the ship additional character. The two traits below are more serious and will affect the outcome of many tasks.

She Likes Us: It feels like *Sharshana* is glad to be back out among the stars. Although her refits and rebuild have resulted in some annoyances, the overall impression is that she wants to look after and please her crew. Systems are a bit wayward during the shakedown


cruise, but some of the crew will soon swear that they can fix many problems by saying the ship's name in the right tone. Phrases like 'Come on, old girl, you don't need to be so difficult' can sometimes induce minor problems to just go away. Observers might conclude this is more likely the result of random glitches in rebuilt systems, but crews can be superstitious about their vessel. Despite the glitches and the uneven floors, the sticking doors and the weirdly positioned workstations, CEI is increased by +1 due to the special relationship the crew have with their battered old ship.

Unreliable: This trait can be fixed by more time in the dockyard with a clear defects list, which is exactly what the cruise is intended to produce. In the meantime, INS *Sharshana* is prone to intermittent equipment breakdowns and faults. At the start of each Mission Segment, the referee should roll 2D. On a score of 10+ the ship's systems begin playing up... again. A series of random intermittent faults impose DM-1 on all tasks carried out by a random department. Roll 1D. 1: Flight, 2: Gunnery, 3: Engineering, 4-6: General crew and command officers. If the Travellers make a point of running down the fault and getting it fixed the penalty is removed for that segment, but others may emerge later.

Ships as Characters

The referee can use the quirks and traits of a ship to turn it into a character rather than a conveyance. Done well, this can create a sense of loyalty and pride – or disgust and hatred – among the Travellers which differs from the more usual attitude towards starships. Many Travellers value their ship for what it can do for them and the advantages it gives, and may be all too keen to trade up to something 'better'.

By playing the ship's characteristics the referee might be able to instil a sense of the ship's worth for what it is and what it has done rather than the die modifiers it provides. 'Yes, there are better ships in the fleet but this is *Sharshana*. She's a tough old bag of bolts... and she's ours.'



REFEREE'S INFORMATION

The following information is for the use of the referee. How much of it is revealed to the Travellers, and in what form, is as always a decision for individual referees. The Travellers will have access to an up-to-date database of information on star systems, naval deployments and so forth, and will have access to data not normally available to civilians. However, intelligence is not always perfect and some matters are kept secret even within the navy. Thus although command of a heavy cruiser is a position of great trust which brings with it many benefits, the Travellers will never have 100% accurate and complete information and must often determine the facts of a situation for themselves.

THE DUCHY OF ZENG

The Duchy of Zeng is one of the major administrative districts of Deneb sector. It lies entirely within Imperial space and is subject to all of its laws... and all of its internal politics too. The Duke of Zeng does not command the Imperial Navy assets assigned to his area of interest, but he does provide political direction to the admirals that command them. Among other things, this means that the duke can apply pressure on the Admiralty to deploy ships in one area or another.

Zeng is active and influential in Gulf subsector, which lies to Spinward of Zeng. Its duke is engaged in constant political manoeuvring, seeking to increase his power relative to the other subsector dukes in Deneb sector. Zeng is a minor player compared to most of the others but is influential in Gulf subsector. These political machinations are kept within reasonable limits – mostly – by the Imperium itself. A certain amount of friction and even the odd proxy war on a backwater world is acceptable, but the Imperium would not tolerate direct action by one duchy against another. As a result, political gains are made in more subtle ways, typically by creating economic advantages and influencing world governments.

Although Zeng does not directly rule the region, its duke's prestige is increased or decreased according to the fortunes of the worlds it is associated with. Popularity among the worlds of Gulf subsector translates to being able to count on additional votes in the Imperial

Moot, and economic advantages when dealing with markets in that region. All of the Imperial duchies in Deneb sector constantly seek to win the support of world governments away from their rivals, and the '*Sharshana* project' is just one of many gambits the Duke of Zeng has implemented.

Although expensive, the *Sharshana* project has the potential to increase the duke's political standing. The presence of an additional heavy cruiser on the local spacelanes is a constant reminder to local world governments that their duke is looking out for them. Of course, this does mean that the failure or underperformance of the ship will harm the duke's standing but that is a risk that must be taken.

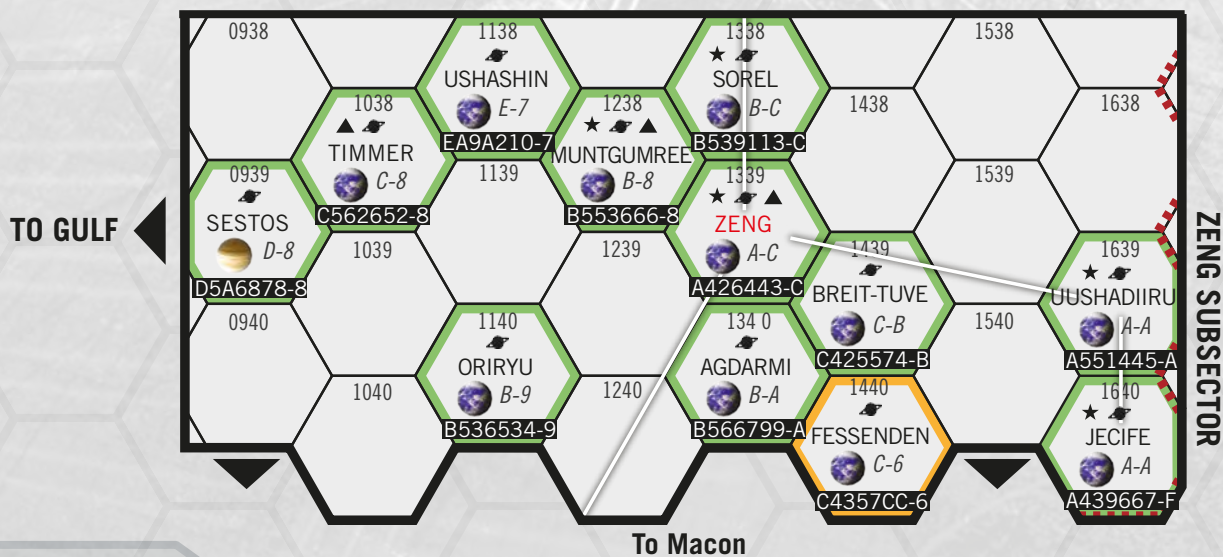
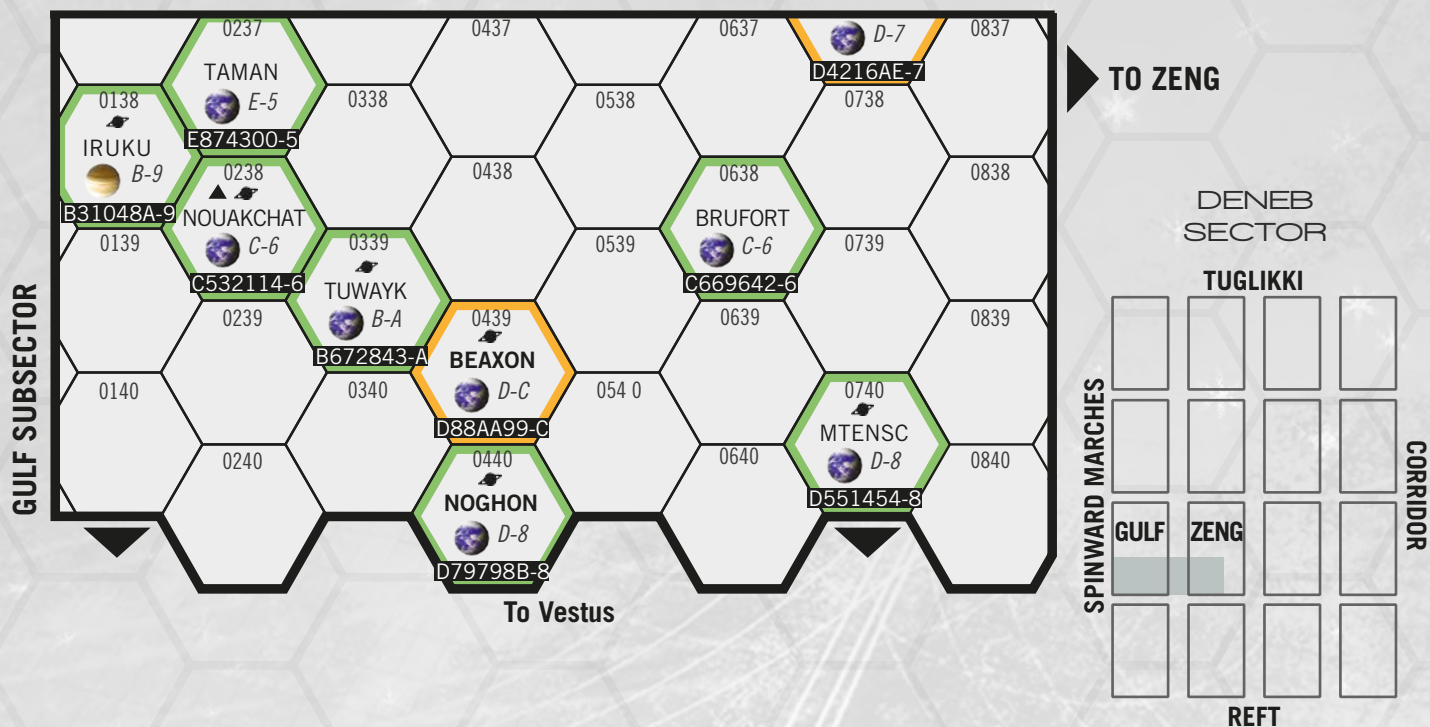
Note that the duke does not 'own' the cruiser, even if he sometimes acts as if he does. It is part of the Zeng subsector fleet, answerable to the admirals of the Imperial Navy. However, its return to service was subject to a number of agreements and a general policy of co-operation with the duke's wishes for the next decade of its service life.

GULF SUBSECTOR

Gulf subsector is characterised by small clusters of star systems with easy jump-2 navigation across the subsector. It has no subsector duke, and is generally thought of as a protectorate of Trin in Spinward Marches subsector. Unfortunately, Trin's interests extend only to the nearest worlds; the Trailing parts of the subsector are largely ignored. Similarly, the Duchy of Vincennes (to Coreward) exerts some influence over the Coreward-Trailing worlds but gives little priority to the rest of the subsector and Zeng cannot spare the resources to do much.

The rimward end of Gulf subsector is an underdeveloped backwater of significance mainly for the jump-2 route across the subsector, which connects Trin and Zeng. There are other routes, of course, and most commercial shipping goes by way of the coreward end of the subsector, but there is a modest amount of commercial traffic along this path, which also provides access to Vestus subsector to rimward.

PARTIAL MAP OF GULF AND ZENG SUBSECTORS



Name	Location	Bases	Statistics	Trade Codes	Travel Code	Gas Giants
BEAXON	0439	-	D88AA99-C	Hi, Wa	Amber	G
Iruku	0138	-	B31048A-9	Ni	-	G
Mtensc	0740	-	D551454-8	Ni, Po	-	G
NOGHON	0440	-	D79798B-8	Hi, In	-	G
Nouakchat	0238	Scout	C532114-6	Lo, Po	-	G
Sestos	0939	-	D5A6878-8	FI	-	G
Taman	0237	-	E874300-5	Lo	-	-
Tuwayk	0339	-	B672843-A		-	G
Zeng	1309	Naval, Scout	A426446-C	Ni	-	G

STAR SYSTEMS

In the course of its mission INS *Sharshana* is expected to visit several star systems. The information available on each of them is presented below. Additional data, which would not be in the ship's databases, is presented in the appropriate section of the adventure.

Zeng (A426446-C)

Zeng is a fairly unremarkable world; dry but habitable, with a modest population and a moderate democratic government. Its importance is primarily as the seat of the Duchy of Zeng, whose economic capital is the large and well-appointed orbital starport.

Most people with business at Zeng conduct it at the highport; a smaller proportion visit the extensive downport and fewer still venture out into the cities of the world. The port is extremely busy, seeing a constant flow of ships passing up and down the subsector's central main. There is also a noticeable Imperial Navy presence at the port and nearby.

The Imperial Navy maintains a base in the Zeng system, which caters mainly to destroyer-class vessels assigned to patrol operations within the subsector. Visits by larger ships are not uncommon, but the base is geared to smaller vessels. A destroyer is normally stationed close to the starport at Zeng as a guardship, though this is a courtesy rather than a formally ordered deployment.

Naval uniforms are a common sight in the starport, and the business community is generally friendly to naval personnel. A uniform or naval ID is required to get into some of the starport bars, and combat ribbons will usually earn a discount on drinks and meals. Many of the larger businesses depend on 'navy money' and are typically positive towards the Imperium and her armed forces. As a result Zeng is a popular place to take liberty or furlough time. The population of its orbital port includes many navy veterans or their families.

Sestos (D5A6878-8)

Sestos lies at the spinward end of the Zeng subsector's mains and sees little traffic other than jump-2 ships headed across Gulf subsector. It is an unpleasant world, with an exotic atmosphere and oceans composed of complex diluted compounds. It is these that brought people to Sestos in the past; its chemical extraction and processing plants required a large population to operate them and provide supporting industries, which in turn led to a diversified and stable economy.

Today, Sestos is balkanised in the sense that its large city-states are all self-governing. There is little population outside the cities; just a few agricultural complexes. Some of these use sealed environments to grow edible crops; others produce some quite exotic plants which are edible to most intelligent species. Meat is rare on Sestos as it is difficult to produce, and thus extremely expensive.

Mtensc (D551454-8)

A dry world with a thin atmosphere, Mtensc provides a jump-2 link between Zeng subsector and Trin's Veil (to spinward) and Vestus (to rimward). It is very much a 'port town', with the entire population of a few thousand dwelling around the very basic starport and mostly dependent upon it for their livelihood. There is little industry or economic activity on Mtensc, though occasionally prospectors head out into the wilderness to seek their fortune.

Fuel and water for all other purposes are obtained by drilling into a large aquifer under the port-town. Its presence was the reason for siting the port where it is. In recent years there have been concerns that the aquifer is drying up, and the world's ruling council has repeatedly petitioned the Duke of Zeng for funding to develop additional water sources. Thus far this has produced little more than a small scientific team who conduct research into the situation and possible remedies.

Iruku (B31048A-9)

As one of the possible jump-2 links from Trin's Veil subsector, Iruku received considerable investment and development of its orbital starport. The orbital component of the port is a more or less self-contained environment, with a small and under-equipped downport planetside. There is little traffic to and from the surface; Iruku Highport receives most of what it needs from beyond the star system, paid for with revenue generated by commerce at the port.

Although the 'mainworld' of the system, Iruku itself is almost an irrelevance; a convenient gravity well for the highport and little more. Its population of fifty thousand or so are almost entirely concentrated at the downport, with a few small outposts scattered elsewhere across the planetary surface.

Iruku has little industry other than a small own-needs production capability based on mining in nearby areas. Offworld minerals corporations have thus far showed

little interest in this backwater rockball, and official data suggests that there are few useful deposits of minerals or metals. This has not prevented the usual hopeful prospectors from searching from time to time.

Taman (E874300-5)

Taman lies just off the jump-2 route across the middle of Gulf subsector. It is a habitable enough world, with sufficient water and a breathable, if tainted, atmosphere. For many years Taman was on the Reserve List, not interdicted as such but not open for colonisation. The intent seems to have been to wait until sufficient investment was available to create a colony that could quickly develop into an asset to the local economy. That never happened, and attempts to obtain permission to colonise the world on a smaller budget fell victim to the cross-cutting politics of the region.

As a result, Taman's official population consists of a few hundred people dwelling in a single town which forms the estate of House Vielnaa. House Vielnaa is a very minor – and distinctly impoverished – Imperial noble family who have been assigned to Taman as an 'emplaced resident population'. This translates from legalese into Anglic as meaning the noble family and their staff are on Taman to provide an official population – and thereby delegitimise any attempt to unofficially colonise the world and claim squatters' rights – but they are not recognised as 'owning' the world in the same way as a true local population and government would.

This complex arrangement means that the unofficial colonies that have been set up on Taman cannot claim to be the only, and therefore 'official', population of the world. These colonies are small, with a total population of around eight thousand people and an average tech level of 5. Some are friendly to House Vielnaa, but in most cases the communities just ignore one another.

The 'port' at Taman is a landing field at the only officially present settlement. There is no body of law as such, but the site is policed by House Vielnaa troops who have little tolerance for thievery and violence. There is virtually no industry, but the settlement has access to offworld equipment and is kept resupplied by ships from Trin. In short, 'the town on Taman' as it is described in a popular drinking song, is populated by people who are paid to be there just so that nobody else can claim the planet.

Nouakchat (C5321 14-6)

Dry, with a very thin atmosphere, Nouakchat is virtually uninhabited other than the staff of the small starport. This is run by the Imperial Interstellar Scout Service, and has a slightly larger orbital component than most

Class C ports. A handful of unstreamlined Scout Service vessels are usually moored there – typically lab ships and survey scouts – whilst streamlined vessels typically land at the downport.

The only permanent residents of Nouakchat are the employees of the Nouakchat Corporation, a private firm that handles brokerage and commercial activities at the port. Most technical tasks are subcontracted to the Scout Service, and come second to ensuring the small scout base at the port remains functional.

Jump-2 ships normally bypass Nouakchat, transiting between the much better ports at Iruku and Tuwayk. Those vessels that do come through find little worth staying for; Nouakchat is a scout base that serves as a starport from time to time, and is not set up for entertaining guests or conducting major trade deals. What little profit is made by the port goes to offsetting the cost of the base and its personnel.

Tuwayk (0339) B672843-A

Lying just within the area of interest of Trin, Tuwayk is a backwater world of importance mainly for its starport. One of the standard jump-2 routes into Trin and thereby Spinward Marches sector runs through the port, though it could not really be said to pass through the world itself. The port acts as a local trade hub, but Tuwayk does not export much and thus benefits little other than from revenue generated by port operations.

The world itself is very dry and extremely hot, with an indigenous ecosystem hostile to humans and most imported species. Attempts at a 'soft terraforming' by way of introducing algae and similar primitive life that – hopefully – would eventually supplant the local species have been decisively defeated by the resilient and even aggressive ecosystem of Tuwayk.

Tuwayk is very much a backwater, but within its cities at least it is a comfortable one. Harsh conditions outside are counterpointed by luxurious if rather bland climate-controlled living areas. There really is no 'local' culture as such; society is very much Imperial-standard and influenced mainly by what is 'in' at Trin.

Trin also exerts considerable political and economic influence over Tuwayk, offering subsidies or reduced prices on necessary goods in return for continued loyalty. Normally few strings are attached but the world government controls the starport, and occasionally it may be useful to throw a few obstacles in the way of a rival. At these times, quietly having control over port operators can be a useful tool in making a shipping operator or business group's activities in the region that little more costly and frustrating.

Beaxon (D88AA99-C)

Beaxon is a high-population water world, with around 90 billion people crammed into its cities. These are mostly built in shallow water, with the upper parts of large buildings poking above the waves. There are few structures on land; most of the available flat areas are used for intensive agriculture.

The world has been Amber Zoned for some time now, due to its internal troubles. The huge population are subject to fairly strict laws, but enforcement is a problem and there is significant unrest as well as organised and opportunistic crime. This has affected economic output; Beaxon was once a significant exporter or fairly high-tech goods but production has gradually slumped. As corruption and the general disruption of production increased, the price of Beaxon goods kept pace. Today, Beaxon's exports are known for being overpriced and not very good... assuming they get shipped out at all.

Beaxon's starport, never extensive, has deteriorated to the point where it is now designated as Class D. Sections remain derelict and more-or-less sealed off, though local gangs are able to use them to stash goods or hide from pursuit. The cost of returning the port to its proper status increases as systems are illegally stripped for salvage, and although the port authority makes token efforts to patrol the derelict sections it is clear that the situation is not likely to improve.

Noghon (D79798B-8)

Noghon's dense, if tainted, atmosphere and presence of plenty of water made it an attractive candidate for early colonisation and development. The original colony was set up as an agricultural base, and was intended to become a breadbasket for expansion in the region. Although the atmospheric taint gives food raised on Noghon a slightly odd taste, most people find it strange but not unpleasant, and the world's agricultural exports were sufficient to fund the development of its industries.

Today, Noghon is primarily known as an exporter of decent quality mid-tech goods. Its food production is still extensive, but the growing population absorbed an increasing proportion until exports dwindled to almost nothing. A few luxury items such as wines are still exported, commanding a surprisingly high price for what is essentially a novelty item rather than particularly good wine. Again, the world's atmospheric taint affects the taste, creating something unique but not especially pleasing.

Noghon has two starports. The 'general' one receives little traffic and is rather basic, hence its D rating. There is a better port but it is off-limits to all vessels other than contracted freighters carrying the world's goods to market. This commercial port is set up for bulk freight handling only and cannot accommodate tourists or passengers. Nor does any commerce or speculative trade take place there; the ships that use it already have a contract in place. Everyone else is directed to the general port.

GUIDANCE FOR REFEREES

The Travellers must be allowed to make their own decisions, other than when a direct order is received. However, if they are not used to the naval campaign environment the referee may wish to point them in the right direction. For example, the Travellers may be used to making decisions on the fly about what to do next, but a successful naval mission requires more planning than that. Subtle guidance might be offered from a friendly officer before the Travellers set out, and if they choose to ignore it that's their business.

Once out on the mission the Travellers are very much the masters of their own fate, but they cannot ignore their orders without ultimately facing censure. Nor can they treat their crew as automatons without eventually running into trouble. The referee should make available some indication of how things are going in the form of overheard comments from crew and officers or even a outspoken subordinate adversely comparing the Travellers to her last command team. Similarly, hints should be available that things are going well. The crew are experienced navy personnel for the most part and will know when everything is running as it should.

The Mission Success Criteria should not be revealed to the Travellers. They may be inferred from the mission orders, but the Travellers will not be certain exactly what they need to do for perfect mission success. Mission orders should always be comprehensible – unless garbled orders are an intentional part of the mission – and referees should take care to ensure that the Travellers can figure out at least most of what the Admiralty wants them to do. This is not the same as providing them with a blueprint for obtaining the most medals from the mission.

For example, in this mission's orders it is made clear that the Admiralty wants the Travellers to visit certain worlds and 'show the flag'. It should be pretty obvious

that the Travellers need to do this in order to complete their mission satisfactorily. Likewise their standing orders require that they uphold Imperial law, keep the peace and support local governments 'where appropriate'. This should indicate to the Travellers that a request for assistance from a world government should be carefully considered, but the Travellers cannot know for sure if this is one of the measured objectives contained in the Mission Success criteria listing, or 'merely' something that has cropped up along the way.

The referee should also be mindful of the fact that a naval ship is a large and complex system, and that senior officers do not have time to micromanage everything. Indeed, attempting to do so invariably leads to problems. The Travellers should be aware of the big picture as it is reported to them, but this is not the same as knowing exactly how many rounds of ammunition remain for the snub weapons in the arsenal. This information is available if the Travellers request it but for the most part naval officers have to rely on their subordinates to deal with details.

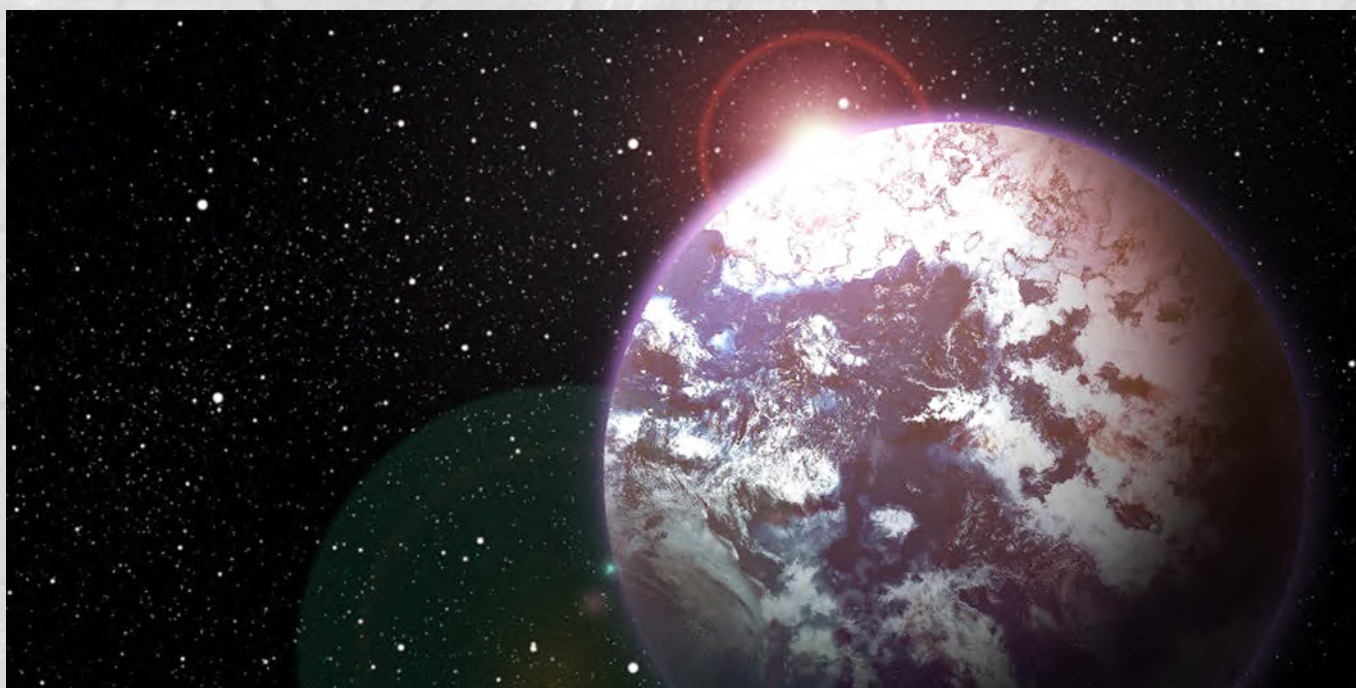
The captain needs to know the ship is ready for jump; the chief engineer needs to know a lot more about the drive systems but even she does not really have time to care exactly how stiff the manual fuel regulator valve is unless it comes to her attention as a problem. Thus there will be a lot going on aboard the ship that the senior officers do not need to know about and do not have time to deal with. Some of it will be undesirable, especially if morale is low, but the Travellers will need to learn how to make a ship function as a unit rather than rushing around trying to inspire every disaffected crewmember and count every bean aboard the ship.

Codes, Designations and Operational Security

Navies tend to use codes, often built around random words, to designate places, areas or vessels. They are also used to indicate some circumstances. For a routine patrol, actual system names may be used, and the operational area may not be encoded. This is the case in the Travellers' orders for their mission. However, the details of the mission are designated by the third word of the operational area reference.

Gulf Central refers to the general area of the patrol, whilst 'formative' is a random word assigned to a specific circumstance. A naval officer with proper authorisation could look this code up in the database and find that it refers to the specific systems to be visited and the time frame within which this is to be done.

A more secretive mission might instruct a ship to go to location Eraanii Foxfur and carry out Case Copper-Four. Even if the navy's encrypted messages were penetrated, only someone who knew what the codewords referred to would be able to decipher the orders. Codewords are regularly updated by courier and at bases, and are stored in heavily encrypted data vaults in naval ships. Breaches have occurred but for the most part the system has remained secure except where a ship with current codes has been captured intact by an enemy... which almost never happens.



CHAPTER-THREE

SHAKEDOWN

The mission is presented below as a series of information blocks. However, events may not follow a simple linear flow. For example, the vessel is ordered to 'show the flag' at several systems, but its visits may be interspersed with other events. There may be several incidences of flag-showing, with other activities in between. Much depends on the Travellers' choices.

A NEW COMMAND

The Travellers have received orders to report aboard INS *Sharshana* as her new command crew. Their journey to the naval base at Zeng is outside the scope of this mission; some will have been at the base for a while, others may just have arrived. Travellers transferring from a previous deployment will have arrived together; others will not know their new colleagues yet.

Events begin to unfold as the senior crew meet and prepare to transfer aboard their new vessel. Their orders are to take command of the cruiser – she currently has a set of 'caretaker' officers aboard, who will transfer control and then leave – and conduct a local patrol that will also serve as a shakedown cruise. The crew are already aboard. Some have been assigned to INS *Sharshana* for some months; others have arrived over the past few days. The Travellers can expect to find their ship provisioned and the crew familiar with their vessel, but as with any new ship's company the personnel will need to gain experience at working together and crewing this particular ship.

The Travellers' belongings will be transferred by a separate shuttle; they are going aboard in dress uniform to take command of a heavy cruiser, with an appropriate degree of ceremony. The referee should set the mood with a few details about the flight out to INS *Sharshana*:

- An honour-guard of eight marines troopers and a lieutenant from the naval base, who convey the command crew aboard their shuttle then smartly salute and march out of the naval base shuttle bay.
- Utility craft buzzing about the naval base as the shuttle begins her short transit over to the cruiser. A naval fighter decelerating sharply into parade formation with the shuttle, a snappy piece of flying made to look effortless. The fighter peels away under high acceleration as the shuttle enters the cruiser's docking bay, but stays welded to its wing until then.

- A system defence boat on security patrol flashing her running lights in salute.
- Light from the distant star glittering on the hull of INS *Sharshana*. A proud old ship with an honourable record. A heavy cruiser of the Imperial Navy. *Our Ship*.

The shuttle passes through the docking bay doors and settles into its berth as the bay is pressurised and the welcoming party file in. Behind them, forming up by divisions are the flight, gunnery and engineering crews; the stewards and the medics, the marines and the technicians. There is a podium set up for the new captain to greet his crew.

But first, there are formalities. The current commanding officer is a grey-haired Engineering lieutenant who has clearly looked after many ships whilst they are under repair. Identification and orders are presented; the ship's computer logs the new arrivals and confirms their status. At last the yard crew salute and announce they are relieved. As the new captain approaches the podium, the yard officers quietly enter the shuttle. Some look back, perhaps wistfully, though whether they are already missing the ship or envious of her crew, it is not possible to say.

The new captain needs to say something to the crew. Ideally, this takes the form of a solemn promise to lead them well and to make the navy proud... but the Travellers are in charge now and can make their own decisions. The crew must stand and listen, however long-winded or waffly the Travellers' speech might be.

The ceremony should make the Travellers feel that they are *important*... but also it is an opportunity for them to see just what a big job they have ahead of them. Every one of those crewmembers and officers depends on the Travellers to get them home after the mission, and with their honour intact. Lives will depend on their decisions, and great events might be influenced by the actions of this crew. Commanding a navy ship is no small task, and if the Travellers do not already realise this, they soon will.

APPRAISAL AND PREPARATION

The first order of business is a meeting of the command crew and any additional personnel the captain may decide to invite, to reveal the mission orders and begin the process of familiarisation with the ship and her crew.

ORDERS

DEPOT/DENEB: PATROL AND EVALUATION OPERATIONS

Admiral L. D. Ishshemu: officer commanding Reserve Cruiser Forces, Deneb Sector Fleet
Commanding Officer, Heavy Cruiser INS Sharshana

Sir, You are hereby requested and required to proceed aboard heavy cruiser INS Sharshana, currently at Zeng naval base/Zeng subsector, and take command of this vessel. You are to conduct post-refit appraisal and, if appropriate, proceed with patrol operations as detailed below. You are directed to report all defects and rectification requests upon return to base, at which time you will be advised as to retention of command.

You are first to conduct basic space trials and, if appropriate, to proceed via Sestos and Mtensc to patrol area designated Gulf-Central-Formative. There, you are to carry out patrol and general duties in each system of the patrol area, spending not less than five days (120 hours) in each system. Operations within the patrol area are at discretion. You are to return to base at Zeng within 140-180 days of leaving port.

Resupply will be made available at Nouakchat 50 days after mission commencement. The scout facility at Nouakchat will be unable to furnish significant resupply before this time.

INTELLIGENCE ASSESSMENT

Probability of major military opposition is negligible. Some corsair activity has been reported in the region in recent years.

Smuggling and 'grey commerce' are considered common, and the levels of such activity are of growing concern to the sector administration.

ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS

A supply vessel will make rendezvous with your command off Mtensc 20 days after leaving port at Zeng. You will take on supplies as an exercise, and furnish an initial report on the performance of INS Sharshana and her crew before proceeding with the remainder of your mission.

The Trin-Deneb Point-to-Point yacht race is due to pass through your patrol area during the latter stages of your deployment. Be advised that members of major noble houses may be aboard vessels encountered in the region. All due courtesy should be extended to senior members of the nobility encountered.

The racing yacht Sunburst Scatter is taking part in the race, crewed by cadets from the Spinward Marches Fleet. Assist this crew if possible, within the provisions of the race rules.

INFORMATION

Patrol area designated Gulf-Central-Formative consists of the following systems:

<i>Iruku</i>	<i>Taman</i>
<i>Nouakchat</i>	<i>Tuwayk</i>
<i>Beaxon</i>	<i>Noghon</i>

Your vessel is to provide a highly visible presence in the region, reassuring world governments and deterring illegal activity. Due consideration should be given to requests for assistance from world governments. It is considered desirable that boardings and searches be carried out in a very obvious manner as a deterrent to smugglers.

The Admiralty has the utmost confidence that you will carry out this mission with zeal and intelligence.

Good hunting, Captain.

Admiral L. D. Ishshemu

WHAT THE ORDERS MEAN

Naval orders are normally fairly clear. These orders require the Travellers to visit all of the named systems; those in the central cluster as well as Sestos and Mtensc. Only one specific instruction is given – the Travellers are to rendezvous with their supply ship at Mtensc at the designated time. They should realise that things are always imprecise due to the vagaries of the jump drive, and that the supply ship may be a little early or late.

The instruction to rendezvous ‘Off Mtensc’ means in orbit or close to the mainworld of that system. If the Travellers take it into their heads to wander halfway across the system whilst they are waiting, they will be out of position and in violation of their orders. That is fine if there is a valid reason, but without one the Travellers will have some explaining to do.

The rest of the orders are less specific. The Travellers must visit each of the systems for not less than 5 days each, but there is no mention of whether they must go to the outsystem, the mainworld, or anything in between. This is because they have discretion to do as they think best.

‘Patrol and general duties’ means carrying out routine operations – scanning passing ships, boarding suspect vessels or conducting random customs and paperwork checks, visiting mainworlds and ‘showing the flag’ in orbit and in port. The Travellers have a choice whether to be seen – as a deterrent and a reminder of Imperial power – or to hide and try to spot some illicit activity. Again, this is a matter of their discretion.

The Travellers have some additional information in the form of an intelligence assessment and notification about the forthcoming yacht race. This is not a set of orders – it is information they may be able to use. They are also told that smuggling and ‘grey commerce’ – a catch-all for semi-legal and underhand trading, transport of questionable goods and falsified manifests intended to reduce costs or deceive officials – is common in the area. This is a hint that they should be on the lookout for this sort of activity, but not a direct order to do any specific thing.

In short, the Travellers have been ordered to take their ship into a certain area and ‘do whatever navy stuff seems to need doing’. They will have to decide on the details for themselves.

Note that assuming the Travellers make as few jumps as possible and spend an entire week in each system, it

will take 22 weeks (154 days) to complete the mission. Taking a minimum of 5 days at each system lowers this to 132 days, assuming a standard 7-day jump in each case. The Travellers have 140-180 days to complete the mission, which gives them a margin of 30-50 days (4-7 weeks) to use at their discretion. Arriving back in port a few days late for a valid reason is acceptable, but an overdue vessel of any sort – especially a heavy cruiser – is grounds for serious concern. If the Travellers are very lax about timing they may find the subsector fleet out looking for them or whatever killed them.

Given the jump-4 range of the Travellers’ ship, they do not have to move through their target star systems in any given pattern. Indeed, progressing one parsec at a time makes their movements highly predictable whereas jumping greater distances may allow them to catch suspect vessels by surprise. If they fail to think of this, it may be mentioned at their final debriefing – predictable patrols are a pirate’s friend, as they say.

Mission Success Criteria

The Travellers ought to be able to infer most of their mission success criteria from their orders. Others will become apparent as events unfold – if a naval ship encounters a pirate vessel then under most conditions the way they deal with the situation will help dictate the success or otherwise of the mission, and any naval officer should be able to figure this out.

Some of the success criteria for this mission are based on the initial orders. Others are determined by the events that will unfold as the mission goes on.

See the Naval Campaign Guide for details of mission success indicator (MSI). The referee must assess success using the guidelines below.

Criterion 1: Conduct Flag-showing and general patrol operations in the designated area of operations and return to base within the expected time frame.
Importance: Routine

Complete success (MSI +2): The Travellers manage to visit each system and conduct meaningful operations there. This means either ‘showing the flag’ at the mainworld (and perhaps conducting some inspections at the port or in space) or carrying out a patrol sweep of another part of the system. For example, a sensor watch for several hours at a gas giant suitable for refuelling, and a scan of nearby moons for signs of a corsair or smuggler base would constitute a ‘meaningful operation’. NOTE: if the Travellers fail to complete this part of the mission due to a valid decision to deal with something more important, it will be considered to be a complete success for the purposes of determining overall mission outcome.

Partial success: (MSI +1): The Travellers manage to visit most of the worlds in their orders and carry out meaningful operations there.

Marginal success (MSI +0): The Travellers visit less than half of the worlds in their orders, or fail to carry out meaningful operations at the majority they visit.

Failure (MSI -2): It would be hard to fail such as simple objective, and a crew that manages it without a suitable explanation will be watched carefully in the future whatever the overall mission outcome may be. Failure is indicated by failing to carry out meaningful operations at (or even visits) to any of the world in their orders.

Criterion 2: Rendezvous with the supply ship off Mtensc
Importance: Routine

Complete Success: (MSI +2): The Travellers make a timely rendezvous and conduct a successful replenishment exercise.

Partial success: (MSI +1): The Travellers are late for the rendezvous or out of position, or make a hash of the replenishment exercise.

Marginal success (MSI +0): The Travellers are late or out of position and make a hash of the replenishment exercise.

Failure (MSI -2): Again, it would be hard to fail this objective. Missing the rendezvous entirely or suffering some disaster like a collision with the supply ship would constitute failure.

Criterion 3: Protect Commercial traffic
Importance: Important

Complete Success: (MSI +3): The Travellers successfully assist the distressed merchant ship, destroy or capture the corsair vessels and carry out operation during their patrol that overall make a good impression on the captains and port staff involved.

Partial success: (MSI +2): The Travellers assist the distressed merchant ship without total success, or carry out a slipshod and poorly executed patrol with numerous incidents that make the navy look less than highly competent.

Marginal success (MSI +1): The Travellers assist the distressed merchant ship without total success, and carry out a slipshod and poorly executed patrol... OR

either of these two operations goes badly awry.

Failure (MSI -4): Failure to save the distressed merchant ship (or destroy the attacker) accompanied by a chaotic patrol constitute failure of this objective.

Criterion 4: Provide aid to civil power
Importance: Important

Complete Success: (MSI +3): The Travellers resolve the situation with minimal force and with the navy's good reputation intact.

Partial success: (MSI +2): The Travellers resolve the situation in a messy and perhaps violent manner.

Marginal success (MSI +1): The Travellers make a credible attempt to resolve the situation, but ultimately fail... OR they decline to help but manage to find a lawyer-proof reason for their actions.

Failure (MSI -4): The Travellers' efforts are ineffectual or mishandled, or they refuse to assist without finding a suitable excuse.

Criterion 5: Locate and eliminate the pirate haven
Importance: Critical

Complete Success: (MSI +4): The Travellers locate the haven and eliminate it effectively.

Partial success: (MSI +2): The Travellers eliminate the secondary target.

Marginal success (MSI +1): The Travellers do some damage to the pirate operation.

Failure (MSI -8): The Travellers fail to do any significant harm to the pirate operation and/or the yacht race comes under attack.

Referee's Note: The maximum MSI available from this mission is 14, assuming complete success in all areas. It is highly unlikely that the Travellers will come close to this 'score', especially if this is their first naval mission. The referee should resist any temptation to be lenient. Commanding a naval ship is a tough job and the Travellers will need to work hard to complete their missions in a satisfactory manner.

APPRAISAL AND SPACE TRIALS

The first part of the Travellers' mission is carried out in the Zeng system. They are to run a set of standard trials and record the results. This is standard practice for any ship returning to service after a refit, and requires some low-power manoeuvring, high-acceleration runs, gunnery practice, orbital insertions around one of the outsystem planets, sensor tests against drone targets and the like. None of this is particularly difficult but the tests may show defects in the ship, especially after a major rebuild.

The trials will produce lists of thousands of minor defects, some of which can be fixed by the ship's maintenance personnel or engineers. They will be very busy for the first couple of weeks, and the Travellers would be well advised to assign some personnel from other departments to assist, but there is nothing fundamentally wrong with the ship. The yard personnel handed over a working vessel as they should have; huge lists of things that need tightening and components that require replacement are normal. Indeed, this is what a shakedown cruise is all about.

Some of the defects will need to wait until the vessel returns from her cruise, since they require the facilities of a shipyard. A few of the turrets do not traverse properly; a missile hoist is prone to sticking. M-drive calibration is slightly off. There is a leak somewhere in the water recycling system which requires shunting around it – which means there are a few cabins without working freshers. None of this prevents the ship from carrying out its mission.

The crew's performance must also be evaluated. The personnel who have been assigned are, with a few exceptions, competent and properly trained. However, they are a new crew with no experience of working together, and they are part of a 'peacetime' navy with

little combat experience among them. Thus the crew has an overall Crew Efficiency Index (CEI) of 6. This gives a -1 DM on large-scale task checks made by the crew or a detachment from it.

The Travellers might not be satisfied with this situation, but this is what they have to work with. They may be able to increase the effective value of their crew's CEI during the mission. See the Naval Campaign Guide for details.

The referee can make as much or as little of this phase as seems appropriate. Some Traveller groups will want to roleplay out the trials; others will not. Since the trials are conducted in a system with a naval base, the Travellers' activities will be observed and their performance monitored.

The trials can be resolved in great detail if the Travellers are enjoying the experience. At the least, the performance of the four main divisions of the crew should be determined separately, possibly resulting in some departments producing a more favourable performance than others.

Resolving the Trials

The Travellers must make an Average (8+) check using the Crew Efficiency Index (CEI) modifier of -1 for each of the four main divisions: Flight, Gunnery, Engineering and Crew. This may produce Incidents, Mishaps or Opportunities depending on the outcome. The referee can make as much or as little of these as seems appropriate, not forgetting that the trials are taking place in a base system. Nothing disastrous should happen at this stage, but the Travellers may be presented with some interesting situations which will help them learn how to deal with the unique circumstances of naval command.

To determine the performance of ship and crew during a mission segment, one of the Travellers will normally make a single check based on ECEI. As the mission goes on the referee should ask different Travellers to make whole-crew checks on a rotating basis. If the check concerns a particular Traveller's area of expertise (for example gunnery or engineering) then the relevant Traveller should make the check.

Assuming they are willing to obey their orders. The Travellers are now ready to make their first jump. After informing the base of successful space trials, they receive clearance to commence. The first jump in a refitted ship is always a tense occasion, but the drive works properly and the ship enters jump smoothly enough. Resolve the jump to Sestos using ECEI, which will indicate how well the ship performs. Ideally, INS *Sharshana* will emerge close to the mainworld in a generally favourable orientation. A poor result might place her out of position, requiring a mildly embarrassing transit into orbit. Nothing serious should go wrong at this stage, however.

SITREP

INS SHARSHANA

At the end of her trials the situation aboard INS *Sharshana* is as follows:

Factor	Value	Notes
Crew Efficiency Index (CEI)	6	-1 modifiers on all checks involving CEI
Effective Crew Efficiency Index (ECEI)	6	As above. ECEI may change during the mission.
Crew Morale (MOR)	6+1D	Naval ships determine MOR using CEI + 1D. The Travellers should determine MOR at this point.
Crewing Level	96%	It is commonplace for a vessel to have a few less personnel than her 'paper' crewing level. 96% is an entirely acceptable situation.
Supply Situation	80+2D%	It is entirely normal for a ship to have slightly less than a full set of supplies. The Travellers should determine their supply level at this point.

The Travellers might decide that they cannot possibly begin their mission with this crew, short of supplies and with everything less than perfect. Whining to the Admiralty will produce nothing other than a curt order to get on with the mission. Everything the Travellers need has been provided. Yes, there is plenty that they might want, but they have a workable ship and crew, sufficient supplies and provision for obtaining more. Indeed, their situation is better than many ships. If the Travellers cannot or will not get on with the job until everything is perfect then there are other officers who will.

CEI vs Skill Checks

The Travellers may wonder why they cannot use their own skills or those of a crewmember to resolve CEI checks. This is because CEI is designed to generate an indication of how the crew (or a part of it) handled a large and complex task that would require a great many skill checks to resolve and also involved interactions and teamwork that are not modelled by skill checks.

In almost all cases, a CEI check produces a successful (or successful-ish) completion of the task. It may be a chaotic mess, with incidents and mishaps, but the job will get done. If the Travellers want to improve performance, there are ways to do it other than increasing ECEI. For example, if the crew are trying to move supplies aboard in record time, the ship's logistics team might be ordered to prepare a most-efficient plan. This is a skill-specific task and can be resolved with the appropriate skill checks.

Measures of this sort will normally give a +1 DM to the CEI check, and in general only one such performance-improving measure can be taken per CEI check. However, if the Travellers come up with particularly good ideas they may be allowed more DMs. 'Good' in this case means 'in keeping with the style and tone of a naval campaign' rather than simply 'effective at providing the DM the Travellers want'.

A certain kind of Traveller will want to endlessly grind out DM-producing 'standard setups' for tasks. This is not what naval campaigns are about. Each clever plan to improve performance on a task is an opportunity for a mini-adventure. If it is reduced to just an extra die roll to get the +1DM, the referee should disallow the attempt.

THE MISSION: GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS

Once the mission begins, the Travellers are free to go wherever they please and to deal with what they find there according to their own discretion. Some considerations apply no matter what the Travellers choose to do, and so are detailed here rather than under any specific location.

SUPPLIES

A Ghalalk class cruiser has capacity for 50,000 Supply Units (SU) when fully loaded. This is stowed in lockers and holds built into the ship for the purpose, and does not use up any cargo space. Additional stores can be carried in cargo space; 100 SU uses up one ton of cargo hold. Stores carried in this manner require unpacking before use, which can be a lengthy task.

The Travellers' ship is stocked to 80+2D% of capacity, and uses a number of SU equal to 1% of its tonnage – in other words, 500SU – each day unless measures have been taken to reduce consumption. If this is to be done, see the Naval Campaign Guide for details.

Obviously the Travellers do not have enough supplies aboard to complete their mission. Air and water can be recycled, but fuel and stores must be replenished. The mission orders make provision for this; a supply ship will deliver stores to Nouakchat once the mission is underway. These can be picked up whenever the Travellers choose to do so.

Supplies can also be obtained at other ports. Most friendly ports will resupply the ship in return for a letter of credit. The navy prefers not to buy supplies in this manner, partly due to the expense and partly because it makes the fleet seem dependent on the commercial sector. Wherever possible, the navy uses its own supply chain, buying what it needs in bulk and sending it out directly to ships on deployment.

Civilian ports will have common items such as food and standard electronic components available but will lack some of the specialist supplies needed by naval vessels. Ports can be considered to 'generate' supply points every day – this is an abstract representation of imports

from the local worlds, items brought in on passing ships and equipment manufactured at the port or salvaged from damaged vessels.

The table below indicates the amount of SU available at any given time at a given port, and amount of SU generated each day. If a port's stocks are significantly depleted, the available SU should be determined anew. The amount of supplies available will increase each day until this amount is reached. If a naval crew chooses to do so, it can remain at a port for some time and fully restock, but cleaning out the warehouses every few days will cause resentment.

Port Class	Supply Units Available	SU Per Day
A	2Dx10,000 (Average 70,000)	2Dx1000
B	8Dx1000 (Average 28,000)	8Dx100
C	2Dx1000 (Average 7,000)	2Dx100
D	8Dx100 (Average 2,800)	8Dx10
E	2Dx100 (Average 700)	2Dx10

Naval bases maintain vast stocks of supplies and, under normal circumstances, can resupply all the ships based there.

SHIP ENCOUNTERS

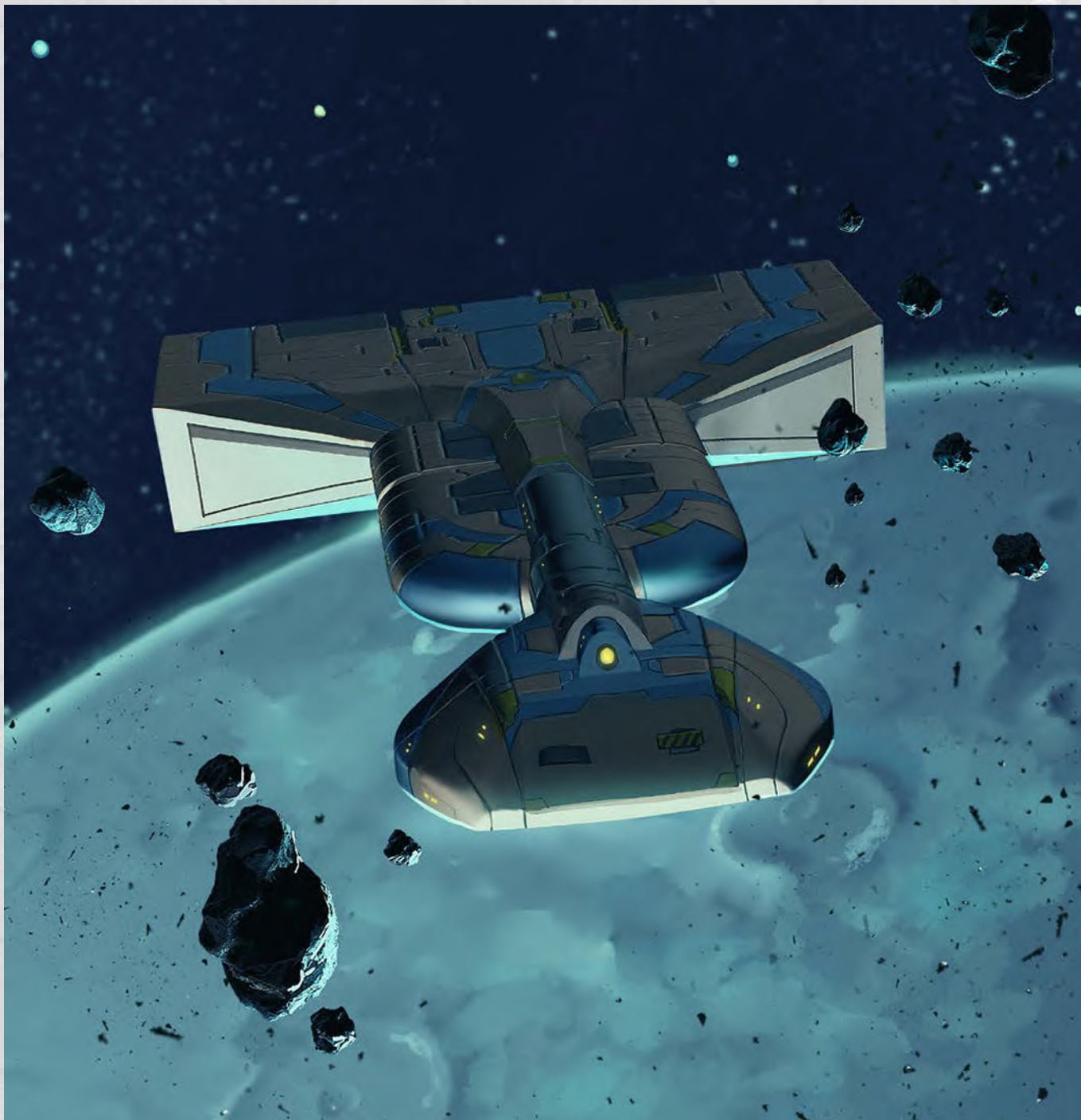
Encounters with other vessels are likely in the course of the mission, and should be determined normally. If the Travellers choose to turn off their transponder and 'run silent' their ship is unlikely to be detected by a typical merchant ship's sensors providing care is taken to avoid getting too close. This can be useful if the Travellers want to observe the situation without revealing their presence or are hoping to catch a suspect vessel unawares.

If the Travellers want to 'show the flag' they will have to run their transponder constantly, advertising to all vessels within range that a navy cruiser is present. There is little reason to fear being ambushed by an enemy capable of doing serious harm to their ship, so the Travellers will likely prefer to advertise their presence unless they have a good reason not to.

Vessels encountered during the mission will tend to be respectful or at least take notice of the Travellers' ship – a heavy cruiser is impressive or threatening depending on whether you're doing something you should not be. Crews who do not like the navy might be insolent or engage in passive resistance, but the Travellers not only have all the big guns; they also have the force of law on their side. They can order a ship to heave-to for boarding, inspect her paperwork and go through the cargo manifest if they please... though unduly harassing or delaying commercial traffic will get them into trouble.

Some ships will have something to hide. They may try to avoid detection or act innocent in the hope of not being searched. They may even try the sort of crazy stunt a typical band of Travellers might attempt – the referee can have some fun as the Travellers witness their own antics from a previous game through the eyes of those they were trying to deceive, avoid or misdirect.

If a ship refuses to halt or appears threatening, it can be fired upon. This is a big decision however; a captain who puts holes in a merchant ship is going to have to explain



his reasoning upon return to port. Running from the navy is grounds for arrest, but not necessarily for a salvo of missiles. Handling an uncooperative civilian ship can be a delicate business, and the Travellers must never forget that they are accountable.

INTELLIGENCE GATHERING

One of the reasons ships are sent out on patrol is to gather routine intelligence and monitor the situation first-hand. The Travellers' crew will maintain a standard intelligence-gathering posture unless told to deviate from normal practice. Sensor data will be collated and analysed, personnel sent planetside will provide reports on what they saw and heard, and information on ships encountered will be cross-referenced with other available data.

Most of the time this information is entirely mundane, and simply feeds into the vast amount of data already known about local conditions. However, occasionally something unusual is spotted and the ship has the opportunity to follow up. The price for this is constant attention to little details, most of which are irrelevant.

An Intelligence Event normally occurs at the beginning of each mission segment. At this point the referee determines the quality of information available to the Travellers, which in turn may impose a modifier on the tasks they attempt. The Intelligence Event is resolved by making an Investigate check and consulting the Intelligence Events table on P29 of the Naval Campaign Guide.

If the Travellers are not satisfied with the quality of information available to them they may decide to take measures to improve it, for example by conducting a detailed sensor sweep or sending some personnel planetside with a specific intelligence-gathering mission. This can be time-consuming, and often the Travellers will need to do the best they can with the data they have.

An additional Intelligence Event takes place at each mainworld the Travellers visit. The referee should require an Average (8+) Investigate check, made as the ship is leaving the system. The Travellers will not be told what this is for, other than 'to determine the quality of routine intelligence gathering'.

The referee should keep a running total of the number of successes scored on these checks. This will affect the mission finale, and will be discussed there.

SHOWING THE FLAG

Much of the Travellers' mission will be fairly routine; a matter of being seen and doing the job under normal conditions. They will proceed among the worlds of their patrol area and carry out the mission, resolving events as they occur. Any fuel-skimming operation or stop-and-search of a suspect merchant vessel has the potential to expand into an adventure, as determined by the normal mission segment resolution process.

Against the backdrop of these mundane activities, a number of scripted incidents will occur. These do not necessarily have to be in the order presented, but the finale ('Strike Mission') cannot begin until these incidents have been resolved.

Every 2D weeks, there is a chance that Effective Crew Efficiency Index may change. The referee should determine the time frame when the Travellers leave Zeng, and again after each attempt. When this time is up, The vessel's commanding officer must make a Difficult (10+) Leadership check (INT) and apply the Effect as a DM on the table below to determine whether the crew remains effective.

ECEI Changes

2D + Effect	Result
0-	Morale collapses (-1D+3 Morale) and the crew is near mutiny. Reduce ECEI by -3
1-2	-1D Morale. Reduce ECEI by -2
3-4	-D3 Morale. Reduce ECEI by -1
5-8	No change
9-11	The crew gains confidence. +1 Morale
12+	Efficiency and morale increase. +1 ECEI, +D3 Morale

In addition, there will be opportunities to improve ECEI as the mission unfolds. The most likely situation is a 'solid success' as described in the Naval Campaign Guide, but other events may also modify ECEI. Smart Travellers might deliberately engineer a situation where their crew can succeed and gain confidence. This is a valid leadership gambit, but the referee should not be too lenient in letting the Travellers engineer ECEI-improvement situations on a frequent basis.

CHAPTER-SIX

EN ROUTE

The first requirement is to reach the designated patrol area. The Travellers have been ordered to proceed via Sestos and Mtensc. Both have gas giants, and the Travellers are expected to skim fuel at Sestos before moving on. They also have orders to carry out the usual flag-showing operations in the system. These two systems provide an opportunity for the Travellers to establish their operating procedures.

Sestos is a backwater which sees little traffic, though there may be a few small merchant ships in the system. The arrival of a heavy cruiser will cause a slight stir – though the Travellers may not be aware of it. These systems are normally patrolled by small escorts or perhaps destroyers; major warships rarely visit. There will always be those who leap to the conclusion that ‘something big’ is afoot when a major ship puts into the starport, but for the most part the response will be what the Travellers expect and want; the locals are reminded that the navy is doing its job, and that its vessels are powerful enough to deal with whatever might happen.

Events at Sestos should be resolved as normal. Little things like a sloppy orbital insertion or indiscipline among crewmembers going planetside can undermine the success of a flag-showing mission. However, it might benefit the Travellers to have something go mildly wrong at this non-critical stage in the mission. If they become aware of underperformance they will have a chance to correct it as the mission progresses. The referee should thus ensure that the Travellers get some feedback and indications that their crew has room for improvement.

After Sestos, the Travellers are to proceed to Mtensc. This is another backwater system with low starship traffic. The supply ship *Shuursima Ki* is due to make rendezvous off the mainworld 20 days after the Travellers leave port. This is of course an expected date; all manner of factors can make a ship a few days early or late. In fact, *Shuursima Ki* arrives 22 days rather than 20 after the Travellers’ departure from Zeng. This may give them cause to worry or be annoyed at the supply ship’s captain, but in fact the arrival time is well within the expected parameters.

The replenishment exercise is a change for the Travellers’ crew to succeed and gain confidence, perhaps increasing their ECEI. If the Travellers are careful to set up the situation such that their crew gains bonus DMs to

their task checks, this operation could be a resounding success. Of course, there is plenty to go wrong....

The rendezvous and resupply exercise could be abstracted as a single check using the crew’s ECEI, but the referee is urged to play it out as an adventure. There are opportunities for the captain to display steady leadership and the other Travellers to show their skills... and for some roleplaying too. Any operation can be expanded into an adventure in this manner, either on the fly or with preparation beforehand.

INS Shuursima Ki

Shuursima Ki is a naval logistics ship. She displaces 5000 tons and is lightly armed for self-defence. She can make 2g acceleration and jump-2, and carries sufficient supplies to fully restock the Travellers’ vessel more than twice over. Full stats are not needed for this vessel, as she is to a great extent ‘scenery’ in this adventure.

The crew of *Shuursima Ki* are typical ‘peacetime professionals’; they are well enough trained and good enough at their jobs but they are complacent and a little bored with their humdrum role. If *Shuursima Ki* needs to make a check to resolve any actions, it is made using here ECEI of 6, which imposes a -1 DM.

THE RENDEZVOUS

Being in the right place at the right time is a good start to the operation. *Shuursima Ki* is a little late but if the Travellers are sensible their ship will be close to the mainworld and positioned to make a timely intercept. If not, a -2 DM applies to pilot checks to determine the approach and docking – assuming the Travellers are out of position but fairly close to the mainworld. If they are off exploring the outer planets, several days will be needed to transit back to the rendezvous and a poor impression will be created.

The Travellers’ pilot (or the officer overseeing manoeuvre operations) must make an Average (8+) Pilot check to

make a smart approach and clean-first-time connection using the UNREP (Underway Replenishment) system. It is inadvisable to try to manoeuvre whilst the ships are connected, though it can be done by giving one ship remote command of the other's drives. There is no need to do so on this occasion, other perhaps than occasional station-keeping nudges. Thus once the ships are docked, the pilot need do nothing more than stand ready in case something goes wrong.

If a Traveller is the pilot, then he may use his normal skill and modifiers. If not, the ship's captain (or another officer given responsibility for the rendezvous) may use his own Pilot skill, in this case representing his ability to tell the pilot exactly what to do. The referee should record the Effect of this check. If the Travellers had to transit back to the mainworld, an Effect of -4 is assumed to have occurred, unless the pilot somehow managed to produce a worse result.

A disaster is unlikely at this point, but it is possible to bungle the docking several times or even cause a minor collision. Trying something ridiculous such as coming in at high speed and decelerating hard into a perfect position will result in a reprimand at the very least when the Travellers return to port. This is assuming no harm was caused – cruiser commanders should know better than to try to hot-dog a 50,000 ton ship like it was a fighter.

A positive Effect on the Pilot check indicates a smart and professional, non-nonsense docking. It is not exactly quick – a heavy cruiser must be handled carefully in close proximity to other ships – but the job is done in an efficient manner. This gives no bonus to the CEI check to resolve the supply exercise, but it is one of two requirements for an ECEI-increase opportunity.

THE RESUPPLY EXERCISE

Resupplying a warship in space is nothing unusual, but this is the first time the Travellers' crew has done it in this vessel. The UNREP system can handle liquids and containers, which are floated at high speed in a grav-plate lined tube. Sorting and stowing the containers is a complex task, and since this is an exercise the supply ship has been instructed to make a few deliberate mistakes. Some containers are in the wrong order, or mislabelled, or both. Ensuring that everything goes where it is supposed to requires an Average (8+) Admin check on behalf of the XO or logistics officer. Success indicates the crew spotted the errors and avoided any hiccups such as a build-up of containers in the receiving area, which would require slowing the transfer process whilst the backlog is cleared.

Whilst this operation is going on, *Shuuursima Ki* urgently reports a sensor contact headed towards the two ships. It may well be just a passing Free Trader or something similar, but the ships are vulnerable whilst they are docked together. As this is a threat situation the Travellers have responsibility for dealing with the situation.

A suitable response would be to undertake a focussed sensor sweep, contact the 'bogey' and ask its identity, and perhaps warn it to change course away from the sensitive area around the two naval ships. A prudent captain might send a small craft to 'eyeball' the bogey, obtaining visual confirmation that it is not a threat. Extreme responses like a panicky undocking or a salvo of missiles represent – at the very least! – failure of the exercise. A captain who fires on an unidentified sensor blip in friendly space will not retain his command.



The threat situation should be played out as a mini-adventure. A successful sensor check will indicate that it is a vessel of approximately 400 tons displacement, coasting on an orbital insertion path that will take it too close for comfort to the docked naval ships. It does not respond to communications attempts. Emissions are normal for a small merchant ship, and there are no signs of weapons-related sensors in use.

At this point, the Travellers might start issuing stern warnings and bringing weapons on-line, just in case. Undocking is an option, though the threat posed by any 400t ship to a heavy cruiser is minimal. The bogey can be properly identified by a Very Difficult (12+) sensors check (which can be repeated every 2D minutes until it succeeds) or 'eyeballing' it with a small craft. It is, of course, a naval decoy drone mimicking a small merchant ship as part of the exercise.

OUTCOMES

If the Travellers make a good docking and conduct an efficient resupply exercise – in other words they achieve a positive Effect on the Pilot check to dock and the Admin check to stow the stores then providing

their response to the simulated threat situation was competent they have a solid success to show their crew. This is an opportunity to attempt to increase ECEI as per the Naval Campaign Guide.

There is an additional opportunity here, if the Travellers think of it. The resupply exercise fills their supply stocks to 100%, which is all that is authorised. However, if the Travellers can convince the supply ship captain it is necessary, he would be willing to let them take additional supplies to be stowed in their cargo bay.

The Travellers can convince the supply ship captain to part with an additional amount of supplies equal to 3Dx100x the Effect of an Average (8+) check using an appropriate skill. This might be Admin, to demonstrate a need, or Diplomat to just come out and ask for more. Other skills might be used by clever Travellers, but only one check can be made.

100 Supply Units (SU) takes up one ton of cargo space. The Travellers' ship normally uses 500 units of supplies per day. Whilst the ship has more supplies aboard than its normal capacity, the Travellers can claim a +1 DM on CEI checks.



CHAPTER-SEVEN

ON STATION

After Mtensc the Travellers are free to undertake their patrol at discretion, visiting worlds in whatever order they please, and for however long. There will be encounters with shipping in the region, which are determined and resolved normally as per the Traveller rules. Some of these encounters may generate adventures, others may be resolved using a CEI check or simply narrated.

Naval campaigns are about the big picture, so it is sometimes acceptable for the referee to gloss over several days of patrolling: 'Four small merchant ships were encountered during a 6-day deployment in this system. One ship was boarded and inspected. No contraband or irregularities were found.'

Conversely, most of the time the Travellers will remain aboard their ship even when it is in port. The captain of a cruiser has no business brawling in portside taverns or leading his marines, pistol in hand. There are situations where the command team might get into trouble planetside or may decide to handle a situation personally, but for the most part the naval campaign is about a ship's company rather than individual Travellers. The referee may have to guide the Travellers to this understanding during the patrol; if they insist on doing everything themselves then perhaps naval campaigning is not right for them.

During the patrol there can be as many incidents, encounters and adventure opportunities as the referee pleases. However, there are some scripted events that must take place before the mission storyline can move to its finale. If, for some reason, the Travellers deviate so wildly from their planned mission that these events cannot occur, then the yacht race will go ahead on time and will come under attack by pirates. In the aftermath the Travellers will have to explain why they failed to prevent this from occurring... an opportunity to use the court-martial rules perhaps.

THE ZEGLAASHSHISH INCIDENT

This incident can take place in any star system. As the Travellers' ship emerges from jump, it picks up a distress call from the *Zeglaashshish*, a Type A2 Far Trader. The ship's registry checks out if the Travellers look her up in their database; she is an old tramp trader with a few minor infractions on her record. According to her telemetry she is heavily damaged, with systems failing shipwide.

Zeglaashshish is under fire from another vessel; an 800-ton mercenary cruiser. She has no transponder running, and does not respond even when her systems are interrogated by a navy 'identify yourself' code. She is obviously a corsair, and breaks off almost immediately and begins to accelerate away. The arrival of a 50,000 ton heavy cruiser has apparently altered the odds in a way these pirates do not like!

The problem confronting the Travellers is that the two ships are on divergent courses and *Zeglaashshish's* drive is disabled. Her crew are in immediate and severe danger, and even if the fires and system failures aboard their ship do not kill them, the mainworld's gravity will eventually cause the ship to enter atmosphere and be destroyed. The corsair is running out to jump, and may be able to escape if the Travellers concentrate on rescuing the merchant crew.

DEALING WITH THE CORSAIR

The corsair is far enough away – and the penalty for piracy so harsh – that its crew have nothing to lose if they run. They are clever enough to choose an escape vector that puts the *Zeglaashshish* between them and the big guns of the cruiser. If the Travellers fire on the corsair with energy weapons they risk hitting the merchant.



Of course, they may decide to do just that. If so, the gunners will require explicit and precise instructions which make the Travellers responsible for any harm caused to the merchant crew. Hitting the corsair with energy weapons requires a Very Difficult (12+) Gunnery check. An Effect of -2 or less indicates the merchant has been hit instead.

The Travellers may realise it is possible to launch missiles on a dogleg course around the merchant ship, or to change their vector to unmask the target. However, the latter will increase the time taken to reach and rescue the merchant crew, and could be countered by the corsair crew making their own manoeuvres.

To unmask the target and give their gunners a clear shot, the Travellers need to outmanoeuvre the corsair vessel. This requires an opposed Pilot check by the Travellers' pilot or officer in charge of manoeuvring. The mercenary cruiser's thrust of 3 and Pilot skill of 2 impose a -5DM; against this the Travellers have their own thrust of 6 and their Pilot skill. An Average (8+) check means that the Travellers have a clear shot for that round only.

The corsairs want to reach a safe jump distance, which will take them 2D+2 rounds. However, they are willing to risk an emergency jump if their ship is likely to be destroyed. They will not fire on the cruiser – it is pointless and might make things worse – but they are willing to shoot up the merchant ship some more, or to fire at missiles or small craft if it will facilitate their escape.

The most likely resolution to his situation is an exchange of threat and counter-threat as the Travellers warn the corsairs they will be fired upon and the corsairs threaten to shoot up the merchant ship unless they are permitted to leave.

The Mercenary Cruiser has a CEI of 7 and a Morale of 8. Since the crew may face the death penalty for piracy they will not automatically surrender if Morale drops to 0, but may well choose to make an emergency jump and hope for the best. In the interim they may be persuaded to surrender, which requires a Difficult (10+) Diplomat or Persuade check with a negative DM equal to the crew's remaining Morale.

Each time the Morale of the corsair crew is reduced, the Travellers' negotiator can make an attempt to induce surrender, with current Morale (Morale value after the reduction) as a negative DM to the check.

- Morale is reduced by 1 each round the Travellers' ship (or its armed subordinate craft) have a clear shot at the corsair.
- Morale is reduced by an additional 1 if the corsair vessel is hit by weapons fire and its armour penetrated.

Only one attempt can be made per round to induce the corsairs to surrender. If their jump drive is disabled, they may still make a futile attempt at resistance since they expect to be spaced anyway. They may also try to bargain for their lives, offering information in return for leniency. Their ability to destroy the merchant ship is their best bargaining chip throughout the whole exchange, and the corsairs are well aware of this.

The Travellers have a difficult situation here, in which their formidable weaponry does not provide a simple solution. Instead, it is a negotiating tool that may enable them to reap a harvest of convictions and information – a better outcome than vaporising a corsair, though that is acceptable. Callous solutions like firing the spinal mount through the merchant ship at the corsair will result in court-martial and severe consequences.

RESCUING THE MERCHANT

Zeglaashshish is in desperate trouble. She has hull breaches, internal fires and power system failures. She is not responding to the helm and her weapons turret is a cloud of debris. Her crew of five are injured and unable to control their ship. Two are in the bridge, trapped by a twisted bulkhead that has jammed the iris valve. The others are elsewhere in the ship, condition unknown, and with internal comms down it is not possible to say if they are dead or alive.

The Travellers will need to coordinate a rescue. Engineering officers might go aboard the stricken merchant ship, but the senior command team have no business leading a boarding party. Instead the rescue will be controlled from the cruiser, with the Travellers having to work through video feeds and real-time reports from the boarding party.

When the Travellers arrive, the crew are all alive, though some of them are badly hurt. The boarding party will need to search a heavily damaged ship, possibly cutting away wreckage or dousing fires, to reach the crewmembers and then bring them aboard. This can

be abstracted with a DEI check for the boarding party, or the Travellers can remotely control their actions and make skill checks for them – essentially telling the personnel aboard the merchant vessel what to do. An obviously dumb order will be questioned by someone with relevant skills, but the boarders have to obey or refuse the order if it is repeated. Getting personnel injured or killed through bad micromanagement will impose a minor crew Morale check.

Ideally, the Travellers should be able to get the crew off the damaged merchant ship and may be able to attach cables and use their small craft to tow it into a stable orbit. Saving the ship in this way will really impress observers, though just getting anyone out alive can be considered at least a partial success.

INTEL FROM THE INCIDENT

Some facts are obvious and will be presented by the Travellers' intelligence staff.

The corsair was a Mercenary Cruiser, original identity unknown. There have been no reports of corsair activity involving such vessels in this area over the past few years, but there have been raids on remote settlements and installations that a vessel of this type would be well suited to. Mercenary cruisers make good corsair vessels but are generally uncommon in the role as they are expensive and obviously paramilitary in nature. They are also a little difficult to get hold of, as most shipyards require certification as a mercenary unit or other accountable group before completing the sale.

Although its original identity (and thus where it was obtained from) is unclear, the vessel was operating under the rather grandiose name *Rosax Ravager*. It was also displaying visual imagery on its hull – an axe and a stylised rocket ship, crossed on a blood-red background – that corresponds to no known mercenary formation. It may be that this is a blatant piece of self-declaration, perhaps proclaiming membership of a previously unknown pirate or raider group.

Little more could be determined from the sensor data gathered by *Zeglaashshish*, other than the fact that *Ravager* maintained a strict EMCON (Emissions Control) posture which made her very difficult to detect until she launched her attack. Her movements and general demeanour were more professional than the typical pirate vessel. It is possible she is part of an organised group. If so, her purpose may not be simple piracy for profit but could be linked to economic warfare on behalf of some as yet unknown group.

If the Travellers took prisoners for interrogation, they will be able to learn a little more. *Ravager* is one of several ships – the captives' estimates vary considerably and it is clear they do not really know for sure – operated by an organisation calling itself Rosax Security. 'Rosax' is presumably a corruption of 'rocket ship and axe', the organisation's logo, but there is no such mercenary formation operating under license in Deneb or Spinward Marches sectors.

It is possible that this is an unlicensed formation, or an organisation that has chosen to appear to be a legitimate mercenary outfit. That can have advantages; some corsairs have been known to make a series of attacks then offer their services as escorts for local traffic, collecting an easy fee to deter raids they know will not come.

Captives seem to be well trained and professional for the most part. They are anything but wild-eyed revolutionaries, terrorists or desperadoes seeking a quick profit. They do seem to be more like members of a mercenary organisation than the typical pirate, and will try to use this as a defence against piracy charges. They say they were hired by a mysterious client to ambush that particular ship, but they do not know why.

The Travellers will not be able to find anything aboard the wreck to suggest why, and the crew of *Zeglaashshish* seem to be just typical spacers. There is something afoot for sure, but at present it is not obvious what. This may induce the Travellers to step up their intelligence gathering efforts as they proceed with the patrol.

INTEL FROM PRISONERS

If the Travellers manage to capture some of the Rosax personnel alive, they may be able to obtain information from them. However, they will have to make some decisions about how to treat them. Although piracy usually carries a blanket death penalty, the reality is more complex and summary execution is only permitted in the case where a death warrant has been issued for a known pirate, or in certain situations such as when escape is likely and cannot be risked. Otherwise, pirates are to be handed to the proper authorities – usually at a naval base, but a Class A or B starport usually has facilities – for trial and sentencing.

The automatic death penalty is often commuted to a much more lenient sentence in return for information about other pirates and their operations. Much depends

on where the pirates are tried and the prevailing political conditions. Smart pirates may bargain for promises of leniency or an agreement about where they will be tried, which can amount to the same thing. Certain ports are more likely to recognise mitigating conditions or even find a pirate innocent for a variety of reasons. This can include corruption and influence of course, but also the details of the local legal system. A pirate who has not committed certain acts and arranges to be tried in the right court can often avoid a harsh penalty and may even be recognised as a legitimate privateer and released.

Thus the politics of piracy are complex, and the crew of *Ravager* know this. They will provide some information in return for an agreement they are to be tried in one of the courts named in their contract. It is within the Travellers' power to grant this if they choose, and their superiors will honour a deal but may question it.

If the Travellers do not make a deal with the corsairs, they may still be able to interrogate them for information. Torture and extreme measures are not tolerated, but an officer trained in interrogation techniques can obtain a lot of information over time. A Difficult (10+) Investigate or Persuade check will obtain some useful information.

The corsairs maintain that they are not pirates and have not engaged in piracy as defined under Imperial laws. How a court would view this claim varies a lot, which makes it important to them where they are sent for trial. They claim they are employees of Rosax Security, an unregistered but 'legit' (whatever they mean by that) starmerc unit. They say they were not committing acts of piracy for profit but were engaging in commerce raiding and economic warfare on behalf of a client whose identity is not known to the personnel in the field.

The corsairs know that Rosax Security has several ships in the area and it was planned to set up a base somewhere. They do not know where; their information comes to them through a complex set of electronic message drops at starports outside the current operating area. They had the impression that their task was to destabilise the area but for what purpose they did not know. In their experience – and that of the Travellers – the most likely reasons would be to weaken a political or economic opponent which would suggest the Duke of Zeng or Duchess of Trin is the indirect target. This is, however, nothing more than surmise.

AID TO CIVIL POWER

This mission segment takes place at Beaxon, an overcrowded water world with a dense atmosphere. Beaxon has been Amber Zoned for years as it suffers from serious internal dissent. Its starport is partially ruined, and is known to be infested with scavenger gangs who occasionally prey on visiting starships.

Imperial pressure has been brought to bear on the world government to resolve the situation, but the government in turn demands investment and assistance, stating that it lacks the resources to improve conditions for its people or even to suppress them thoroughly. There is some truth in this; it has been observed in several other situations that if economic output lags by too much as a world's population increases a downward spiral is inevitable.

Although this is undesirable, the Imperium is a big place and Beaxon is not very important in the grand scheme of things. The cost of revitalising Beaxon's economy and improving its living conditions to the point where the populace are less restive would be far beyond any possible return on a meaningful timeframe. So Beaxon has received a token investment package and some words of encouragement from the Duke of Zeng. The Travellers will have no data on how the investment was used other than a standard statement of the sort that always accompanies such a gesture. This lists improvements to the starport as one of the goals; it will be apparent that none have been made.

The Imperium has a policy that the internal affairs of a world government are its own business. A formal intervention can be made in some circumstances but even if it were desirable the Imperium cannot afford to become bogged down in long-term projects on worlds like Beaxon. On the other hand, the Travellers are required to provide assistance 'in so far as is reasonable' to the legitimate and recognised government of any member world if they are requested to do so. It does not matter whether the government is nice or nasty, nor what the Travellers think of the situation. As naval officers they serve the Imperium and the Imperium recognises the government of Beaxon. They are not permitted to act against that government and they are expected to assist it if it asks.

Of course, how they assist is up to them.

The situation at Beaxon is becoming serious. There has been unrest in the cities for many years, but recently it has escalated into a number of urban insurgencies. None is very particularly large or powerful, and they do not appear to be coordinated, but there is a general feeling that the government is losing control over parts of the cities. More importantly, not long before the Travellers arrive a force of insurgents take control of part of the starport.

Upon arrival, the Travellers receive a signal from the world government, whose seat is in one of the cities quite distant from the port. The government itself is not in danger but there are offworlders in danger at the port. The situation is confused, but it appears that a large force of militia have infiltrated the ruined parts of the starport and launched an offensive from there. The landing area has been overrun, with three small merchant ships on the pad. These are thought to be safe enough for now, but their crewmembers who were in the working part of the port are cut off from their vessels.

The small starport security force is fighting a defensive action but is being ground down by superior numbers. Reinforcements from other cities are taking too long to organise due to other uprisings and transport difficulties. Thus the government of Beaxon requests Aid to Civil Power from the Travellers' ship. World governments are empowered to do this, and reasonable requests must be accommodated.

FORCES AT THE PORT

There are several hundred insurgents in the starport area, but they are not well organised and tend to be scattered in small groups other than where a charismatic leader holds fifty or so together. They are armed with civilian weapons, mostly handguns, shotguns and carbines. These are effective in the short-ranged firefights that have thus occurred. The insurgents have plenty of ammunition but no real logistics apparatus. Thus any given group may be short of ammunition and some attacks have failed because fighters had to go all the way back to a stash to get more.

The insurgents are not wild-eyed terrorists. They are disaffected citizens whose leaders believe they can wring concessions out of the government by taking control of the port and essentially holding it to ransom.

Most of the insurgents are inclined to be merciful towards anyone not actually shooting at them. In short, they are not bad people, though the world government will try to paint them in a grim light. The insurgents are fervent in their opposition to the government but inexperienced and scared.

The insurgents can be considered to have a Detachment Efficiency Index of 5, giving a -1 DM on checks to resolve their actions. They rate this only due to their fervour and fear of the consequences if they fail – they expect to receive an amnesty as part of their deal to hand back the starport. This is a rather optimistic outlook, but it is what they believe.

There are also several scavenger gangs, each numbering no more than a dozen, hiding in the wrecked part of the starport. They want no part of the fighting but have a few weapons and will fight if fired upon. Scavengers have no organisation – one group is unlikely to come to the aid of another. Scavenger groups can be considered to have a DEI of 3, imposing a -3DM on checks to resolve their actions.

The defenders of the port are security personnel rather than combat troops. They have light body armour and are armed with a mix of submachineguns and shotguns plus sidearms. They are badly outnumbered and short of ammunition, and have only managed to hold out due to the disorganisation of the enemy. The security force has a DEI of 7, imposing a 0 modifier on checks to resolve their actions.

RESOLVING THE SITUATION

The Travellers are obliged to respond to the request for assistance, and in any case the fighting is taking place at the starport which is Imperial territory. This actually gives the Travellers jurisdiction over the situation and the fate of any prisoners taken. It will not be possible to solve the problem with heavy weapons fire from orbit – not without facing a court-martial anyway – so the Travellers will need to deploy troops to secure the area.

Exactly how that plays out depends on the Travellers' actions. The insurgents are disorganised, so the Travellers will not have to fight them all at once. It may be enough to make a demonstration of force and open negotiations, though if the Travellers simply put shuttles full of personnel on the landing pad they will come under fire from the surrounding buildings and may take unnecessary casualties in the open.

The insurgents will negotiate, but they know their government will treat them harshly – perhaps execute them – if they surrender without good terms. The Travellers will need to either find a way to protect them from this fate or else to convince them that it will not happen. They will then have to deal with the government response if they have negotiated terms or made assurances. Or watch as the government of Beaxon quite lawfully executes the prisoners the Travellers handed over to them.

The most likely resolution to this situation is for the Travellers to land a force to secure at least part of the starport, then negotiate. They will need to achieve a victory over at least a part of the insurgent force before meaningful negotiation can take place. The action planetside should be resolved using the rules in the Naval Campaign Guide, remembering to determine casualties afterward. The Travellers will have to decide what to do with injured or dead personnel once their work at Beaxon is done.

Officials from the local government will demand the insurgents be rounded up, disarmed and handed over to them. They may even instruct the Travellers to execute some or all of them. This goes far beyond 'aid to civil power' and the Travellers are well within their rights to refuse. They may also become concerned that they are sending their prisoners to their deaths. How they deal with this is up to them.

Referee's Note

The same situation might play out very differently with a typical band of Travellers, whose focus would be different. In this case the Travellers need to realise they are making big strategic and political decisions. Personnel sent planetside to fight the insurgents are not the focus of the story; the focus is on the decisions made by the Travellers. Are they comfortable sending prisoners to be executed? Will they get bogged down in a guerrilla campaign in the ruined parts of the starport? To succeed they must realise they are operating on a wholly different level to the average band of Travellers, and their decisions will affect the lives of a great many people.

CHAPTER-NINE

STRIKE MISSION

This part of the mission begins when the Travellers visit the scout base at Nouakchat to resupply. The base is a small affair, supporting local operations only, and the supplies will need to be transferred aboard using the Travellers' own shuttles. This will take a while, but since the Travellers are under orders to spend some time in each system this is not a real problem. Whilst they are at Nouakchat, the Travellers will detect a ship emerging from jump almost on the 100-diameter limit and with a near-perfect entry vector. It is a naval courier, with updated orders for them.

The Travellers are advised that a sizable force of 'minor vessels' (a navy term for ships under 1000 tons) has been assembled by an unknown power and intends to attack vessels taking part in the Trin-to-Deneb yacht race. Several noble families have members aboard these ships, so the goal may be to take hostages. A possible location has been found for the ambush force's base. The Travellers are ordered to proceed there and eliminate the threat to the yacht race participants.

The referee should decide on the location given for the base. It will probably be on a gas giant moon or outsystem rockball planet. This location was obtained when a pirate vessel was intercepted and captured by a patrol in the Zephyr system. The information is considered fairly reliable.

The suspected corsair base is within easy reach for the Travellers' ship, and the race is not due to start for a few weeks. They do not have to deal with this immediately, and indeed it may not be desirable to do so. Ideally, the Travellers will catch the enemy fleet concentrated and be able to eliminate it – the ships are the threat, not the base, and simply destroying the base will not necessarily protect the yacht race participants.

GATHERING INTEL

The Travellers may also realise they do not have much information. Their ship is surely powerful enough to bull in and smash through any opposition, but a wise captain wants as much advance warning of threats as possible. Thus the Travellers may decide to undertake some intelligence-gathering operations before they strike.

Intelligence can be gathered at any starport or system where there is traffic. Overtly stating that they are looking for information on a raider group will of course alert the

target sooner or later, but if the Travellers are fairly subtle they should be able to glean some useful information.

At each port of call, the referee should resolve an Intelligence Event. On a result of 1-3 ('sufficient information') the referee should reveal the first part of one of the facts listed below. On a 4-6 (Solid information) the referee should reveal the whole piece of information. A later 'sufficient information' result can also produce the second half of a known piece of data.

The Travellers have several weeks before they must act, and may be able to avoid some nasty surprises if they spend the time wisely.

- A raider force, powerful and very well organised, hit a freighter belonging to the Trin-Deneb line a few weeks ago. The freighter was carrying large numbers of naval missiles which were intended for the sell-on market having been removed from storage at the end of their mandated lives. The strike is thought to have been specifically targeted.
- Some of the yachts taking part in the upcoming race have already passed through this area, scouting out the route. Among them was the navy's entry. *This is the yacht Sunburst Scatter. She is currently overdue.*
- A new starmerc outfit has undertaken a number of escort and convoy operations in the area. Personnel and ships seemed smart and efficient. *This is Rosax Security, operators of the vessel Ravager. There are indications that some of the ships escorted by Rosax vessels never reached their destination. It is possible that the escort ship waited for a quiet moment then attacked the target it was supposed to be protecting.*

If the Travellers take the time to sift and digest this information, they may draw some useful conclusions. It appears that Rosax Security is well organised and has an agenda... or is working for someone who does. They may be connected with the disappearance of *Sunburst Scatter*, and they may have access to a large number of naval missiles. What they do with this information is of course up to the Travellers.

THE CORSAIR BASE

The corsair base is located on an outsystem rockball world or a gas giant moon in a system of the referee's choosing. It consists of little more than a set of prefabricated shelters half-buried in pits dug out

of the bare rock. The shelters are for the most part connected by tunnels or semi-tunnels cut through the rock and covered with airtight rigid panels. Few of these structures are capable of withstanding more than small-arms fire or the occasional micrometeorite, but a direct hit would be required to damage any given structure with most weapons. Missiles striking nearby rock will cause damage, but without an atmosphere to create blast the effects will not be impressive.

The corsairs have several ships, mostly 800-ton mercenary cruisers. The majority nestle in protected pits when they are at the base, but one vessel will always be on orbital sensor watch. There is a second contact in orbit; the crippled remains of the racing yacht *Sunburst Scatter*. Her crew of naval cadets and a couple of instructors are prisoners at the corsair base.

The corsairs are a competent paramilitary unit, and have carried out some contingency planning. Their reaction to the arrival of a large warship will be dismay quickly replaced with pragmatism. They had planned for an attack by naval ships and had prepared a sucker-punch that would have annihilated a group of small vessels. It will clearly not be enough to stop a heavy cruiser, but it might enable some of the corsair ships to escape.

The corsairs know their prisoners are a bargaining chip, and will make sure the Travellers are aware that their comrades are planetside. This, they hope, will deter a saturation missile bombardment and buy some time. This is not a fight they can win, but that is not their goal. They want to survive and escape, and their efforts are bent to this end.

The corsairs are alert and well-trained. Ships and personnel can be assumed to have a CEI or DEI of 7, giving no modifier on checks to determine the success of their actions. Their reaction will be quick but not uniform – some crews will be more ready or react more quickly than others, and some personnel will be left behind at the base. This is a pre-planned gambit, though the personnel left behind may not have known about it.

The ships intend to escape whilst the remaining personnel cover their retreat then surrender. The corsairs are mercenaries and think of themselves as formally recognised combatants. They have measures in place to protect them from charges of piracy – they hope – and are prepared to put up a stiff fight before surrendering. They are, however, not fanatics and will not take actions that would prejudice their position after surrender, such as killing the cadets they hold hostage. They might threaten to, but their plan revolves around fighting as long as is reasonable then negotiating a surrender. This is fairly standard for mercenary forces and is recognised as a fair practice.

CORSAIR FORCES

The corsairs have three Mercenary Cruisers on-planet. They are fuelled and partially crewed. At the first sign of an attack the duty crew will begin preparing for launch and other personnel will rush to get aboard. These ships will launch when their captains think they have to, whether or not they have all their personnel aboard. They are not intending to fight a heavy cruiser; they will scatter and run, and enter jump as soon as they can.

The vessel on orbital sensor watch is a 400-ton Patrol Corvette. She will detect the arrival of the cruiser instantly – it is hard to miss – and will initially attempt to bluff the Travellers. Her crew have little hope they can succeed but they might be able to buy some time. The corvette identifies herself (truthfully) as *Rosax Guardian*, a privately operated patrol and escort vessel. She was hired to investigate the disappearance of some vessels in the area. Having found this wreck in orbit over a rockball (the wreck of *Sunburst Scatter*) her crew were about to board it to search for survivors and clues.

The sheer barefaced cheek of *Guardian's* captain should impress the Travellers. She ignores their questions and demands, instead asking if she will still get the finder's bounty if the navy takes over the search and rescue operation. It is a pretty good performance, but of course she is merely stalling. Once the Travellers adopt an openly hostile position *Rosax Guardian* will have to flee, though she might try to cover the escape of other ships against small craft or missiles.

The corsairs have a secret sucker-punch in the form of five improvised missile complexes (each equivalent to a large missile bay) sunk into the bedrock several kilometres from their base and from one another. They are remotely controlled and have thousands of missiles in their autoloading system. As soon as the Travellers adopt a hostile stance, or if an opportunity for a surprise strike presents itself, the corsairs will set the launchers to maximum launch rate and make a run for their ships.

Each launcher bay must be separately eliminated. The amount of rock protecting them is equivalent to 6 armour points, and 500 points of damage must be delivered to silence the launchers. This will produce some spectacular explosions as stored warheads are set off, rearranging loose rock on the planetary surface some distance away.

The stay-behind force is armed with military small arms – advanced combat rifles and light support weapons, which are of limited use in the base but can sweep the landing area until the Travellers' troops get into the buildings. There are about 40 personnel in this force,

equipped with armoured vacc suits and flak jackets. They make a professional fighting retreat through the base, surrendering when cornered or when the odds become too great. They know the cadets are a useful bargaining chip and may be the only thing preventing the base from being evaporated by the cruiser's spinal weapon, so will try to keep rescuers away from them. The mercs of the unit are professional enough to know when they are beaten, and might even surrender to the naval cadets through the locked doors of their cells.

RESOLVING THE STRIKE

The Travellers have all the cards in this situation, which is why the navy puts cruisers on patrol. The missile salvos from the surface can cause some damage but will not cripple such a large ship as theirs. The corsairs' ships are incapable of causing much harm to a heavy cruiser. In short, this is a very one-sided fight. However, that does not equate to automatic mission success. The mission is to prevent the corsairs from attacking the yacht race. If the Travellers lose sight of this they might end up congratulating themselves on winning a fight whilst entirely failing to complete their objectives.

Although the fight is one-sided, this is still a dramatic situation requiring good leadership. The referee should not give the Travellers a clear picture of exactly what is happening, instead describing what they know or are seeing. There are missile launches from multiple sources, ships lifting off and scattering, fighting in the base and demands that they back off because the corsairs have hostages. The Travellers will need to deal with this chaotic situation and impose order upon it.

The Travellers will need to deal with the big picture, which is complex and fragmentary. They may find themselves wishing for a simple firefight where it was just them and the opposition, instead of trying to fulfil multiple goals by proxy through subordinates who do not always produce exactly the desired result. This is the essence of what the naval campaign is about, however. The Travellers have some big toys to play with but they have a big job to go with them.

POST-STRIKE

If matters go well, the Travellers should emerge from the situation in control of the base, with some prisoners and the cadets freed unharmed. They will have been able to destroy at least some of the fleeing ships or to force them to surrender. This may lead them to believe they have won, and in many ways they have. However, they have not prevented the attack on the yacht race.

There were more landing pits than ships at the corsair base, and the Travellers should be able to find out there are more corsair vessels than they have seen. This should be obvious if they saw some of the enemy ships escape, but analysis of information found at the base will indicate there are more ships, and also where the attack is to take place. The freed cadets may also know.

The cadets' yacht was taken in a damaged but flyable condition. Since being brought to the base it has been stripped to the point where it cannot be repaired outside a dockyard. If the Travellers intend to intercept the attack – which they have a duty to do – the cadets will volunteer to join the crew. This might create additional situations, perhaps where a hotheaded cadet who has lost friends in the attack or feels they have something to prove goes against orders, but how much the referee wants to make of this depends very much on circumstances.

The corsairs' attack is to be made in the Endup system. The cadets know that some of the yachts involved in the race intend to skim fuel there, and presumably the corsairs know too. Indeed, this is why the cadets' ship was captured. It was acting as a route scout and had information on the intended movements of the race participants.

The corsairs know the race is to pass through the Endup system, and indeed which gas giant the target yachts intend to refuel at. They know when the first ships to arrive are due. Those ships will be carrying members of important noble families. Endup is outside the normal patrol area but the Travellers would be expected to abandon routine operations in order to prevent an attack of this nature.

If they choose to go to Endup, the Travellers find four Mercenary Cruisers and a Patrol Corvette there, plus a Far Trader that has been refitted to carry large numbers of secure low berths. They may or may not be able to destroy the raiders but they can chase them off, ensuring that when the first racer yachts arrive just hours later they can refuel and proceed unmolested.

The corsairs will try to slink away rather than fight a big, powerful ship. It may be that the racers emerge from jumpspace to find a heavy cruiser floating majestically amid a cloud of debris that used to be her enemies, or they may simply find the navy has sent a guardian to secure their passage. Either way, the Travellers will have saved a lot of important people from being killed and captured, and even more ordinary crewmembers too. Either way, the Travellers have done what the navy does, and prevented a disaster that could have had serious political implications.

CHAPTER-TEN

RETURN TO BASE

Upon their return to base, the Travellers' performance will be assessed according to the Mission Success Indicators. If they cut the patrol short for a good reason, such as returning to port with damage and casualties taken in preventing the attack at Endup, then the flag-showing part of the mission will still be considered a solid success. Indeed, nothing reminds the citizens of the navy's presence better than blasting a pirate base and capturing several crews.

The referee should resist the temptation to be too lenient about objectives, however. Complete success is hard to achieve, and the Travellers may need to learn lessons about operating as a naval crew. The Travellers are expected to make their report in the manner described in the Campaign Guide, giving an overview of the mission and answering Three Tough Questions about their performance. Note that these questions are sometimes asked to allow the officers being debriefed to shine, rather than to find flaws in their performance. It is entirely possible that their superiors will express approval or sympathy for having to make a tough decision.

As a general rule, if the Travellers tried hard to behave like a navy crew and acted in a responsible manner the questioning should be neutral or even positive. If they rampaged around the spacelanes like a bunch

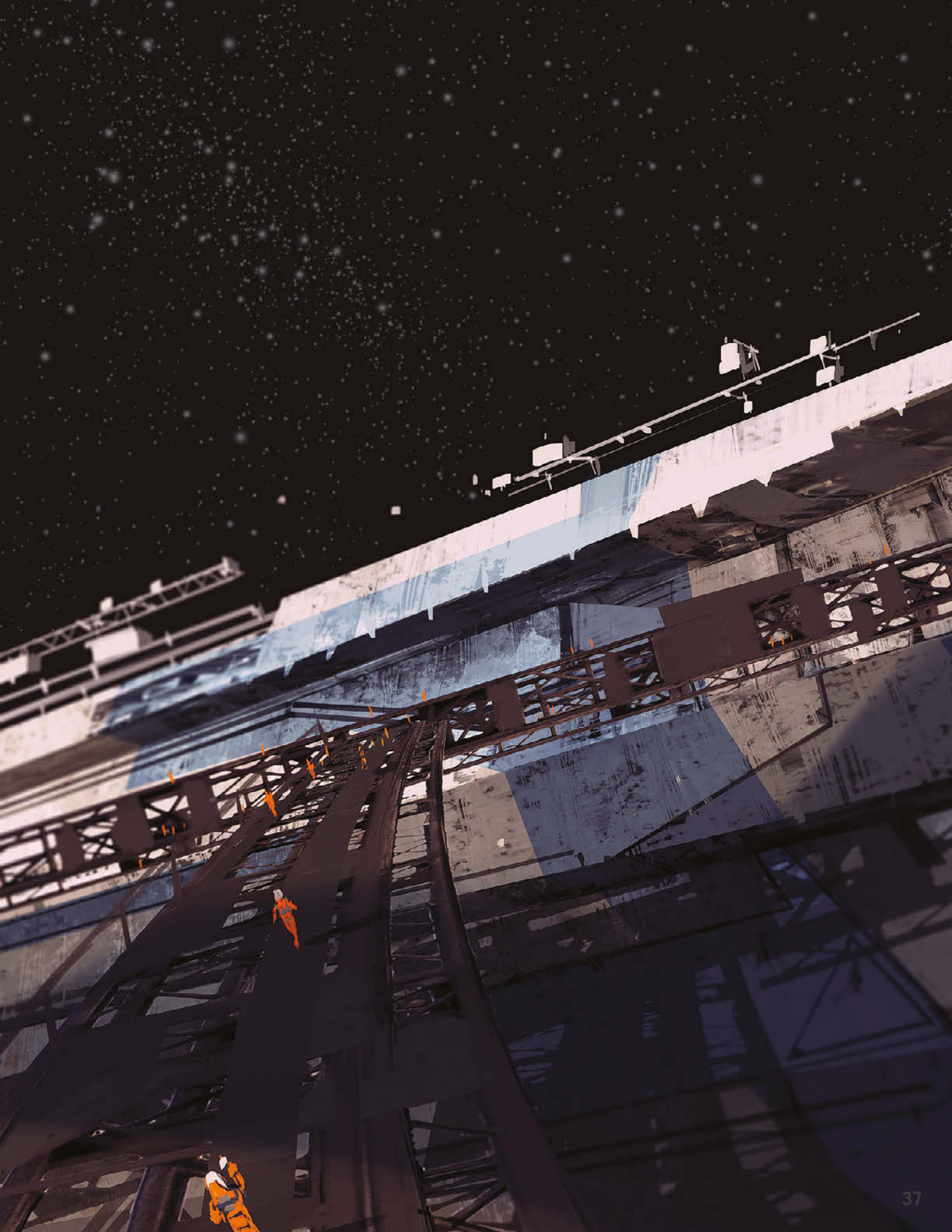
of trigger-happy yahoos then the Admiralty will have more searching questions for them. Either way, the debriefing is an opportunity for the Travellers to learn what they might have done instead, or what the consequences would have been if they had chosen a different course of action.

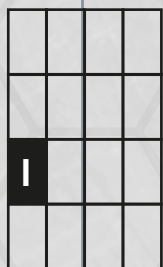
Finally, the referee should determine the final Mission Outcome. This is the sum of the Effects from the captain's Leadership check, checks to resolve the Travellers' answers to their Tough Questions, and the Mission Success Indicator total. This value is applied to the Mission Outcome table to determine the Admiralty's opinion of the Travellers' performance.

FURTHER EVENTS

Someone set up Rosax Security with the intent of killing or more likely kidnapping some of the race participants. Was there a single target or did the mysterious patron just want to grab hostages for bargaining or information extraction? Naval Intelligence will set to work on these questions, just as the yard crews at Zeng will begin repairing the cruiser and addressing the defects list. By the time they are done and the crew have enjoyed some rest, it will be time to set out again.

The shakedown cruise is over; it is time for a new mission.





Deneb

GULF SUBSECTOR

To Trin's Veil

To Star Lane

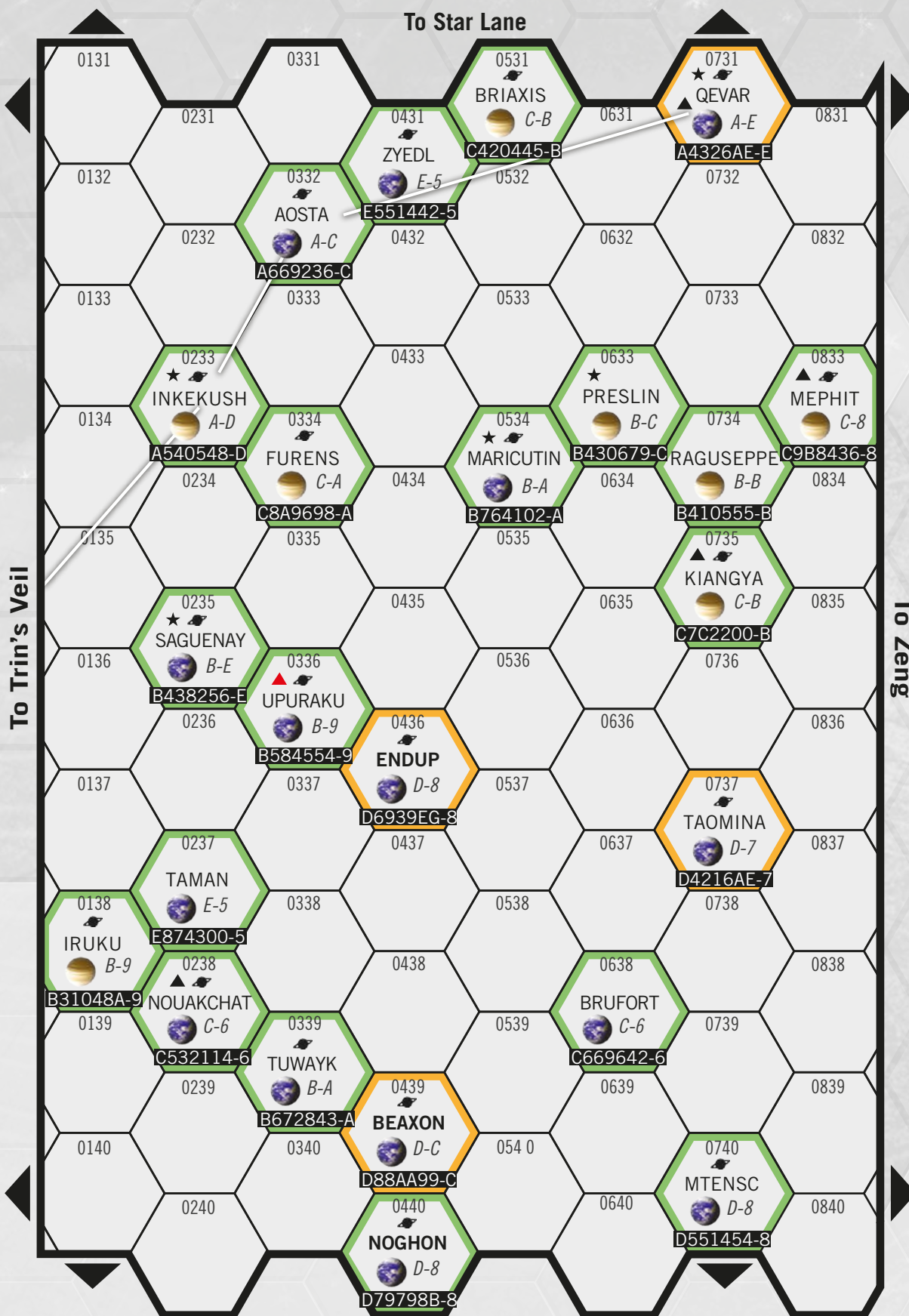
To Zeng

To Vestus

- Gas Giant
- Starport Class & Tech Level
- Imperial Scout Base
- Imperial Scout Way Station

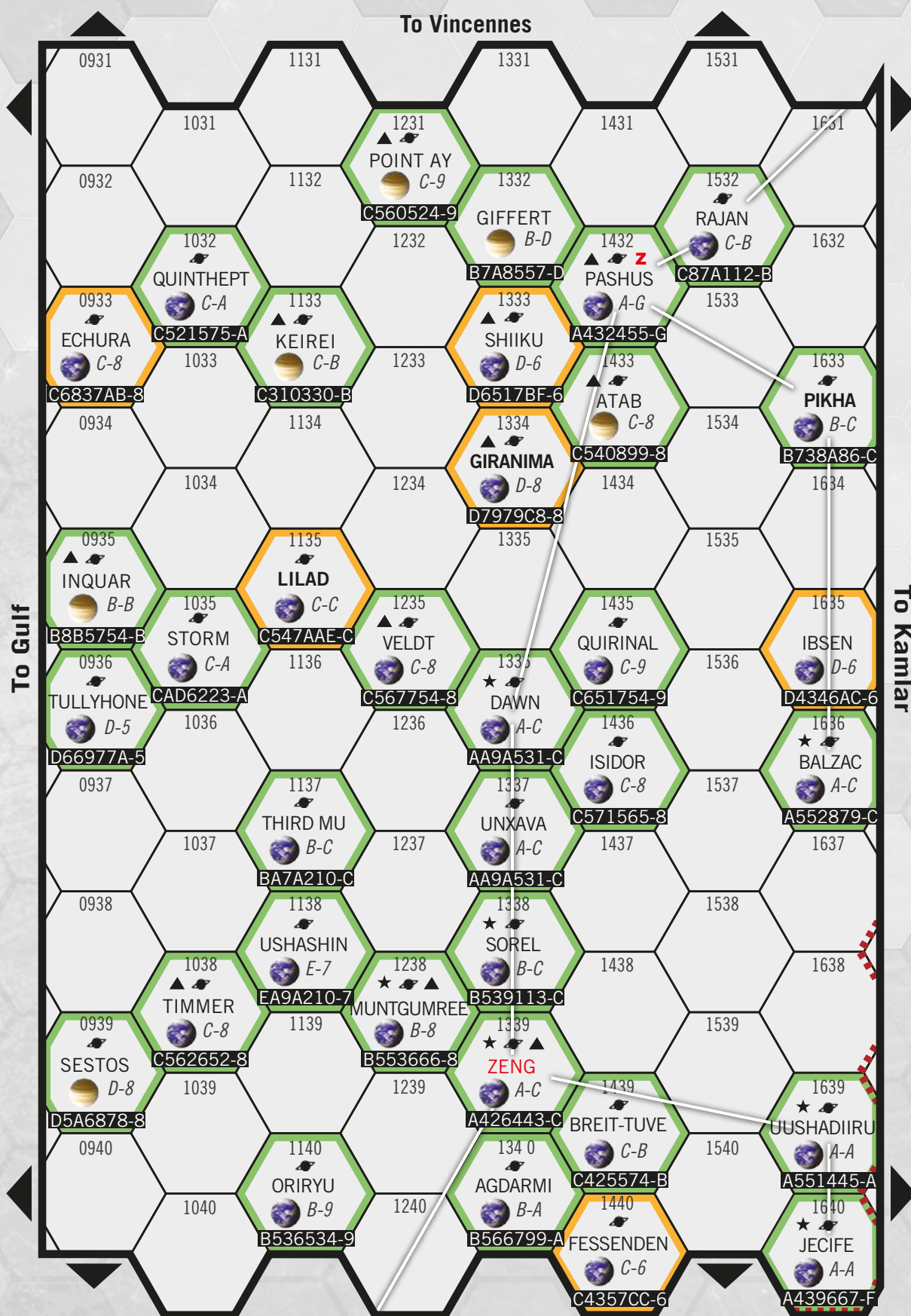
- Secure System
- Amber Zone
- X-boat Route

- Planet (dry)
- Planet (water present)
- Imperial Naval Base





ZENG SUBSECTOR



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

- Secure System
- Amber Zone
- X-boat Route
- Empire Border

- Planet (dry)
- Planet (water present)
- Imperial Naval Base