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Welcome to Absolute Zero

>>> Connecting to Fuyoushi Opnet Node >>>

Avatar: Orchidware Natsuko . . . Online

Greetings! Welcome to Zeronet, Fuyoushi's Opnet Node!

I am Orchidware Natsuko v1.0! I am the computer agent in charge of Zeronet (*Just call me Natty, okay?*). I am here to help you with all of your ZeroNet needs. My Avatar image is back online!!!! After months of being faceless thanks to that damn pirate attack last March, my Avatar has been repaired!! Now you can see my beautiful face. (*If anyone falls in love with me now, its not my fault!*). My thanks to the hardworking station techs! Well, enough about me (*there's more on THAT vital subject later!*), on with the show. Earlier this year, the station came under attack by pirates. Much was damaged, including ZeroNet. Many files were severely scrambled or lost entirely. I have been working non-stop ever since to restore the lost data (*no rest for the electronic eh?*). Many of the lost files have already been repaired and are available for your perusal, feel free to browse. (*I do recommend, however, starting with MY datafile!*).



Orchidware Natsuko v1.0

Everything you wanted to know about ZeroNet's System Agent, but were afraid to ask.

Orchidware Natsuko v1.0 is a unique and powerful computer agent (*Yes I am!*). Created by specifically to be the ZeroNet system agent, the original Nihonjin builders of the station (*Nice guys I miss 'em*) contracted Orchidware to create her. Natsuko was fashioned as a Nihonjin female (*and a hot one at that!*) with the fact that Fuyoushi's population would be mostly male Nihonjin asteroid miners. Although the nationalities of the station residents has changed to a wide spectrum, Natsuko is still in her original avatar appearance, and that's the way everyone likes it (*including yours truly*).

Over the last 40 years, Natty has grown in knowledge and experience (*Beauty and brains in one package! What more could you want?*). Her interactive learning software, an advanced and unique programme added to her by a former inventive station tech (*miss him, too*), has allowed her to expand from a simple agent up to a Satisfactory Intelligence level (*Only Satisfactory Intelligence?? Excuse me??*). She has also developed a quirky personality that most find endearing (*and some, irritating*). Her sense of humour has been described as 'original'. Visitors to the station should be warned: Natsuko has a reputation for playing pranks (*I'm gonna get ya!!!*).

(Face it, you all love me! You can't live without me! I really think someone should start a cult in worship of me. It'd spread like wildfire!)

The History of Fuyoushi

Fuyoushi (also known as Absolute Zero due to its stellar position on the Asteroid Belt), was built in the year 2080 (the station is now over 40 years old). Fuyoushi was originally built as a Nihonjin research station to study the Asteroid Belt. The station itself was built into a large asteroid on the inner edge of the Belt which had a stable solar orbit and had little chance of collision with other asteroids. The Nihonjin financed the station by means of asteroid mining. After a few years however, Nippon abandoned Fuyoushi when mining operations proved too minor to support station operations. The research station lay empty and lifeless for a small time.

Soon, a small group of businessmen put their funds together and bought Fuyoushi from the Nihonjin. The council of entrepreneurs

was made up of people from different countries, religions, cultures and tax brackets. All of them, however, had a shared vision of what Fuyoushi could become. Loading several run-down ships with the most high-tech (at the time) equipment they could afford, the prospective miners went to the Belt hoping to strike it rich, with dreams of platinum-heavy asteroids in their heads. Some few were successful, most were not.

Enough "Big Finds" were made that the station attracted others however. Many miners, along with criminals on the lam, social outcasts and destitute people hoping for a break flocked to the research-station-turned-mining colony. Soon known as Absolute Zero, the station was eventually expanded to accommodate the influx of social refugees and greedy profiteers.



A huge spacedock was added and the marketplace grew, and soon Fuyoushi gained a reputation as a commerce centre for the outer solar system. Today, this "Poor Man's Olympus" is home to many thousands of souls. While the rest of humanity sees Absolute Zero as a seedy dive and haven for criminals (which, in a sense, it is), Absolute Zero is much more. Trade vessels routinely dock to do business here. A Legionnaire outpost patrols the Belt for pirates and Aberrants. The station marketplace, known as the Promenade, is a gathering place for weary miners and crewmen to have a drink and share news and gossip floating in on the spacelanes.

The Guided Tour

Welcome to the ZeroNet Virtual Guided Tour of A-Z. I will show you almost every part of the station you could want to see. First some basic information about our space station.

Name: Fuyoushi

Other Names: Absolute Zero

Type: Mining Colony & Trading Post

Distance from Earth: 1.7 AU

Distance from Primary Stellar Body: Sol 2.7 AU

Population (Permanent): 10,500 (est. as of 2120)

Population: (Maximum): 25,000 + (traders, off-station workers, drifters etc)

Built in and around a large asteroid, A-Z has been in existence for over 40 years. While not the most up-to-date facility (*DUH!*) in the solar system, it serves its purpose. Appearance wise, A-Z isn't so much to look at. Originally built for functionality instead of beauty, A-Z doesn't have the same visual awe that other, newer stations such as Mujukuu or Lacordaire Orbital Hotel.

The View from Space

Fuyoushi, as seen from space, resembles, as Orgotek Prexy Alex Cassel once said "a 20th Century erector set haphazardly thrown together with a big rock stuck in the middle". That description is not far from the truth.

The structure on top of the asteroid is the Command Centre, with the various technical facilities such as life support and fusion generators located in the wider levels below the tower. Hanging off the right side of the asteroid (with the "Absolute Zero" sign

displayed proudly on the top) is the Promenade, which takes up two structural levels. Attached to the underbelly of the Promenade are storage areas and the original residential pods.

The long antenna-like structure underneath the asteroid is the main spacedock of A-Z. Storage warehouses and the Fuyoushi Port Authority are located in the building at the base of the dock. There are smaller docks next to the main spacedock. One is a repair dock for damaged ships and those buying modifications. The other is the Legions Spacedock, for use by the Seventh Legion fighter pilots. This dock is off limits to the general public.

The various 'tubes' located all over the rest of the asteroids exterior are the habitat modules, each having room for about 1000 people comfortably (although in some of the more run down habitats the number of residents is much, much higher). As A-Z's population grew, the original modules couldn't hold everyone and thus the new ones were added. In the interest of saving time and money, the new habitat modules were not added on an 'even level' with the rest of the station, instead being hung at odd angles and occasionally being embedded into the asteroid itself. As each module has its own gravcrystal grid (as do the hyper-lift tunnels leading through the rock) this isn't a problem.

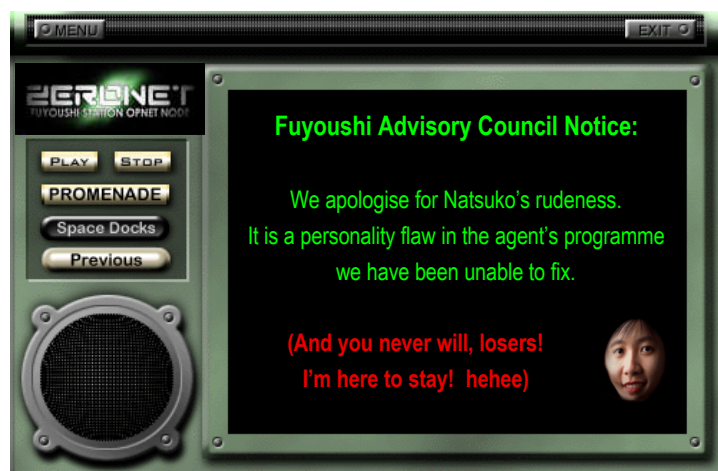
The View from the Inside

The habitat modules near the Command Centre and the Promenade are *(allegedly)* the residences of the Administrative Council Members, important local businesspeople and the more well-to-do types. Those modules located further away are those of the lower classes, including miners, common labourers etc. These modules are correspondingly more dangerous and are regularly terrorised by corridor gangs and the like.

While areas such as the Promenade, Command Centre, spacedock and certain habitats are safe (in relation to the rest of the station), the more far-flung areas of the station are more dangerous, often being claimed as territory by various 'corridor gangs'. The Fuyoushi Police Force asks that you use caution if you must tread into these wilder areas.

It is especially important to remember that the lower levels of the station (nicknamed 'sub-zero') are not covered in active patrol by the FPF. Visitors are warned to avoid this lawless area of the station. Please note that services and facilities (such as running water and heating) are not maintained in sub-zero.

(Specific files on the various areas of Fuyoushi are still being repaired, so, not all are available yet. More will become available as soon as I feel like doing it. If you don't like it, get off your lazy butt and go exploring the station yourself.)



Lvl 1: Command & Control

This is the brain of Fuyoushi. Command and Control is where the crew makes sure that the station runs *(relatively)* smoothly. Everything from life support to flight control to station defence is run from here. Like a beehive, it is always teeming with F.A.C. employed staffers.

Absolute Zero's defenses are classified, but are publicly known to include an array of laser cannons and missiles. *(if you want to know more, go ahead and attack the station. You'll see the defenses in action then. Go on . . . I dare you!)*

Command & Control is off limits to the general public, but tours are given on occasion to VIP's.

Lvl 2: The Promenade

The promenade is perhaps the heart of Fuyoushi. A combination trading post/shopping mall, it is where the work-weary come to relax, the gossip-mongers come to chat, and the youth come to "be seen".

The largest single area on the station (not counting the Ore Processing Plants), the Promenade is a huge corridor module two levels high and flanked on both sides by shops, bars and offices. The first floor contains mostly bars, restaurants and equipment stores. The second floor has many business offices and a couple of nightspots. Elevators and stairwells provide easy access to both floors.

There are businesses of all types *(that means legal and....otherwise!)*. Some of the more notable of these businesses are:

Promenade First Floor

The first floor of the Promenade houses shops and offices down the left and right stretches and a massive all-day, all-night marketplace. The shops are usually small(ish) in size and the marketstalls are even more so. From the marketplace you can see directly up to the balconies of the second floor.

Aussie Brew

Situated on the first floor of the Promenade, Aussie Brew is a cross between liquor store and warehouse. Isles upon isles are stacked full with all manner of discount Austronesian beverages, mostly alcoholic.

Low-wage staffers occupy the series of checkouts, constantly replenish the stock and offer help to any customer simply trying to find a particular brand in the often chaotic store.

Unlike the rest of A-Z, prices in Aussie Brew are more than affordable. A good quality 12-pack of brand name beer can cost as little as a couple of yuan. It is not unreasonable to assume that the amount of drunks in the lower levels of the station are due to regular visits to Aussie Brew.

A-Z Souvenirs

A_Z Souvenirs is a blight on the landscape, if you listen what the FAC would have you believe. Never in the history of A-Z has a single operation been the subject of so much attention from the FAC Commerce Committee.

A-Z Souvenirs is a relatively recent arrival on the station. The owner set up shop on the Promenade with the intention of providing 'souvenirs' with possible sentimental value to the traders and miners that pass through A-Z. The FAC made the mistake of believing that this meant that A-Z Souvenirs would sell choice products from Earth, Luna and Mars. *(Boy were they ever wrong!)*

What A-Z Souvenirs actually meant to sell were, as the name did indeed imply, souvenirs of the station itself. The small outlet is packed full of a staggeringly wide variety of souvenirs all based on the station, its inhabitants and the occasional non-station item.

Visitors to the store can find everything they could possibly want, the list below is just a very, very small selection of some of the items available:

A-Z models on a stick that rotate and make whirring noises when switched on, scale models of station personalities (including a series of robed statuettes which are supposed to be the FAC), Strike Team Raptor Biofighters, pens, minicomps branded with A-Z logos and a 'starfield' interface, holo images of station personnel and regulars including Madame Deanna (and a surprising number of her many 'girls'), *(hey! they have holo's of ME down there..... the cheek!)*, clothes, picture frames, pictures, etc etc.

The list goes on. Much to the annoyance of the FAC, the owner of A-Z Souvenirs is actually rather sharp when it comes to business acumen. The owner has set up several deals with local spots of interest and residents to sell souvenirs based on their likeness. Participants in this scheme include, but are not limited to Madame Deanna and Orbit 69, the FAC (without authorisation - action is currently being taken) Strike Team Raptor, Aeon (for Aeon related merchandise), The Pulse Nightclub, ICE and others.

Clothes Cabin

The Clothes Cabin is actually split across two stores on the Promenade. The first (and the original) offers fairly good quality civilian clothing from various 'high-street' brands. The prices are, well, overpriced - but such is life on A-Z.

The other shop for the Clothes Cabin is nicknamed the Bargain Cabin. Here you can obtain cut-off's, discontinued lines and there is even a thriving section of the store for second hand goods. The Clothes Cabin is one of only a handful of chain stores from Earth that operates premises on A-Z. *(Apparently not every chain is all that worried about how this might affect its reputation!)*

The Cove

Here we have one of the seemier places on Absolute Zero. The Cove is a grimy little bar hidden away in a far corner of the Promenade. *(This review of the place may not be kind, but the owners don't seem to give a shit!).*

The Cove is small and dark. The interior lights are always on 'dim'. It is also always hot, due to poor ventilation. Past patrons (those who have no interest in being return customers) have said there is also a strange, unidentifiable smell throughout the whole bar. There is a book running to see if anyone can correctly identify the odour. Non one has won in the 12 years the book has been running.

This is a favourite place for those who have covert business to do on the station. There is a back room with several small private booths for just such clientele.

The Cove serves no food, and the booze is usually watered down. No one knows exactly who owns the joint. Management seems to change on a weekly basis. Fights are very common in here, as is the classic knife in the back. *(Consider all this a warning . . . or a recommendation, if you like that sort of thing).*

Cyber-Sushi, Pizza Belle, RoboBurger & 'Roids

The famous fast food joints of Earth and Luna are alive and kicking on A-Z. A total lack of indigenous life *(it is a rock after all!)* has meant that the imported food business is thriving. All of the chain fast food outfits have facia designed in exactly the same 'out-of-the-box' designs as the rest of the chain across the Sol System.

Cyber-Sushi is favourite Nippon concern, obviously peddling a wide variety of Sushi from Nippon and nearby Austronesia. The fish dishes go down well with the residents of A-Z as fish, like a lot of similar products, are difficult and expensive to come by on A-Z usually. The prices are however, acceptable, even by non-A-Z standards. Visitors can choose from the menu, or select from a variety of live fish in tanks that line the walls of the restaurants interior.

Pizza Belle has been going for many, many years and is a chain of fast food stores native to the Federated States of America. Although this chain was once a family owned business, Pizza Belle became a public company in order to continue international (and now interstellar) expansion. As well as a dizzying array of pizzas, Pizza Belle also serves chilled drinks, the occasional burger (to the annoyance of RoboBurger no doubt) and a host of side dishes. Restaurant goers can choose to sit inside the establishment, use the chairs and tables outside which look out onto the Marketplace or can opt for takeaway.

RoboBurger was, until recently, the only 'meat' fast food joint on the station. RoboBurger (*TM!*) is one of the largest fast food chains in the Sol System. Burgers come in a variety of sizes, dozens of different relishes, cold and hot drinks are available. RoboBurger has been suffering competition from the recently opened 'Roids. Patrons usually buy their food as take-away and then head about their business on the station.

'Roids (an abbreviation of Asteroids) gets its name from the fist sized balls (*lumps!*) of meat that they sell. Literally any sort of 'relish' can be added for a small fee. Although some believe that simply looking at the food raises your cholesterol level, but since it opened 'Roids has become the defacto haunt for miners and 'quick-stop' traders. This has affected the business of RoboBurger, who used to accommodate this profitable market. The prices at 'Roids are cheaper than the other fast food restaurants. (*But you get the extra fat for free!*)

Drunken Aberrant Bar & Grill

Here is perhaps, Fuyoushi's most well-known and popular watering hole, where most of the station's populace seems to come to relax, and drink (*you can also eat here, if you want to risk food poisoning*). The Bar has been here, under various managements, nearly since Fuyoushi's creation. It has changed hands, and names, many times over the past four decades. It is currently owned and run by Jake Manson, a retired asteroid miner from Australia who never managed to 'find the mother-lode'. He used what yuan he had saved up over the years and bought the Bar from its previous owner, Carlos Juarez, a Sudamerican who left the station under mysterious circumstances.

Jake has only one rule: Leave it outside. He doesn't tolerate hijinx or violence in his place, and he keeps a netgun and a sonic pistol under the bar to keep everyone quiet. Considering Jake's large size and usually bad temper (*he's a teddy bear really!*), everyone listens to him.

Jake has three barmaids on hand and a busboy/janitor, while Jake himself doubles as his own bouncer. The Bar and Grill itself is clean and comfortable (*or as much as anyplace on Absolute Zero*). Upon entering the establishment, you find yourself with a long bar running along the left-hand wall. Jake can be found here nearly all the time, when he isn't in the kitchen. The kitchen doors are behind the bar, restricting access to staff only. The bar opens at the near end to allow passage. Along the right hand wall is a large-screen holoivid, which usually has some Earth sporting event or another on. Numerous pictures, some of Jake's life, most of miscellaneous things, decorate the rest of the wall. Booths are here, for those wanting more privacy than the tables. The restroom doors are found here as well as at the far end.



The far wall is all large windows, looking out over the Belt. Occasionally, spacecraft can be seen flying around the great rocks, their exhaust flames appearing as tiny bright sparks. These are usually outbound traders and miners as well as the Legionnaires Locust C biofighters.

Throughout the room are a dozen or so tables. The ones near the window tend to fill up fast, so if you want a good view, come early. There are usually four chairs to a table, though people often swipe them from other tables to accommodate larger groups.

Each table and the booths have a holographic menu projector. You have only to place your order with the computer (and pay for it as well), and a barmaid will bring it to you soon after. If there's something you want that is not on the menu . . . tough. Jake doesn't cook requests. The tabletop comps also have jukebox selections. Your choice of music will be put on the playlist. As soon as it comes up, the overhead speakers will broadcast your tune to the room. Jake asks everyone to please ignore the carvings and graffiti on the tables and on parts of the walls *(and especially in the bathroom)*. Anyone caught adding new graffiti will be ejected from the bar.

Flikz

Flikz is situated one the far left of the Promenade, a stones throw from Trader Nicks and just across from Kostbaar. Flikz specialises in holovid's, the latest fau vistas, opnet feeds and, to accommodate the 'tourists', camera equipment.

Prices here are not that bad, but are still nearly twice as much as you might pay on Earth. Flikz does well as it seems to get copies of the most recent holovids quickly, and in plentiful numbers. It has been commented by the Marshall's Office that it seems unlikely that the entertainment industry would actually allow the small-scale operation a license to rent and sell holovids not yet on general release, but as yet the Marshall's have done nothing about this. *(I wonder if they rent their 'vids from there too eh?!)*

Iris Systems

Iris Systems maintains a small retail outlet here on A-Z. The metanational computer and software supplier obviously feels that if Wazukana were prepared to set up shop on A-Z, then they needed to as well.

Entering the store is quite, interesting. Both Wazukana and Iris's store front display information about the latest model minicomps and agents on holoprojectors, keep a constant supply of upgrades and add-on's flowing into the station and make customisations to brand and non-brand computer gear when asked.

Like Wazukana, Iris Systems' store is packed full of recent, new and second hand computer gear tastefully set out on tables, demonstration stands and on shelves. Payment is at the back of the station, usually by CredChip only.

ISRA Office

As noted earlier, ISRA's have the same legal authority on Fuyoushi as the FPF. ISRA maintains a basic office directly next to the Marshalls Office.

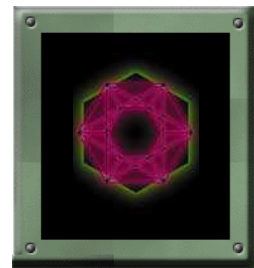
The small series of rooms and what passes for a reception (presumably the ISRA's don't see the need to supply a waiting room - as the staff would 'know' who was coming to visit them anyway).

At any one time a couple of ISRA's occupy the offices, whilst the rest of the half a dozen or so Clears go on about their duties across the station.

It is important to note that for a station of A-Z's size (actually small in comparison to Earthside stations) there are a lot of ISRA's here., and more pass through the station 'just visiting' on a fairly regular basis.

The Marshalls are glad of the help (the FPF is well known for being understaffed and overworked on a prodigious scale) that the ISRA's can provide, and the FAC doesn't seem to mind the help offered. It does save on hiring extra police of course.

The ISRA Office not only serves as a supplemental facility to the Marshall's Office but maintains a couple of simple quarters for visiting ISRA's.



Kostbaar

High fashion came kicking and screaming to A- with a bang several months ago. The indomitable Kostbaar is rumoured to have personally have arranged for his chain of top selling clothing stores to expand to the Belt.

The store was opened amongst a great fanfare complete with free food, music, dancers and media coverage. Even Cori Heisler made the journey from Earth to cover the event (rumour has it she was personally invited by Kostbaar himself - which in and of itself is quite a surprise, as Cori Heisler is never invited to anything).

The store is quite possibly the most expensive location on the station. A top of the range designer suit, in the latest fibreweave materials could easily cost as much as a small cargo hauler.

Only the very, very rich can afford to shop here. Owning a genuine Kostbaar is a true sign of one's social status. If you want to make the right impression - you need a Kostbaar original.

Every wall in the store is covered in faux vista images of stellar phenomenon, unusual sights from Mars and similar images. The shop floor itself is actually quite spartan, as orders are placed and goods shipped in from Earth. The only stock in the store consists of a small amount of the more accessible, Kostbaar items - none of which are originals. A series of glitzy images from the store's holoprojectors invite all and sundry to marvel at the wonder of Kostbaar.

Marshall's Office

Here we have the local law-enforcement headquarters. The Fuyoushi Police Force (the FPF) is co-ordinated from these central offices. This place serves as both 'sheriff's office' and 'town jail'.

For security reasons, exact information on the Marshall's Office cannot and will not be made public (*no fun!*). In general, however, here is what a visitor or (or prisoner) will see:

The front office (looking out onto the Promenade and the Marketplace) has several desks, stools for suspects and 'proper' chairs for lawful visitors. A weapon's rack hangs on the back wall holding numerous sonic weapons, netguns, tasers and a few more lethal weapons.

Another wall contains a holographic "wanted poster" of some local outlaws (*celebs!*).

In the back you'll find the jail cells (or 'tanks', as they are sometimes called) and the Evidence Lab (off-limits to the general public).

The FPF and the ISRA's have a special relationship. As per the Law and Regulations File 3.0 gives any registered resident Clear exactly the same martial power and responsibilities as the regular FPF.

(To put it simply the FPF does the work whilst the clears occasionally lend a hand if they're around and not busy, erm..... seeing things).

For additional information see the Fuyoushi's Most Wanted file and the ISRA's Office file.

Mining Supplies

This large store on the Promenade caters to the miners that inhabit the station. Everything from mining hardware, life support gear, refining equipment and more can be found in this well kept and thoroughly organised store. One of the largest stores on the Promenade, Mining Supplies makes a fair income by actually selling second hand mining equipment to the Marketplace and smaller stalls scattered around the spacedocks to supplement its regular clientele.

The store itself has two large, always open, double doors that lead to a neatly organised and catalogue array of goods. A large number of items (particularly the more expensive machinery) is stored in warehouses down in the spacedocks, but you could easily drop by and pick up, say, a triple-charged laser cutting tool (*you know, the 8ft long ones that need a harness to use without ripping your arm off*).

Promenade Marketplace

The Marketplace is the single largest area on the station next to the main spacedocks. The Marketplace takes up the central area on the first floor of the Promenade.

Several hundred small market stalls litter the central area of the Promenade's first floor selling every possible product imaginable. Everything from food and clothes, to holovids (*bootleg, of course*) to weapons, armour and smaller parts for ships can be found here. A very persistent market in forgery, and other 'underground' trades exist here as well, such as personal cyber body modification & enhancement.

Prices in the Marketplace vary from the just about affordable to the downright ludicrous - but as the local mining companies pay their miners good hazard pay money, and miners need the services of the stall owners, no-one (*especially the FAC*) is complaining.

At the very centre of the Marketplace is a small oasis in the chaos. A series of tables and chairs provide a restplace for at least 500 people at a time.

Needless to say, the Marketplace, and by extension the entire Promenade, is always loud & busy. The Marketplace never, ever, closes.

Solar Art

Solar Art is an oddity on A-Z. With a space station packed full of mercenaries, traders, miners, soldiers, privateers, pirates and criminals. It comes as more than a passing surprise to find an art dealer smack bang in the middle of the Promenade.

Solar art deals in actual, original paintings - many of which are brushed by the owner of the out-of-place store herself. The paintings are usually landscape and renderings of the various solar bodies and similar scenes.

Prices for the art is actually quite reasonable. Although the art generally appeals only to the very rich (most people prefer the high tech fau vistas or holoprojectors). some notable locals have purchased art their, and even establishments like Aeon and Kostbaar proudly display some of the art in their premises.

Trader Nick's General Store

Here we have Trader Nick's. Trader Nick himself is gone (present whereabouts unknown). The store is now under new management. The store itself is a small alcove situated strategically within sight of the Marshall's Office (*though not THAT well. Trader Nick was never one to attract too much attention to himself*). Three holoprojectors constantly flash ads in the store's from window.

Inside, to the left, you'll find dry-goods and perishables in one isle. The isle to the right of that contains all manner of cooking utensils and personal hygiene products (*an odd grouping, but at least your forks will be clean*). Isle number three has clothing, vac suits and mining gear (*big surprise on a mining colony*). In the fourth isle we have life-support gear, basic medical supplies (under lock and key), and over-the-counter drugs. Finally, up at the checkout counter, you can buy sweets and the latest tabloid chipzines just in from Earth (*if you really want to read any of that crap*).

Wazukana

Leader in 22nd Century computer hardtech and software, Wazukana has long maintained premises on the station. Both Wazukana, and its nearest competitor on the station Iris Systems, have very similar stores. Computer hardware and software is displayed on carefully arranged shelves and stands. Hardtech computer equipment is the province of the staff in this store. Unlike Iris Systems however, Wazukana tends to deal almost always in Wazukana brand equipment. Iris does, on occasion, deal in multiple brands.

Prices here are comparable to Iris, and the quality is always top-rate. If you want computer equipment that is from a reliable brand, and is reasonably priced, you need look no further.

Zero Security Corps

Occasionally called the UFPF (unofficial Fuyoushi Police Force) Zero Security Corps are, to be polite, ex mercs dressed in nice uniforms toting the latest weaponry and offering their services for a fee - usually a large one.

Although the owners of the business do not hide the fact that their employees are from the roughest stock, no-one can deny ZSC's ability in certain situations. The FAC has been known to hire entire squads of ZSC 'guards' to supplement the FPF when needed, and to provide everything from escort duty for V.I.P.'s, extra muscle to deal with corridor gangs and similar duties.

The office of ZSC is medium sized, relatively spartan but does contain a series of holoprojectors that constantly dazzle the visitor with image upon image of ZSC staff in action, weapons used and situations that ZSC can be contracted for.

Although you may not like their stock, ZSC's reliability, availability and capability has never been called into question.

Just some of the local groups to hire ZSC include the FAC, the FPF, The Pulse Nightclub, ICE, the Fuyoushi Port Authority, Banji, Wazukana, and Orbit 69.

Promenade Second Floor

The second floor of the Promenade is essentially a large gangway built around the edges of the ceiling area of this module. From the 'balconies' you can see directly down to the expansive marketplace. The gangways hang directly over the shops that line the edges of the first floor of the Promenade.

Aeon Trinity Outpost

The eyes and ears of the benevolent Aeon Trinity are everywhere watching out for, and on, humanity. A-Z is no exception. Although they tend to keep their operations close to Earth, the trinity maintains a small office here, located on the Promenade's second level.

Admittedly, the Aeon Trinity has no real business on A-Z, other than just keeping an eye on things, reporting back interesting details to Earth and lending a hand to anyone who needs (and/or deserves) it. The office has had to be rebuilt in recent months due to a well placed bomb that totally destroyed the previous outpost. During the months of the TA0 Cultist terror activities the Trinity (and the FPF for that matter) suffered greatly. In true fashion, Aeon has recovered and now has an active team of Neptune coordinating things. A couple of Triton research staffers are also posted at the outpost.

A small team of lightly armed and armoured guards are now ever-present at the Outpost. Whilst some of the Orders maintain their own premises on the station (such as Aesculapian Clinic, the ISRA Office and the Orgotek Repair Facilities), Aeon maintains that its doors are open to all orders.



Aesculapian Clinic

Here is the local hospital. If you get shot, stabbed, burned, beat-up, electrocuted, poisoned, or exposed to space (*what can I see A-Z is a rough joint!*), this is the place to come.

Maximised for saving space, the Clinic still tends to be cramped and understaffed (*just hope you don't bleed to death in the waiting room, you'll be in for a long wait*). The waiting room is staffed by a Hippocrates A.I. Agent (*git!*). Prepare to fill out a lot of paperwork.

The only office has the name Dr. Sherri McIntyre scrawled on the door. She will meet with those not needing medical assistance in her spartan office when she has the time (*she never has the time*).



The Emergency Room (almost always in use) is stocked with the standard equipment, including an operating table and, off to one side, three L-B/Xie Intensive Care Tanks (although there's room for six, and only two are in actual working order).

The Recovery Ward, holding eight beds, is almost always full (most patients are simply sent home after receiving treatment). The Hippocrates agent handles the nursing duties with the aid two mouse-sized robots.

Dr. Sherri McIntyre has the dubious honour of being Chief Medical Officer of the station, a Vitakinetic relatively new to the station. She arrived to replace the late Dr. Lucas Zeaman.

More recently the Aesculapian Order sent a personal security guard to aid the good Dr. Boris Velinsky, a member of the Black Company, is always found, alert, at the Clinic.

A.N. Dupres-Mutessa & Company Inc.

DuPres & Company control most extraterrestrial metal and mineral mining operations. The company uses the considerable facilities at A-Z to support its absolutely massive mining programmes across the entire Belt.

DuPres & Company are also the single largest 'tenant' of the Ore Processing Plants that the FAC has. This makes DuPres the largest single employer on Absolute Zero. It is believed the DuPres actually employs some 35% of the residents on the station.

Ore mining and refining is incredibly dangerous work, and DuPres pays extremely well by way of hazard allowances. It is not unreasonable to expect in excess of 900 yuan a week working for DuPres, however at least 3% of annual workforce suffer fatalities, 10% suffer serious crippling injuries and at least another 20% suffer minor burns and other assorted injuries. The Offices of DuPres are large, expensive and guarded by two squads of Zero Security Corps soldiers (*to deal with the occasional worker uprising but realistically more for show*).

CyberCentre

The CyberCentre can best be described as a cybertech chop-shop. The clustered shelves are packed with all manner of delicate computer equipment including wiretaps, minicomp enhancements, communications devices customised agents and more.

The owner of the CyberCentre is himself a monument to leading edge (*which means borderline illegal!*) cyber enhancements. Enhancements are available to anyone who asks no questions, doesn't have a big mouth but does have a healthy CredChip balance.

Earthside

Earthside is a restaurant that specialises in traditional meals from cultures across Earth. The menu is, needless to say, varied. Earthside is a small restaurant with a small bureau that acts as a quick-stop takeaway bar.

Although traditional food from many nations is available, the most popular is still Nihonjin, as a good proportion of the station's residents are from that country.

Earthside continues to alter its menu's to accommodate the increasingly diverse cultures on A-Z, so although Nihonjin cuisine still reigns, its place as the number one food served here is not secure by any means.

Prices for food are usually slightly more expensive than you would pay on Earth.

Eclipse

The Eclipse cafe is situated near Madame Deanna's and diagonally opposite the Aeon Trinity Office. The Eclipse was an up and coming late afternoon/early evening cafe that catered to a growing nightlife crowd on A-Z.

Usually patrons of the Eclipse would arrive for a few drinks after a meal down on the first level of the Promenade before finally heading off to Madame Deanna's or, more likely, the Pulse Nightclub. During the TA0 Cultists attacks on some shops on the Promenade the Eclipse nightclub was put out of business. The store still remains closed, the previous owner unable or unwilling to complete the necessary repairs.

The FAC can be contacted regarding the lease on the well-placed property and ToshiGinko has pledged financial services to anyone wishing to re-establish the venue.

Fuyoushi Tribune Editorial Office

The Fuyoushi Tribune maintains its editorial office on the second floor of the Promenade. The most popular of the two new chipzines on the station (the other being ZeroNet News, staffed by a small group of techs - whereabouts unknown), the Tribune is the zine to buy to get the latest on what is happening on the station.

The Editor in Chief is one Brian 'Mac' MacDermot, a dour Scot who has managed the Tribune for as long as anyone can remember. He is supported by a small team of copywriters, designers and the like, but the face that residents are more likely to see is that of Gemma Chun, the reporter for the Tribune.

The offices of the Tribune are chaotic at best. Except for Mac's office, everything is open plan. Minicomps buzz, the staffers rush about their business and people come and go placing personals, commercial adverts and reporting interesting news stories.

The Tribune ChipZine can be purchased from hundreds of small vendors across the station and, of course, can be downloaded from ZeroNet for a yuan.

International Consortium on Ecomining

The second largest water mining company in the Sol System. ICE is headquartered in a private colony station on Luna, but maintains sizeable operations on A-Z.

ICE makes its money from extracting every ounce of ice from the many frozen rocks in the Belt. The rocks are broken up in the Belt, shipped back to A-Z and then superheated to produce water. A significant amount of the water goes directly to Luna, some to Mars and some to Earth. A small portion of it remains behind on A-Z for station use under an arrangement with the FAC.

The offices of ICE are constantly advertising the need for more miners, pilots, mechanics, scientists and casual staff. Rates are good in comparison to other, smaller, water mining concerns. The hazards pay isn't nearly as high as, say AND, as the risk is a heck of a lot less than some of the metal mining and processing plants on the station.

Nippon Designs

Nippon Designs provides smart casual and workwear to the more discerning customers. Whilst the clothes are not even remotely in the same league as Kostbaar, they are high quality and well priced. Everything you would expect from Nippon produce.

The store is laid out in a traditional manner, with racks, shelves and dressing rooms. Items are arranged by function - casual, smart casual, work, evening and special occasion.

The owner is a friendly and capable little Nipponese gent, who is always eager to find just the right look for his customers. He seems to never forget a name or a face.

Nippon designs has several contracts with companies to provide work uniforms and outfits which supplements his walk-in trade very nicely.

Orbit 69

Welcome to Fuyoushi's most Famous brothel!

Welcome! Please, have a seat and a drink. Madame Deanna will be along to greet you in a moment. It's awfully busy in here today. This, as you know, is the infamous Orbit 69 Brothel. It is not only the best known brothel on Fuyoushi, but in all of the Sol System!

We offer a variety of services, from excellent food and drinks, to steam rooms, to parlour games, to hot oil massages or just someone to talk to. Our girls and boys will provide more intimate companionship at varying prices, if you so wish. Filled with lush furniture and artwork, Orbit 69 is one of the few places on A-Z that has carpeted floors. Aside from the parlour and the library, there are many private rooms in the back.

Madame Deanna founded Orbit 69 here some twenty years ago. An enterprising woman, she has built it into the famous rest stop that it is today. She still personally greets guests, welcoming them like family. Her boys and girls are like sons and daughters to her.

One warning. Do not get out of line with her people. She keeps Boris and Rico (the large, irritable gentlemen standing over there in the corner) on hand for troublemakers. The entire station is quite protective of Madame Deanna. Do not get on her bad side.

Pulse Nightclub

The Pulse is one of the newer establishments to set up shop on the Promenade.

Do you love the nightlife? Do you like to boogie? Then this is the place for you! The Pulse is A-Z's most prominent new nightclub, offering the newest and hippest Bang music around for you to get out on the floor and dance to!

The Pulse also features no less than THREE fully stocked bars, so feel free to down a few while you dance the night away! Speaking of dancing, The Pulse has two large dancefloors and two raised dance platforms, so there's always plenty of room! Couple that with the latest in holoprojecter entertainment technology and a killer sound system, and The Pulse simply can't be beat!

Owners Lo Mei and Robin Teller invite you to come and join the party.

ToshiGinko Bank

ToshiGinko is perhaps the largest financial institution in the Sol System. This Nihonjin metanational maintains its image as a 'friendly neighbourhood bank' even while backing ruthless takeovers. Close to some 25% of all consumer bank accounts in the Sol System are with ToshiGinko.

The A-Z branch of TG not only hold the accounts of almost every single shop on the Promenade, but also handle the finances for ICE, AND, and many hundreds of traders and merchants.

The bank is situated next to The Pulse Nightclub on the second level, looking down onto the Marketplace below. The bank is neat, efficient and its staff are always friendly. The manager is quick to pick up on the needs of his customers and is prepared to take the occasional investment when other financial organisations might not - something that HQ seems to tolerate for the present.

The FAC utilises TG on occasion, and then only when it is diverting some of its not inconsiderable funds off-station.

Several CredChip machines line the external walls of the bank, although hard currency can also be obtained over the counter.

Travis Finance

A small time finance bureau, Travis Finance has been on A-Z since the FAC took over. Old Man Travis died several years ago and the current owners prefer not to publicise their identity.

Travis Finance specialises in providing financial packages tied into rental, and are happy to accommodate those customers that ToshiGinko simply won't touch.

Travis Finance's credit terms are largely to the benefit of the company, with customers paying a higher interest than TG, but at least people can usually get financing here without masses of paperwork and overdue consideration of credit problems.

The office of Travis Finance is small, functional and thoroughly old-style. The current manager even keeps old fashioned filing cabinets in his office, a throw back to the days of Travis himself. The main office does operate on minicomps (a necessity in the modern world). Geena, a friendly receptionist makes all visitors feel welcome.



Lvl 2: Lunar Habitat & Embassy Row

Lunar Habitat

This habitat module is easily the most expensive and luxurious on the station. Residents are primarily (really) wealthy business people, top-level Command staff, diplomats, VIP's and it is rumoured that even some members of the FAC maintain their residences here.

Office areas are also plentiful here as well as the FAC administration has premises here as well. Several large Earthside corporations have small offices in Luna habitat as well. The FPF maintains a good presence here, easily the best on the station and many squads of Zero Security Corps are on regular standby in Luna habitat. A small residential block in Luna habitat goes for well over 4000 yuan a week.

Embassy Row

Here is Embassy Row, where diplomats and representatives of various Earth nations have their offices. The "Row" itself is actually a block of offices located near the Promenade. China, Nippon, Australia, Brazil, the FSA and the UAN all maintain small facilities in this section of the Promenade, all next door to one another (though not necessarily in that order). Those who need to make contact with their homeland governments can do so here. Diplomats also work to keep good relations with the Fuyoushi Administrative Council and keep the valuable mining revenues pouring into their countries. While space considerations keep these offices small, their importance makes them well-funded.

The Chinese Embassy also doubles as the local headquarters for the Ministry of Psionic Affairs. A few Telepaths can found here, if you need to talk to one for some reason. One should keep in mind, however, that the mind police serve their government first and foremost.

Nippon has had an embassy here since the station was built. Fuyoushi was originally Nihonjin property, after all. Note: No biotech is allowed inside the office. Australia's office is open 24 hours for its citizens convenience. The Brazilian Embassy looks to be a normal governmental facility. Those searching for the Norôa should look elsewhere. They don't advertise. The UAN Embassy is here for all African citizens. Those wanting to deal with a particular country need only come here.

The FSA's office is, as one might guess, a rather unfriendly place where bureaucracy is the word of the day. Be ready to wade through a lot of red tape.

Transportation Hub

Almost every single module attached to the station, from the Promenade, to Command & Control, to the Spacedocks and even down as far as subzero - a network of gravlifts operate transporting the residents and visitors of A-Z where they need to go.

The Transportation Hub is placed loosely between the Promenade, Embassy Row and underneath Command and Control. The Transport Hub is simply the section of the gravlifts where some 40 lift tubes interconnect. This section of the asteroid is a veritable anthill of converging tunnels through which gravlifts zoom taking their passengers to their desired destination. It is also known amongst the resident maintenance crews as 'hell' (thats the polite version!).



Lvl 3: Nebula & Nova Habitats

Nebula Habitat

Although not nearly as luxurious as Luna habitat, Nebula is still expensive and well worth the money. Most of the residents are from the more profitable businesses and staff from Earthside metanationals. Low level A-Z administration staff are also based here. Many expensive but small shops cater exclusively to the residents. Accommodations starts at about 600 yuan per week.

Nova Habitat

Nova habitat is noticeably less extravagant than previous habitats. It is considered the sector for the 'upper middleclass' of the station. More affluent residents make their homes here as well as a lot of business owners. Quite a large number of passing traders keep residences on retainer here for when they need them. Small malls have sprung up throughout this area to accommodate the larger population. Accommodation goes for about 400 yuan a week here.

Lvl 4: Solar & Asteroid Habitat

Solar Habitat

At this level the accommodation becomes much more affordable and the residents are typical of the majority of people on the station, earning enough to keep them fairly comfortably - but no more than that. The FPF presence in the habitat modules drops sharply from here down.

A handful of small mall's services the population, and a good sized number of markets cater to the needs of residents. Accommodation goes for 200 - 300 yuan a week here.

Asteroid Habitat

Another middle class habitat module, with a sizeable population. A handful of small mall's services the population, and a good sized number of markets cater to the needs of residents. Accommodation goes for 200 yuan a week here.

Lvl 5: Starburst & Mars Habitats, Ore Processing

Starburst Habitat

Things start to get a little rougher in this habitat. People are usually just earning a simple living and accommodation is usually crowded and basic. Whilst not strictly poor, the module lacks any real luxuries. Accommodation goes for anything from 50 yuan a week to 200 yuan a week here.

Mars Habitat

Situated right near the DuPres processing plants this habitat module is considered the poor area of A-Z. FPF presence is here, but in very small numbers. Accommodation is spartan, services are adequate. Accommodation goes for 50 to 100 yuan a week here.

Ore Processing Plant (A.N. DuPres-Mutesa & Company Inc.)

The Ore Processing Plants of Absolute Zero are similar in design and controlled, totally, by the FAC. Each of the plants are 'sublet' for massive fees to companies such as A.N. DuPres-Mutesa & Company Inc., the International Consortium on Ecomining and a handful of smaller outfits. After all, it's more cost-effective and space saving to fill your ships cargo holds with finished metal rather than irregular chunks of metal ore. The plants are where much of the raw ore brought in by the asteroid miners is taken. Run through the huge smelting machines, this is where the rock is superheated, the sought-after metals melted and drained off. The plant processors run day and night, as an endless supply of ore comes through the plants, demanding and exhausting pace. Factory workers usually endure three shifts around the clock. Accidents are common and more than one corpse (*or rather miniscule bone fragments*) have turned up in the processors. (*Incinerating bodies works quite well, you know!*). The ore processors take up a good chunk of the station, most of the levels from 5 though to 10, and that doesn't include the storehouses.

Lvl 6: Venus & Pluto Habitats, Ore Processing

Venus Habitat

At this level the habitat modules are strictly for the outright poor. A lot of ex miners living on whatever savings they had are based here, out of luck traders and out of luck

Pluto Habitat

Pluto habitat is, if at all possible, slightly lower-class than Venus habitat. (*The warehouses in Venus habitat are at least visited by the Aesculapians once a year!*)

Ore Processing Plant (A.N. DuPres-Mutesa & Company Inc.)

Another of the massive Ore processing plants complete with its hundreds of teamsters, mining company workshops, refinery lines and other necessary equipment to the mining process. This plant is currently leased to A.N.D-P & Company Inc.

Lvl 7: Ore Processing

Ore Processing Plant (A.N. DuPres-Mutesa & Company Inc.)

Another of the massive Ore processing plants complete with its hundreds of teamsters, mining company workshops, refinery lines and other necessary equipment to the mining process. This plant is currently leased to A.N.D-P & Company Inc.

Lvl 8: Ore Processing

Ore Processing Plant (A.N. DuPres-Mutesa & Company Inc.)

Another of the massive Ore processing plants complete with its hundreds of teamsters, mining company workshops, refinery lines and other necessary equipment to the mining process. This plant is currently leased to A.N.D-P & Company Inc.

Lvl 9: Ore Processing, Ore Storehouse

Ore Processing Plant (General)

Another of the massive Ore processing plants complete with its hundreds of teamsters, mining company workshops, refinery lines and other necessary equipment to the mining process. This plant is currently leased out to five medium sized mining concerns.

Ore Processing Plant (General)

Another of the massive Ore processing plants complete with its hundreds of teamsters, mining company workshops, refinery lines and other necessary equipment to the mining process. This plant is currently leased to over a dozen smaller mining concerns.

Ore Storehouse (A.N. DuPres-Mutesa & Company Inc.)

Another of the massive Ore processing plants complete with its hundreds of teamsters, mining company workshops, refinery lines and other necessary equipment to the mining process. This plant is currently leased to A.N.D-P & Company Inc.

Lvl 10: Ore Processing, Ore Storehouse

Ore Processing Plant (International Consortium on Ecomining)

Another of the massive Ore processing plants complete with its hundreds of teamsters, mining company workshops, refinery lines and other necessary equipment to the mining process. This plant is currently leased to I.C.E.

Ore Processing Plant (International Consortium on Ecomining)

Another of the massive Ore processing plants complete with its hundreds of teamsters, mining company workshops, refinery lines and other necessary equipment to the mining process. This plant is currently leased to I.C.E.

Ore Storehouse (I.C.E & General)

The ore storehouses are equally as impressive as the processing plants when it comes to sheer vastness. Many thousands of tons of refined materials are temporarily stored here before being shipped to Earth, Mars and Luna. In the case of this storehouse, the International Consortium on Ecomining and a few smaller outfits keeps tens of thousands of tons of extracted ice in deep refrigeration (*not actually a difficult task in deep space*), for later shipment Earthside.

Lvl 11: Traders Spacedock, Orgotek Repair Facility

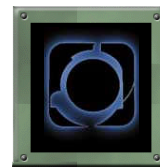
Trader Spacedock

The Trader spacedock is smaller than the main spacedock on the twelfth level. This is not to say it is small by any standards. Thousands of traders come through here every month, refuelling, moving supplies and buying the end products of the ore process. The Traders spaceport is more organised than the main spacedock. The Fuyoushi Port Authority keeps things running. Every trader here has to pay his way, the FPA in turn keeps the teamsters employed, pays a healthy cut to the FAC and makes a profit.

(You wouldn't be the first spacejockey to think that you could dock at the main spacedock instead of paying the fees at the Traders Spacedock. Just go on and see if you can..... you'll be lucky to get your cargo loaded/unloaded on the substandard, small-scale equipment, will have to do all the dirty work yourself, get your goods to and from the rest of the station and then there's the slight problem of angry teamsters from the Traders Spaceport if they catch you in the act!)

Orgotek Repair Facility

This is the Orgotek Starship Repair Facility and the unofficial Orgotek Office on the station. Run by Orgotek's Tekne Group (for hardtech ships) and Orgosoft Farms (for Bioships) sub-companies, they service every type of ship that docks here. The prices are *(sorta!)* reasonable and the workmanship expert *(OK, I've gotta give 'em that!)*. Those wishing to do business with Orgotek beyond contracting simple repair work are urged to contact Edwin James, representative of World Enterprises Inc., the administrative and public relations branch of Orgotek, onboard Fuyoushi.



Lvl 12: Spacedocks, Legions Spacedocks

The Spacedocks

Here is the enormous docking facilities Fuyoushi is well known for. We can accommodate any size ship, except for the Leviathan jump ships. All types of ship can be found at the main spacedocks, from Banji Falcons to L-B Ventures to the huge mining Iceships. Even the great Leviathans pass through here for stationary orbit repairs and maintenance on their way out-system to the extrasolar colonies.



Apart from literally 50 or so independent repair facilities major ship building companies such as Banji, L-B and Offworld Enterprises have repair bays in the spacedocks. A surprising number of manufacturing companies that do not produce spacecraft per se have adapted to provide services to the many thousands of spacefarers, such as underwater vehicle specialist FangTech.

The spacedocks are, needless to say, an aw inspiring sight. Nearly ninety percent of this level contains the spacedocks, which is accessed by a series of hangar bays all around the 'needle' that reaches down from the asteroid upon which Absolute Zero sits. A small town in its own right has sprung up around the spacedocks. Vendors of food, mechanical and electrical tools drink *(and weapons!)* now thrives as a 'midway' between the lower levels and the Promenade.

The Legions Spacedocks

This is an off-limits area for civilians. This spacedock is for use by the Legions only. An agreement reached was several years ago, between the 7th Legion and the FAC. The Council would provide, for free, starfighter hangar bays and related facilities, and the Legion would protect the station from outside threats.

The fighter bays are as old as the station itself. Originally used to house the Nihonjin fighters when Nippon still owned the station, freelance pilots in second rate fighters were hired when the Administrative Council took over Absolute Zero. The FAC was happy to have the free protection of the Legions (freelance fighter pilots are very expensive, as is maintaining starfighters in prime condition), when the Psi Order came to them six years ago. The dock is small, with only four hangar bays (though only one is in use).



The facilities built around the docks include:

- Checkpoint at the facilities entrance
- Barracks for enlisted soldiers
- Officer's quarters
- Offices for the Strike Team Leaders
- The Armoury (containing plenty of firepower)
- The briefing room
- The recreation room
- A gymnasium/combat training centre

Though there is space for fully four strike teams and their ships, the Legions has always assigned only one team to the station (*after all, one 7th legion squadron is better than four neutral squadrons put together!*). The current Legion strike team posted at A-Z is Strike Team Raptor, lead by Commander Jazz Dandett. The team's Orgotek Locust C Biofighters occupy Hangar Bay One. (*The recent problems with the TA0 Cultists also saw the deployment of previously unseen hardware at the station - a VARG. Rumour has it that it is maintained in Hangar Bay 2 - although nobody is THAT stupid to want to try and get a peek!*).

Lvl 13: Subzero (level 1)

Subzero is, without question, the most dangerous area on the station. Until a year or so ago the entire bottom two levels of A-Z (the smallest levels at the point of the 'needle') were thought by the FAC to be abandoned due to a total lack of power or water being routed to the area.

During the TA0 Cultist incidents it was brought to the attention of the FAC that far from being abandoned, the lower two levels were in fact home to many hundreds of homeless, strays, society drop-outs and hardened criminals of the worst possible kinds.

It appears that the two levels of the aptly nicknamed 'Subzero' are divided between warring criminal gangs comprised mostly of brutal thugs, murderers and similar types. Drug dealing, protection money, laundering, murder and even slavery are everyday occurrences in Subzero.

Lvl 14: Subzero (level 2)

The second level of Subzero is even smaller than the first, approximately 1/16th the size of some of the middle levels of the station. Not so long ago it was rumoured that the TA0 Cultists operated from this level, but any one in the know can say that the level is simply an extension of the first, and the cultists are, thankfully, either gone or laying low.



Getting by at Zero Degrees

A-Z Services, Prices & Trade

Anything, absolutely anything can be purchased, rented or obtained on A-Z (it all adds to the charm of the place really!).

Apart from the diverse stores, traders marketstalls and individual salesmen which can provide every kind of product or service, A-Z is home to the one of the largest black markets in the Sol System - second only to The Pit on Luna. In fact, a great deal of illegal produce that gets to The Pit comes via A-Z. Prices on A-Z vary from reasonable in the spacedocks, to high on the Promenade to daylight robbery in the habitat modules and the lower levels. The FPF is not encouraged to intervene in the black market by the FAC. Provided the goods are not unnecessarily dangerous, the FPF usually doesn't bat an eyelid.

There are a couple of simple rules to remember when buying goods or trading on A-Z.

1. CredChips are not universal. Some 70% of all transaction on A-Z are made with hard currency, usually yuan, but barter is also a common transaction process. So have some ready cash available
2. There are no such things as warranties in the Marketplace. Many of the marketstalls move around from day to day. It is not given that you can find the guy who sold you the broken power cells, let alone get him to replace them
3. Keep your cash hidden. Flaunting any wealth is a fast way to get a knife in the back. Violent crime is a way of life on most areas of A-Z

The table later in this book details the most common goods and services bought on A-Z, their likely location and the price. These prices can vary however.

The Fuyoushi Legal Code

We all live by laws. Even a place as down-and-out as Absolute Zero has laws that are (usually) enforced. The Fuyoushi Police Force asks that you brief yourself on the laws of the station to avoid accidental legal entanglements. *(In other words, behave yourselves!).*

Law 1: Minor Crimes

Most minor crimes, such as disturbing the peace, public drunkenness, theft, graft, slander etc are not subject to intervention by the FPF. The FPF is a small force, and even with the aid of the local ISRA's & Legionnaires the FPF has bigger crimes to chase after.

Law 2: Major Crimes

The FPF does fervently enforce laws against major crimes, including: Murder, Manslaughter, Treason, Espionage, Illegal Drug Trade, Selling & Distribution of Illegal Bioapps, Kidnapping, Slavery, Rape, Terrorism, and Grand Larceny. Note that treason, espionage and terrorism are in reference to acts against the F.A.C.

Law 3: Tobacco

Smoking is illegal aboard A-Z, as it puts a strain on the life-support systems, which are already expensive to maintain. Anyone caught smoking is subject to an immediate 100 yuan fine. Anyone caught distributing tobacco of any kind is subject to an immediate 10,000 yuan fine or imprisonment.

Law 4: Right to Bare Arms

Melee weapons and non-lethal missile weapons are legal on Fuyoushi. Lethal missile weapons are illegal to carry on one's person in the corridors of the station (which you have to use to get anywhere) without a legal permit. Permits can be obtained by applying to the Marshall's Office. Processing takes roughly three weeks and costs 200 yuan. Only one lethal missile weapon can be carried per permit. Anyone found carrying an unlicensed lethal missile weapon will have the weapon confiscated and be fined a minimum of 1,000 yuan.

Law 5: Enforcement of the Law

The FPF has the full authority to enforce the law. Anyone interfering in their duties can also be arrested. Due to the small size of the FPF, the FAC has given equal law-enforcement power to all resident ISRA's and Legionnaires. Agents of Aeon Trinity have the right to apply for legal authority.

Law 6: Medical Regulations

The Aesculapians are the reigning medical authority on A-Z. The resident Chief Medical Officer has the power to relieve station personnel of duty if they are found to be medically unfit.

Law 7: Entertainment

Gambling and prostitution are perfectly legal anywhere on Absolute Zero.

Law 8: Possession of illegal or 'Code Indigo' Bioapps.

Possession will result in incarceration in the station brig for a period of one week, a fine of no less than 1000 yuan and the permanent confiscation of said bioapp. The selling of Code Indigo Bioapps will result in confiscation of all merchandise, a fine of no less than 10,000 yuan, and immediate expulsion from Fuyoushi. Sellers will be placed on the first available ship headed back in-system. Ship owners will be compensated for taking on the passenger.

Law 9: International Relations

Fuyoushi does not belong to any one nation or group of nations. A-Z is a free territory. As such, foreign authorities have no power on board the station. All law is decided and judged by the FAC. Fuyoushi has no extradition treaties with any nation. Admittedly, this makes Absolute Zero a haven for criminals fleeing foreign justice. However, the FAC feels giving extradition treaties would favour one nation over another and refuse to do so in order to maintain the best possible business practices. Most nations are fine with this, as they are not above using covert means to apprehend fugitives.

Law 10: Punishment for Crimes

Punishment for all crimes are either: Public services (rarely used), hefty fines (popular), expulsion from the station or death (popular for terrorists, murderers and rapists). Fuyoushi, obviously, has no facilities beyond the jail cells (the brig) in the Marshalls Office, so fines and expulsion are quite common.

Pirates & The Belt

Fuyoushi and the nearby asteroids are a haven for pirates. Entire fleets of pirates ply the space lanes in the hopes of capturing cargo from merchants and privateers. Some of the larger groups of pirates have managed to acquire small armies of fighters and the occasional cargo hauler.

The Legionnaires almost always have their hands full fending off the pirates that inhabit the nearby Belt. The ISRA's also spend a great deal of their time scouring the thousands of asteroids in an attempt to foresee future attacks.

In recent years some of the pirate gangs have begun hollowing out asteroids and turning the once barren rocks into mobile bases from which to launch their campaigns. Earlier this year a large contingent of pirates attacked A-Z itself. Due to the brave efforts of the Legionnaires and the help of the station defenses, the attackers were repelled. The FAC has decided to take no chances in future however.

The Psi Orders & The Aeon Trinity

The seven Psi Orders all have some presence onboard Absolute Zero - some more than others. For the convenience of those searching for Psions, here we have a file listing where you can find members of the Gifted.

1. The Aesculapians: the Clinic on the 2nd floor of the Promenade.
2. ISRA: The office attached to the Marshalls Office on the first floor of the Promenade.
3. The Legionnaires can be approached via the Legions HQ on the first floor of the Promenade. Do not try to contact them directly at the Legions Spacedock - it is off limits to civilians.
4. Orgotek maintains a small office in the Orgotek Repair Facility down in the spacedocks. Goods and services can be obtained from here.
5. The Ministry has not seen fit to establish a permanent presence here.
6. The Norca are never seen publicly, or though it is believed that there are some of Del Fuego's children on the station.
7. The Upeo Wa Macho have recently returned to the station, as well as to humanity as a whole, The Office of Fiona O'Reilly is on the second floor of the Promenade.



Earth Governments

Earth governments consider Absolute Zero to be more than a little dangerous. Many fugitives have escaped to Absolute Zero over the years, and Absolute Zero is a critical 'stop over' point for the illegal smuggling trade. Fortunately however for A-Z and the FAC, the Earth Governments have bigger fish to fry. When the governments do get around to providing a concerted effort against illegal trade, it will be The Pit on Luna, not A-Z that will first need to be dealt with. Some say however, that the President who runs the Pit has the place so well defended that such a strike by Earth governments will probably never come.

A-Z appears to be safe. *(for now)*.

Fuyoushi Tribune News

6.25.2121

Upeo Found in Spacedocks!

One of the long lost Upeo wa Macho Teleporters has appeared on Absolute Zero! Fiona O'Reilly, a Jumper originally from Ireland, teleported into the spacedocks after escaping from captivity at the hands *(or perhaps that should be claws!)* of the Chromatics.

After Earth's historic attack on Chrome-Prime, the captive jumpers were freed and many apparently escaped to parts unknown. Well, it appears that Miss O'Reilly escaped to here. She was once owner of O'Reilly Courier Service, a company in which she was the only apparent employee. For the right price, Miss O'Reilly would teleport sensitive messages and packages back in-system to Mars, Luna and Earth. Fuyoushi is familiar to her. She says it is likely that she will restart her business on the Promenade.

The Tribune will bring you more on this story as it develops.

>>>>> Sports Night at the Drunken Aberrant Bar and Grill every Friday! Hologvised
gravball tournaments live from Luna! Catch the season with us -----
Dockworkers needed. No experience required. Apply at the Quartermaster's Office <<<<<<

Major Ore Strike on Far Side of the Belt!

You may have noticed that A-Z is a little quieter in recent weeks. The corridors a little less crowded. The bars doing a little less business. That's because of a major new ore strike found in a small asteroid grouping near the 40 degree point along the Belt. Miners have flocked there to stake claims, leaving our station a bit lighter in the population department for a while. Experts say that this new strike won't last long with the huge number of mining ships converging on the area. We can expect our miners back soon - with money to spend no doubt.

>>>>> Used mining gear for sale. Best offer. Contact Doug Thompson ----- 50% off sale at Wazukana outlet this Saturday only!
Don't miss out on these insane prices! <<<<<

Station Upkeep

Station tech support assures everyone that the lighting in Warehouse District 3 in the Ore Storehouse on Level 9 will be repaired within the week. They apologize for any inconvenience in the meantime. *(That's great, guys. Now how about fixing all those lights in the older habitat modules???)*

>>>>> Hot XXX Action! Live Nude Girls!! Come to the Hard Rock Palace in the Venus Sector Habitat for the best adult entertainment on A-Z! <<<<<

Letters to the Editor

This issue, we have a letter sent to us from a representative of the Aeon Trinity here on Absolute Zero, enjoy folks!

"On behalf of the Aeon Trinity and myself, Kenji Baratsa, greetings citizens and residents of Fuyoushi. I have recently been assigned to your station, taking over the post vacated when our former chief administrator, Jane Mulener, married and retired from active duty. She wishes you all well, and has spoken very fondly of you and your home since my arrival. I hope that in time you will make the same outstanding impression on me as you have on her.

The current operations of the Aeon Trinity here onboard Fuyoushi will continue uninterrupted, so those of you who rely on our services need not concern yourself with thoughts of their removal. Those who are most involved with us may notice a few slight changes. With the ever increasing threat of Aberrants, and with the increasingly frequent threats from pirates, we among the Aeon Trinity have decided that our protection must be found wherever there are humans who may need it. For this reason I have brought several new agents with me, to increase the protection we are capable of offering you. It is my sincere wish that with this new partnership will come a new phase of prosperity and safety on Fuyoushi, your home and mine."

Hope, Sacrifice, Unity

Kenji Baratsa, Neptune Division.

Local Personalities

Absolute Zero benefits *(suffers!)* from quite a few local 'celebrities'. It is not surprising that the harsh way of life on the station is home to several hardy individuals that are either famous or infamous. Detailed below are just a few.

Dr Sheri MacIntyre

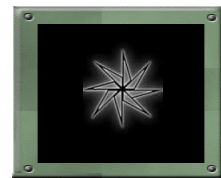
Sheri is the Chief Medical Officer on the station. Her staggering Vitakinetic skills were put to the test during the recent TA0 Cultist attacks on the station where she, a couple of orderlies and her overworked agent had to deal with several hundred injuries in just a couple of days. She came through the crisis *(perhaps a little greyer!)* and has won the respect of the majority of the station. Her policy of offering free clinic services has also endeared her to the stations population

Madame Deanna

Madame Deanna is the matronly owner of Fuyoushi most popular brothel. Madame Deanna appears to be in her late forties (*although I'd bet its a lot older!*) and has has a good relationship with most of the station - even non patrons. Her business does very well, her boys and girls are clean (courtesy of the Aesculapian Clinic) and her fees are acceptable. Madame Deanna has become quite a force on the local business scene since her place suffered in the TAO Cultist attack. She is currently heavily involved with a new trade guild idea that she has been toying with.

Commander Jazz Dandett

Jazz is the stalwart commander of the resident Legionnaires - Strike Team Raptor. Her rank and her ability have earned her an advisory role on the FAC. Jazz's primary concern is station security. She works ceaselessly to protect the station from external attack and commits her forces internally in extreme situations. In one notable event, a scout class VARG was deployed on the Promenade when the TAO Cultists terrorist attacks were at their height.



Jazz has taken her duties at A-Z extremely seriously (*even for a Legionnaire!*). She is regularly in contact with HQ trying to negotiate a larger Legions presence in the area - she hasn't managed this yet, but time will tell.

Gemma Chun

Gemma is the Fuyoushi Tribune's only full-time reporter. She is quoted as calling her career on the station as 'a good education with a smattering of healthy danger'. Gemma is the one to contact with any story, and she is the one usually digging up stories. Although her investigative styles is quite non-intrusive in comparison to the more famous reporters such as Cori Heisler, Gemma has quite a good relationship with the business community.

Fiona O'Reilly

Fiona, one of the Upeo wa Macho teleporters, has recently returned to the station. She arrived when the human fleet attacked the Chromatics home world, Chrome-Prime. Fiona is an attractive woman in her mid thirties. Since arriving on the station O'Reilly has set about re-establishing her courier business that was in operation before the Upeo disappeared. O'Reilly hopes to have the business up and running again within a month. Although her status as one of the returned Upeo, Fiona never talks about her Order, or about her time on the Chromatics home world.

'A'

The enigmatic man known simply as 'A' was once a respected member of Orgotek. It is rumoured that he spent time advising the Orgotek Inner Circle which included Alex & Elayne Cassel and other Orgotek luminaries. 'A' is a very potent electrokinetic. It is rumoured that he was involved in early Orgotek experiments to enhance the array of power uses available to the rank and file Orgotek members. If this is true he almost certainly has access to abilities not likely seen outside of the inner circle. At the present 'A' spends his time involved in various crime gangs and such like - although nobody is quite sure why. The FAC don't seem able to pin anything on him, and 'A' seems in no hurry to leave the station.

A recurrent rumour amongst the stations criminals is that 'A' fell out of favour with Alex or Elayne Cassel. Whatever happened, there is definitely some sort of grudge match going on - on at least two occasions teams of Orgoteks security service have tried, and failed, to apprehend 'A'.

TAO

TAO is the enigmatic leader behind the TAO Cultists that operate on the lowest level of 'subzero'. Although TAO himself was never seen, his cultists caused mayhem on the station in the recent past, which included the murder of many dozens of the FPF, attacks on business property and, most notably, the bombing of the previous Aeon Trinity office.

The activities of the TA0 Cultists were stamped on - hard. the FAC drafted many dozens of temporary FPF officers and paid Zero Security Corps a staggering amount of money to keep both the Promenade and the habitat modules safe. Even Strike Team Raptor got involved - deploying a scout class VARG on the larger sections of the station.

No one is quite sure what happened to TA0 and his closest advisers. With the deployment of so many personnel a great deal of the cultists were captured or killed, even some local members of the Psi Orders (sponsored by Aeon) attempted to track down and remove TA0. Whether TA0 remains on the station is yet to be learned, but things have been a lot quieter since the Cultists were effectively shut-down.

Zulu

The space lanes around Absolute Zero are plagued by a myriad assortments of pirates and rebels. One of the most notable of these undesirables is an ex Legionnaire named 'Zulu'. Zulu was once a member of the fourth legion - Vengeance. It is believed that Zulu was too much of a head case even for the fourth, and he was expelled from the Legions. Zulu has incredible Psychokinetic abilities that make him almost unbeatable in close combat. It is rumoured that during his time as a member of the Legions he personally defeated a SudAmerican Scout Class VARG in close combat!

It is not Zulu's close combat abilities that people fear him for, although that is difficult to believe. Zulu is the commander of a terrifying band of pirates known as The Tribe. The Tribe is quite possibly the most feared pirate gangs in the Belt. They operate out of a converted (*stolen!*) Orgotek Scarab Strike Frigate. The gang has several heavily customised Orgotek Locus C Fighters at its disposal.

The Tribe were increasingly unhappy with the patrols by A-Z's Strike Team Raptor Legionnaires and made a daring attack on the station itself earlier in the year in an attempt to cripple the Legions spacedock. Although the attack was turned back (A-Z's defenses are quite efficient) - it was a close thing (*nah! we walked all over 'em!*).

Nkumba Gazalo

Another pirate with quite a reputation. The term pirate is almost inaccurate however. Nkumba runs the viscous gang known as the Void Masters. The Void Masters are contract killers for hire. If you want a particular merchant, dignitary or even another pirate removed, then you hire Nkumba and his men. The Void Master have never, ever, failed to complete a job. They use a collection of Banji Falcons to execute their mission (and their target) with remarkable accuracy. The Void Master are expensive, but well worth the money if you need someone inbound or outbound taken care of.

The Fuyoushi Advisory Council (F.A.C.)

The FAC is immensely secretive - and rightly so. The FAC is a shadowy body of some fifty or so businesspersons that run Absolute Zero. Guessing exactly who makes up the FAC is something of a station wide pastime. What is known is that members of the FAC come from all walks of life on the station, although the vast majority are wealthy businessmen.

The FAC meet on a regular basis in the areas near the Command Centre. These meetings are long and drawn out affairs (*that make the bureaucracy of some Earth governments appear to be simplistic by comparison*). The FAC sits in session on everything from new business proposals, licensing, trial of the most serious criminals and negotiations with outside forces. Next to nothing happens on the station that the FAC is unaware of.

What is not known about the FAC is how one goes about becoming a member. Rumours suggest that a minimum term of residence on the station is required, some suggest that the FAC agrees on and approaches a promising new member. It is known that new members are only admitted when they have serious financial capital to invest. Rumour currently suggests that Dr Sheri MacIntyre, Jake of the Drunken Abberant, Madame Deanna, the owners of Wazukana, Elayne Cassel, several SudAmerican drug lords and Aeon itself are members. Some of this speculation is quite close to the mark (*and some is wildly off-base*).

'Ben'

The man known as Ben is currently second in command of the Fuyoushi Police Force after resigning his commission to the Aeon Trinity. The FPF is not unknown territory for Ben. During his time as Aeon he was a double agent. He masqueraded as a criminal (tracking the enigmatic 'A') pretending to be an FPF officer, pretending to be a criminal.

During the TA0 Cultists attacks Ben abandoned his mission and got himself accepted by the FPF full-time. He risen very, very quickly in the ranks, making Second in Command in just a few months.

Ben still maintains cordial relations with the Aeon Trinity, but he doesn't really know all the new staff - the ones he knew were either killed in the TA0 bombing of the Aeon office, or have left the station.

Old Man Zhunghoa

This strange recluse is apparently a little, frail old man of Chinese decent. It is said that he spends his time around the traders spacedocks occasionally selling imported weaponry. The description is common to a lot of traders on A-Z. This chracter is a little *(ahem!)* different however.

Old Man Zhunghoa is rumoured to be the partonly father of the Yakuza crime gangs that maintain a vicelike grip on their territory in Subzero.

The Yakuza, as in ancient times, patrol their territory for interlopers, keep the populace in check, and enjoy the benefits of their own little empire. The Yakuza here are a welcome presence. The Chinese residents of Subzero feel the Yakuza are a lesser evil.

People from other nationalities in the territory find it a different picture. Xenophobia is a common trait in the corridors held by the Yakuza.

Aeon Trinity Agents (The TA0 Incident)

During the course of the terrorist attacks on the station by TA0 cultists a small group of Aeon Trinity and FAC sponsored psions and neutrals descended into the lower levels of the station (now known as Subzero) to put a stop to TA0's activities. Rumour has it that this group included the owners of The Pulse Nightclub - Lo Mei and Robin Teller, some of their employees, the new second in command of the FPF - Ben, and the enigmatic criminal known as 'A'.

These rumours have not been confirmed, and no evidence that TA0 has been removed was provided. The attacks on the station stopped however, and that is more than enough for almost everyone concerned (including the FAC).

Goods & Services Prices & Availability

The chart below shows just some of the commodities that can be purchased on Absolute Zero - the chart also details the most likely area where you can obtain these goods and services.

ITEM	LOCATION	COST
Meal	All	*
Drink, Alcoholic	All	*
Drink, non-alcoholic	All	*
Clothes, basic	Promenade	* to **
Clothes, good quality	Promenade	** to ***
Clothes, fine quality	Promenade	***
Clothes, mining	Promenade	****
Accommodation, 1 night-poor	Lower Levels	*
Accommodation, 1 night-average	Middle Levels	* to **
Accommodation, 1 night-quality	Upper Levels	***
Accommodation, 1 week-poor	Lower Levels	**
Accommodation, 1 week-average	Middle Levels	** to ***
Accommodation, 1 week-quality	Upper Levels	**** to *****
Transport A-Z to Luna	Spacedocks	**** to *****
Transport A-Z to Mars	Spacedocks	***** to ***** *
Transport A-Z to Earth	Spacedocks	***** * to ***** **
Firearms, pistol	Lower levels, Promenade	** to *****
Firearms, carbine	Lower Levels, Promenade	*** to *****
Firearms, gauntlets	Spacedocks	**** to *****
Firearms, heavy	Spacedocks	**** to ***** *
Firearms, other	Special	varies
Armour, light	Lower Levels, Promenade	** to ***
Armour, medium	Lower Levels, Promenade	*** to ****
Armour, heavy	Spacedocks, Lower Levels	**** to *****
BioApps (various)	Spacedocks, Promenade	varies
Code Indigo Bioapps (various)	Special	varies
Minicomps (various)	Promenade, Spacedocks	** to *****
Minicomp Agents (various)	Promenade, Spacedocks	* to ****
"adult services"	Promenade, Middle Levels	* to ****
Multimedia Entertainment	All	** to ****
Information, public	All	**
Information, personal	All	***
Information, station security	All	***** **
Information, other	All	varies

