**BITS Writers' Guidelines June 1999** 



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## **APPENDIX – THE BITS TASK SYSTEM**

MegaTraveller (MT), Traveller: The New Era (TNE) and Marc Miller's Traveller (T4) all use a graduated system of task difficulty ratings – Average, Difficult, Formidable, etc. 'Classic' Traveller (CT) and GURPS Traveller (GT) use modifiers to the task rolls instead. The BITS Task System provides a simplified common ground for all these rule sets, using difficulty ratings with corresponding task modifiers for CT and GT as shown in Table 1. The means by which spectacular (*GT: critical*) success or failure are achieved are defined by the rule set used. Similarly, the GM should apply the rules for special tasks – opposed, co-operative, hasty, cautious, etc. – according to the rule set used. As always, these are only guidelines – the GM may alter any task roll as appropriate to enhance the game.

TABLE 1: TASK DIFFICULTIES						
BITS Task Difficulty	T4 Task Difficulty	T4.1 Task Difficulty	GT Target Modifier	TNE Task Difficulty	MT Task Difficulty	CT Target Modifier
Easy	Easy (Auto)	Easy (1D)	+6	Easy	Simple	-4
Average	Average (2D)	Average (2D)	+3	Average	Routine	-2
Difficult	Difficult (2.5D)	Difficult (2.5D)	0	Difficult	Difficult	0
Formidable	Formidable (3D)	Formidable (3D)	-3	Formidable	Difficult	+2
Staggering	Impossible (4D)	Staggering (4D)	-6	Impossible	Formidable	+4
Impossible	(5D)	Hopeless (5D)	-9	Impossible	Impossible	+6
Hopeless	(6D)	Impossible (6D)	-12	Impossible	Impossible	+8

Maria Charles is forging a complex document which the GM rules is a Staggering task. Maria has Forgery-4 (*GT: Forgery-16*) and the relevant attribute (MT, T4) is INT 10 (TNE: INT 9).

**CT:** Task success is normally  $2D + Skill \ge 8$ . Maria requires  $2D + Forgery \ge 12$  (8 + 4 for Staggering difficulty). Alternatively, the GM may prefer to apply the target modifier as a negative modifier on the dice roll, i.e.  $2D + 4 - 4 \ge 8$ . **MT:** Staggering difficulty is equivalent to MT's Formidable (15+), thus the task is  $2D + Skill + (Stat / 5) \ge 15$ . For Maria this is:  $2D + 4 + 2 \ge 15$ .

**TNE:** Staggering difficulty is equivalent to TNE's Impossible, thus the task is  $d20 \le (\text{Skill} + \text{Stat}) \times \frac{1}{4}$ . For Maria this is  $d20 \le 3$ , i.e. (9 + 4) / 4 rounded down.

**T4:** Maria requires  $4D \le INT + Forgery$ . (Note that T4's Staggering rating of 3.5D is ignored.) **GT:** Maria requires  $3D \le Forgery + Target Modifier, i.e. <math>3D \le 16 - 6$ .

Task definitions should always be used sparingly – the GM should be able to define the difficulty and required skills and equipment for most tasks using common sense. Where strange skills or equipment are needed, these can usually be listed, without requiring a full task definition. Where a full task definition is required, use the following format (you don't need to use the bold or italics formatting; plain text is fine):

## To find a boar: Difficult Recon (*GT: Tracking*), or Difficult Hunting, or Formidable Survival

+1 Difficulty if riding at full gallop.

+1 Difficulty if lost.

-1 Difficulty if moving slowly.

Spectacular Success: They have surprised a boar and have one round to act before it reacts.

*Success*: They have found boar tracks and can begin following them.

Failure: No tracks found.

*Spectacular Failure*: They have become lost.

+1 Difficulty indicates a harder task (e.g. an Average task becomes Difficult) whereas -1 Difficulty is an easier task (e.g. Difficult would become Average).

**NOTE:** This system has been extensively play-tested but suggestions for refinements are always welcome.