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# **Merchants, Traders & Raiders**



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**Babylon 5 Created by J. Michael Straczynski**

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# Introduction

*'Look, this is extortion.'*

*'It's business. You see, when my costs go up, I have to pass it down along to the consumer. That's you, in case that's another one of those concepts you've got a problem with.'*

*Michael Garibaldi and Babylon 5 Postmaster*

The Babylon 5 universe is filled with action-packed starship battles and hallway-clearing riots that wash the galaxy in tales of heroes, villains and epic schemes. Some of these plots might sweep thousands of personalities up into their inescapable clutches, but not all plots and schemes are enforced from behind a firing console or powered-up PPG. Some are fought with credits and politics, boycotts and embargoes. Some wars are fought without a single shot being fired, but still crush entire populations in their wake. A merciless master controls thousands, making pawns of kings and fools of learned men, this entity is no devil or alien tyrant; it is just a simple idea... an idea called trade.



Governments hold on tightly to the resources they control, hiring trusted freelancers and licensed merchants to become their fiscal warriors, taking multi-million credit loads of cargo through the void between stations and transfer points. They manipulate worlds through financial strangulation and watch as lesser commercial powers wither and die. They can be predators or saviours with their goods and services, and the galaxy is often bound by their might.

Few escape the traders' grasp, but many try. Some band together in cells to take what they want from the powerful merchant associations and spacing guilds, stealing to make a living, like parasites upon the hide of commerce itself. These criminals are called by many names: freebooters, pirates and bandits but they are collectively known as raiders.

Whether at the mercy of their prices, moving their cargo or attacking their vessels, almost every civilised soul in the Babylon 5 universe is swayed by the machinations of the greatest power of all... greed.

## Science of Trade

From the first haggling encounters of early humans and the survivalist water-exchanges of the Brakiri water clans, the idea of trade between parties has permeated the universe's many civilisations. Upon the advent of monetary capacity (making an otherwise worthless object carry a greater worth through its communal support) trade became more than just goods to be handed between parties. It became a greater power to trade money for goods, services, even people or territory! Civilisations that realised the power of trade soon looked to focus their wealth, growing eventually into the powerful guilds, conglomerates and leagues that now dominate the space lanes.

Trade can exist in a tiny example from one Narn pouchling giving his spoo for a friend's R'kat deck, to the Interplanetary Expeditions purchasing agreement of the second moon of Zafran VIII. While these are valid examples of common trade, most take place in



## How to Use This Book

This book is primarily for Games Masters to involve their players in the science of trade and commerce. Not all players will want to immediately sign up to run cargo as it is often seen as boring compared to battling evils or political manoeuvring, although this text is designed to change that view. By putting more emphasis on trade circles, the powers that control them and even the criminals that abuse them, we hope to give this often overlooked facet of the universe an edge that will give Games Masters a new angle to challenge their players with.

No matter if they wish to play escort to huge shipments or attack them for fun and profit, this book should help both player and Games Master alike to become embroiled in trade-based plots. We encourage Games Masters to use this book for plot support or reference material, but also to keep in mind that much of the information contained within should be considered open knowledge to most characters. This does not mean that it does not contain its share of secrets, merely that they are few and far between compared to the overall content.

the form of sums of money given for wanted goods. Whether in quantities that could boggle the mind or in a few grams at a time, trade occurs in every outpost, transit station and marketplace across the galaxy.

The trade between galactic governments has become the biggest influence that decides their fleet movements and political manoeuvrings in relation to each other. The Brakiri patrol massive 'escort' fleets along their trade routes. The Vree Spacer's Guild use powerful saucers to move from outpost to outpost with their sizeable commercial investments, ensuring their prompt and safe return. Earth Alliance picket fleets can be found intermingled with commercial transports, protecting the many separate companies funded or subsidised by EarthGov.

The utterly alien and powerful factions within the galaxy like the Minbari or the Vorlons seem beyond the scope of normal trade procedures. Even though they do not keep trade outposts of their own or advertise their wants or needs involving other races, they often use intermediaries to attain their desires. Although they are influential enough to quite possibly ask for any merchant terms they could dream of, they prefer to perform outside the hustle of the commercial businesses. It is far easier for them to use the system rather than become a part within it.

Some governments use their trade alliances and travel permits as extra weapons in the actual wars they wage, or plan to wage, in matters of state that otherwise seem unrelated. The Centauri Republic has signed

hundreds of trade agreements with lesser races, using their contact to gauge a possible resistance level before sending in military forces to conquer them. It is no surprise that many of their 'merchant fleet' use the very same powerful warship hulls that their military fleets consist of.

Billions of credits every day change hands across the galactic market. It can be the theatre in which kings are made or tyrants fall, such is the power of true wealth. The people of the universe understand this and few can deny its dauntless tenacity. For eons it has been a game of 'haves', 'have nots' and just one almighty question: 'how much?'

## With Wealth Comes Crime

Just like the first thieves who began to prey upon the caravans of ancient times, there are those who want to steal a living from those working to make one. Raiders from all walks of life (from the disenfranchised military man supplementing his meagre pension, to the sociopathic sadist looking to make a few credits harassing others) have become a worry across nearly every hyperspace route or planetary transfer point in known space. Using ill-gotten funds they gather in numbers to share in the wealth of their victories, stealing anything and everything. Some target resource freighters to turn around and sell their spoils to the highest bidder, ignoring license or hazard protocols that might otherwise hinder the buyer. Others disable ships for salvage, hoping to use the undamaged parts to bolster their own fleets or again, sell them to anyone with enough credits.



Raider cells tend to be small annoyances to larger governments, who sometimes even turn a blind eye to their activities in order to have a viable excuse for the higher prices and demand of certain goods. There have even been cases of larger governments actually hiring raider cells to perform certain services for them that would otherwise be considered illegal by their peers. Some of these raider-friendly governments may go as far as to equip them 'off the record' and wage guerrilla wars against their political enemies.

Raiders are a very real threat to most spacefarers, especially those announcing their presence as a commercial transport, sometimes unintentionally if their cargo is easily recognisable by scan. Thousands of ship crews are lost to these attacks every year, even if some cells do their best to be as 'nonlethal' as they can. It takes a steady hand and a cool head to go after some of the shipments and their escorts that raiders often target. Most governments consider raiding and piracy a crime punishable by immediate counterattack and summary execution, making veteran raiders a rare but impressive sight indeed.

Raider cells have been harassing merchant routes for as long as space travel has been commonplace. Some trade outposts hire constant escort support along their lanes, creating a sort of private security fleet for their customers. Others, like the League of Non-Aligned Worlds, create governmentally-funded police forces that target raider activity and act as bounty hunters on behalf of the League to bring raiders to justice no matter where they hide.

Some corporations and merchant circles are less scrupulous concerning the bane of their livelihoods and look to other criminal sources to deal with raider cells. Assassins, saboteurs and browbeating thugs seek out members of raider cells on behalf of their employers and do their very best to dissuade them from further targeting certain vessels.

Even if these risks were not enough, raiding is an inherently dangerous game. Raider cells are often cannibalistic, attacking and devouring one another without recourse to strengthen their own numbers. Disgruntled raiders might give up their cell's secrets to a larger cell in order to switch sides, or in an effort to disappear and go clean. In the end, there is truly little honour between thieves.

## Governmental Raiders

In the time before the advent of the Interstellar Alliance there were no less than a hundred small raider cells solely existing off the funding and spoils of the missions set up by shady governmental powers. When the ISA was given the ability to use the White Star Fleet to police the space lanes against exactly such a threat, many of the cells went bankrupt, forgotten instantly by their sponsoring government.

Impoverished raider cells do not always simply fade away into obscurity. Often times they become more brazen and try to take their vengeance out on the government that forsook them. This sort of internal strife can be very harmful to a local economy, its constituent members and the innocents who get caught in the line of fire.

## Cargo Runners

It is rare for the power brokers of trade alliances and merchant circles to put their own lives on the line to transfer their varied goods. Should a raider cell attack, it would be a tragic loss for the ship's owner to be killed, so hired runners are used. No matter if they are a private fleet of freighters or a single combat cutter capable of carrying only a few tons, it is more cost effective to risk the vessels of another fleet than those of your own.

Cargo running is a fast way to earn a percentage of the haul's selling value and many career runners learn very quickly the best prices and best places to make the most out of their cargo. Only a fool would try to sell Quantum-40 to Latig I, while savvy runners know the fortune it would fetch on Krish II. Employing freelance cargo runners is good business, as they want to get the most they can for their employer so they too will get the greater share. It is not without risks, as many of these private shipping services are only a good offer away from being thieves themselves.

Reliable cargo running services will have numerous contacts and references for an employer to check with,



and most will provide their own security escort - just in case. Many travel the same routes over and over again, making the hyperspace jumps several times a week. When the credits are steady there is little reason to vary from what works for them. Occasionally a rare offbeat route comes along, and some runners gladly take up the higher paying, and higher risk, jobs. These long-distance trips are not only taxing on the vessels but also on the crew and are seldom taken lightly.

## Trade Outposts and Transfer Points

Across the expanse of the galaxy there are over a hundred orbiting trade space stations and transfer points where commercial freighters can dock to sell or unload their cargo, or pick up new shipments headed elsewhere down their routes. These bases are often floating marketplaces filled with opportunities, both of fortune and mishap. These places are to trading what listening posts are to military intelligence or what starbases are to the fleets of war. They are the backbone of the industry, and no one can argue their importance to the merchants and traders of the galaxy.

Mixed-purpose stations like Babylon 5 are good examples of where politics and commerce mix, one serving the other like two partners in a Balosian waltz. Purely commercial trade bases like the Devado Station orbiting above Sin'talith III are ruled by the current exchange rates and enforce mercantile law with the iron fisted assaults of debt and tariff. A financial rumour passing through these places can be as devastating to the economic flow as a laser cutting through the hull of a starfighter.

Much of the brokers' lives are spent in these stations, negotiating the best prices and offering the finest goods and services for them. There are trade brokers who live years on tiny trade outposts to gather massive financial fortunes before heading back to their homeworld or planet of choice to make use of it. After all, it is in these bustling hubs that the best deals are often made or broken.

There is also a great element of danger in these locations, as they are seldom policed heavily by true military forces. Raiders are never far from these places, lurking a short jump or two away, waiting

for a juicy cargo to pass by with a small escort. Many of these predatory cells have spies amongst the traders who send word ahead of prime targets; one reason why extraordinarily large or precious shipments are nearly always protected by hired escorts or private security forces.

Nearly every outpost or transfer point, while not governmentally controlled, still owes its creation to one proprietary race that it may remain loyal to. The Brakiri with Brakos Ring, Earth Alliance with Babylon 5 and the Drazi Freehold's Mofuka Transfer Point are good examples of supposedly 'neutral' locales that undoubtedly give precedence to their own founding governments' actions and requests.

Popular bases and outposts will become well-travelled and diverse due to their inherent populations, sometimes coming into conflict over opposing races on board; the Narn and Centauri for instance. This may or may not be good for business, and for most commercial outposts this is the only factor to look at when deciding to become officially involved. It might not seem like much, but the threat of boycott from one of these stations can be rather intimidating when targeting one side of a war at the behest of the other.

These stations are a great place to find trade or cargo running work, or to become an employed escort of existing shipment. Raiders can locate targets, or gather support from opposing merchants. There is a great deal other than just commerce going on behind the cold meeting halls and lobbies, and more money to be made than meets the eye.





## Types of Commerce

The varied tastes and needs of the many peoples of the galaxy create a fractious array of goods, services and resources to be profited from. Truthfully, there is not a single commodity in existence, no matter how seemingly small or insignificant, that someone across the galaxy will not pay for.

There are the carrion and refuse barges that travel to 'The Abattoir' on the Pak'ma'ra homeworld of Melat, which pay by the metric ton for any manner of organic detritus, no questions asked. The solar-focusing crystals found in the rings of Sol VI are worth a small fortune to Drazi weapon manufacturers or can be traded weight for weight in platinum to the Grome. Everyone wants something and a good trader quickly learns who wants what.

Goods are not the only type of cargo. Ferrying skilled mining staff to the mines of Entat IV is actually more profitable than selling the ores they dig there. At the height of the Narn/Centauri War, taking Narn refugees either to or from Centauri-controlled colonies was a fast way to create a fortune, along with many enemies.

Slave trading has actually been a large contributor to several economies for many generations. Although looked down upon and considered illegal in over two-thirds of galactic systems, it is a viable resource to be exploited by traders unfettered by moral codes that might forbid it. Of course, slavers must be careful to choose hyperspace routes where slaving is legal lest they be searched, fined or worse. Most slavers rarely care about the legal ramifications, paying their fees or bribes and going on their way.

Data trading, rather new in the grand scope of traded merchandise, is only as profitable as the rarity of the information. Secrets too private or too valuable to be sent across the communications nets must be carried by data crystal, or even hard copy, to their intended destination. While it may not fill a cargo hold or take fifteen union dockworkers to unload, these shipments can be worth more than any mineral load or slave shipment. Many governments unwilling to employ spies turn to the cargo running trade organisations of the merchant circles, knowing they will gladly deliver their goods on time and hopefully without interference.

Amongst the illegal trade circles drugs are a primary source of funds. Crossing boundaries and customs'

pickets to deliver a few ounces of some substances may pay more than any food or medical shipment, and smugglers willing to move larger amounts can become powerfully wealthy in short order. It is a dangerous career with very few happy endings, but many believe the reward is more than worth the risks.

## The Almighty Credit

A wise Earther once said, 'Money is the root of all evil'. There is very little that has not or will not be done for money. Be it dollars, credits, ducats, toka or ook'ar'a... greed sees no difference. The lifeblood of trade lies in the worth of currency, and few would argue against its greatness. While some understand just how powerful the application of funds can be, traders feel its weight like no other.

Some merchant organisations have become powerful enough that even the idea of placing a number on the worth of their power base is asinine. Credits fail to represent the sheer volume of IPX's gains every year, as they can buy or sell entire planetoids without feeling so much as a swell or dip in their funds. The Vree Spacer's Guild stopped announcing the exact amount of their annual profits when it became 'cost inefficient to print such a massive number compared to the business it might attract'. These trade giants are beyond the grasp of simple traders and they truly are in a league of their own.

It is because of how important shipments are to merchants that raiding has become so common. Sometimes it seems easier to steal a sizable shipment rather than haggle for one and when there is so much to lose what is a little risk now and again?

Banking guilds and investment brokering has become a sister industry to the traders of the galaxy, protecting their credits with insured backing and bonded funds between outpost to outpost. Many powerful brokers have their fingers in the very shipping lanes they are protecting funds for, or upon the raiders that prey within them. Their clients become routine, paying off interest with each successful shipment only to pay fines when unable to meet payments. Confiscated shipping vessels are loaned to new traders to create more financial partners and the trade brokers always seem to come out on top.

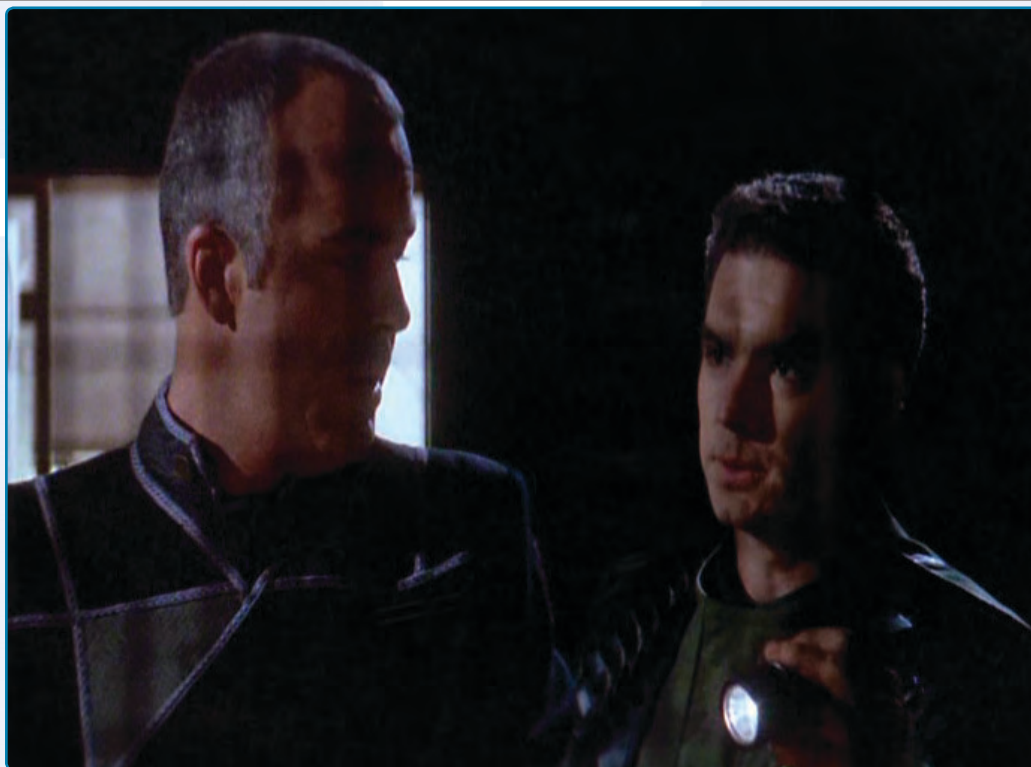
Money is power and while absolute power may very well corrupt absolutely, the so-called 'absolutely corrupt' seem to be doing just fine for themselves.



### Credits Versus Other Currency

While many races have their own monetary currencies, the galactic standard has become the standard 'credit'. This form of legal tender comes in many shapes, sizes and materials from system to system, but all are backed by a single law written by the Markab after the Dilgar War: the 'Code of Unified Worth.' In the aftermath of the Dilgar invasion, several separate governments worked together to repair the damage the Dilgar wrought. After several months of squabbling over whose currency was worth what to whom, the Markab stepped forward with the Code of Unified Worth, now known as the Credit Principle by most governments. In a few weeks of deliberation and refinement, the Markab had constructed a complex set of minting codes to be placed upon any chit, coin or bill to represent a 'galactic credit.' These codes are sovereign to each government, but monitor the worth of their minted currency.

For the purposes of this and most prices found in Babylon 5 texts, the credit is used as a standard. There are still some governments that produce their own local currency, which exchange rates cause to fluctuate.



*'What are you so nervous about? We've been up against the entire Earth Alliance with only two carrier groups...'*

*'Yeah, but this is the Post Office! This could get us in real trouble!'*

*Michael Garibaldi and deputy*



# Life on the Trade Routes

*'There is no better feeling than bringing a cargo in on time and in one piece.'*

*Capt. Alairis Callo, Centauri Merchant Fleet*

## The Business of Trade

The actual application of trade in the galaxy comes in three main forms: direct negotiation, third-party transfer and contracted arrangement. Each has its own strengths and weaknesses for everyone involved, and its shortcomings to profitability. Overall, trade is defined as 'the business of buying and selling or bartering commodities'. These commodities range from the rare and expensive Quantum-40, which is used to construct jump gates and drives, to loads of salt going to the deserts of Brakos. Anything can be bought, sold or exchanged in the galaxy, if someone is a good enough trader to make it happen.

The simplest form of trade – direct negotiation – is where one party has a good or service that another party requires. The two parties haggle back and forth for as long as it takes to come to a suitable agreement on price or trade, some form of arrangement is made and the exchange is concluded. Trading such as this takes place on thousands of worlds between millions of people every minute of every day in the galaxy. It can be seen when a smitten fighter jock buys imitation roses for his sweetheart in the Zocalo on Babylon 5, or when the Dust dealer wrings out an extra ten credits from his 'client' in Downbelow.

Market merchants are the most basic form of trader. They use little negotiation, relying on just a price tag and a sales clerk to complete the trade. It is that simple. While most merchants may also engage in higher forms of trade to arrange for their goods to sell, the banter at their booth or kiosk is a pure example of basic trade skills.

Private services also often involve a direct negotiation. Offering a fee in exchange for services is harder to finalise in comparison to goods. This often requires some form of written contract or witness to verify the nature of the agreement. This may be difficult with some negotiations, as language barriers and the avoidance of legal mishaps tend to complicate matters. When dealing with services that cannot be expressly monitored, a Centauri social escort or hired assassin for example, there must be a great deal of trust. Not only do you have little recourse should the service be sub-par or incomplete but both parties can probably get the other into a great deal of legal trouble.

This is why there is third-party transfer trading. For a gamut of reasons, some traders prefer to pay others to do all of the work for them. Basically, someone with the good or service contacts or is contacted by someone that is neither buyer nor seller. They are merely the messenger set with the task of arranging the trade for another party.

This is best served when the buyer does not wish to be known by the seller, choosing to work anonymously through a trained intermediary. The negotiation itself is treated similar to a direct trade, but often has terms set ahead of time by the third-party. Some hired traders like this are given a great deal of leeway on their negotiations, others are told exactly what price and cannot stray from it by a single credit. These sorts of trades take place commonly in larger market areas, where





high-credit trades take place. Trade outposts and transfer points are teeming with licensed trade brokers and skilled negotiators.

There is also a need for third-party transfers when several deals are being undertaken by a single trader; when it is physically impossible to be present at so many scheduled negotiations. These are rarely secretive and can result in settling for lesser amounts per trade in favour of completing as many transactions as possible in the shortest amount of time. Small-time traders who deal in only the occasional cargo run or load find themselves in these situations more than larger corporate dealings. Setting up more buyers than crew is common and can result in selling more goods than one truly has to offer, which always results in angry customers and debtor contracts. A single undersell like this can put a novice trader into debt with a buyer for surprising lengths of time, from the multi-generational debt calculations of the Vree to the 'Corporate Assimilation Directive' of the Ak-Habil Conglomerate of the Brakiri.

This is why it came to pass that many of these third-party transactions, as of the Telepath/Commerce Act in 2195, take place with low-rated commercial telepaths present to continually verify terms and conditions of a trade. By checking the actual beliefs of the buyer and seller, these telepaths can also keep one from making a calculation error, purposely or not, and possibly save both sides a great deal of money, time and grief. Traders who have something to hide, or who simply do not like telepathic scanning, will resort to underhanded means to occasionally get around the necessity for telepaths by hiring their own; an actor who will feign the scanning during negotiations. This is not as risky as it sounds, because should a lie go undetected or a false number slip by, very few would ever point out the telepath's mistake. After all, it would be admitting their guilt in the matter!

Illegal traders (drug manufacturers, slavers and so on) tend to use third parties in order to add a severable tie to the transaction should the law ever get involved. Very few drug chemists sell their own product; rather they find others to peddle their wares. Should these go-betweens ever be arrested or worse, taken by a competing criminal, the chemist can disassociate himself from ever knowing the victim. This can also backfire, as any third-party involved might get power hungry and look further up the financial food chain to set their sights on their employers.

The last, and highest profiting, style of trade is that of the contract arrangement. With this form of trade the two parties involved set exact terms of a yet-to-be concluded transfer of goods or services between either the two of them, or with a number of secondary buyers. These contracts are almost always backed by an organisation or governmental agency that can police the breaking of their terms and are rarely subtle with their penalties. Countless merchant ships just getting started have been scuttled due to the inexperience and inability of its crew.

Contract arrangements are generally one-sided, with a powerful contracting source seeking out employees to fulfil the contract's terms. Mining firms, industrial corporations and shipping companies are good examples of contracting sources. Those who produce far more than they can themselves use or transport will hire ship crews, even fleets of ships, to ferry their products all over the galaxy to a number of locations set by the terms of each contract.

Performing these contracts is where most traders get their start in the industry. Running cargo from one transfer point to another, taking their agreed-upon cut from the sale and heading on to either another pickup or more sales - collecting their share each time. With the right contract, and little trouble from raiders or fate, a starting merchant captain or cargo runner can get wealthy rather quickly. On the opposite side, one bad run in with a raider cell or dirty buyer can spell disaster for the trader, his crew and maybe even the company he is working for.

Good and profitable contracts carry clauses that take nearly any situation into consideration, while less concrete terms on these trade arrangements can lead to loopholes, exploitation and criminal intent. Shady or untrustworthy employers may actually include their own loopholes and clauses to always get the better of their contracted employees but word spreads fast of dirty business. In no time they will feel the pressure from their peers, if not the legal ramifications, due to their actions.

The first few contracts can make or break a starting trading career. There are a massive number of failed traders still paying off their foolish choices. There is never a shortage of those ready to try their hand at the business, and just as many ready to take advantage of them when they do.



### A Good Example Contract...

CO: CREW OF MAGNIFICENT STAR, by signature of current Captain Russell Breht\*

RE: TRANSFER OF SHIPMENT(S) Br-13, Br-14, Br-15, Dev-1

AR: Pri-Wakat Military Concepts and Solutions\*\*

\*- to be noted as 'the employed' hereafter

\*\*- to be noted as 'the employer' hereafter

TERMS: As of 24:00 hours GST on the 15<sup>th</sup> day of Brakos summer circa y2260, the employer has agreed upon to allow the employed, for a period of no longer than fourteen Brakosian nights, to carry the sealed and protected goods of the employer, hereto marked Br-13, Br-14, Br-15 and Dev-1, to the prearranged transfer points as detailed on each sealed shipment's label code.

COMP: For each successful shipment reported as being delivered unopened, unmolested and intact the employer hereby agrees to compensate the employee with four hundred-and-thirty galactic credits in addition to 12% of the fuel cost and resources necessary\*\*\* to complete the shipment.

\*\*\*. 'necessary' should be noted as to being scientifically deciphered from their vessel's own engine specifics, as noted on page 3-b of this agreement

PEN: Should the employee be found negligent or delinquent of the terms of this agreement, the employer will enact their sovereign rights of Brakiri Corporate Amendment 61OM\*\*\*\* immediately upon verifying rumour of their negligence or proof of their delinquency.

\*\*\*\*. BCM 61OM states 'League Trade Marshal can be directed at any commerce thief, raider or hindrance to the market system of the League of Non-Aligned Worlds; or anyone agreeing to be referred as such'

### A Bad Example Contract...

*Hey Captain Breht,*

*I have a few metric tons of flak vests I need brought over to Praxis JK. If you can get them there before my mates down there start their little ruckus next week, I'll pay you half what their worth*

*Your old friend,*

*L.T.*





## Interlac - The Language of Trade

When dealing with such a diverse group of races, cultures and sub-cultures that traders do, there must be a standard of communication between all involved. From very early on, a basic tone and symbol-based language named 'Interlac' was utilised by the Centauri. During their conquest of the galaxy, Interlac was used to breach many communication barriers when they would conquer an inhabited system. It is extremely simple to learn and can be transmitted on nearly any frequency of electronic communications. After the Centauri were eventually forced back into their systems, Interlac remained as a common thread between the refugee planets and became the best way they could communicate.

In the following decades Interlac became the primary language of first contact situations and traders that travelled between worlds. It has always been a basic cornerstone of galactic trade and any simple translation module will have its base programming in Interlac.

Any Character can learn Interlac for two skill points at any time, learning the twenty-eight tone alphabet and the thirteen contraction-based symbols that combine them. Once learned, Interlac can be written or transmitted electronically but not easily verbally. Interlac is nigh-impossible to create without altered vocal chords, as it was created and designed by early Centauri audio equipment. Like the Morse Code of early Earth, Interlac is more of a written code of electronic wavelengths than an actual language, yet any

spoken tongue can seemingly be translated into it.

Traders who do not first learn the intricacies of Interlac are destined for either a short career or a very limited one. Language is the barrier of any commercial deal. Even business partners of the same race may not communicate very well with written memos over long distances as certain emphasis and inflection is lost on most written languages. Interlac has a set of lines to accent certain words or phrases as well as particular ideas, making it the perfect trade language in nearly all cases.

The only tone that oddly falls flat in Interlac is one of hostility. Threats come off as requests and must be factual in nature. A statement like 'do not cheat me or else!'

would translate in Interlac to be something akin to 'otherwise never cheat upon me.' It should be worded more specifically to be translated verbatim, 'if you cheat on this deal, my vessels will open fire upon yours the next time we meet'.

Interlac may not be the best form of communication in all instances, but it definitely crosses language barriers that might otherwise stop a deal cold. It is a tool that any good commercial trader or even high-traffic merchant should look into using when necessary.

## Merchants - The Marketplace Traders

Mostly found in bazaars, markets and communal barter stations, common merchants are the base of the commerce structure. It is through their peddling of goods that credits flow into industry. The seller gives the money to the merchant, the merchant gives a share to his supplier, the supplier gives a share to the producer and the producer gives a share to his labour force who hopefully take that wage to a merchant. It is a simplified cycle of funds, but one that keeps the economy in motion. The majority of merchants care very little for the upper echelons of the commercial industry; rather they want to get the most out of their goods as they can.

Becoming a merchant is not just as simple as acquiring goods to be sold. Anyone can grab a few crates of a product and sell it on a street corner or in the halls of



Downbelow. It takes a certain perseverance to stand for long hours at a market stand trying to make your wares as attractive as possible while also keeping an eye out for thieves looking to get a quick fistful of whatever you are selling. Most places in the 23<sup>rd</sup> Century require licenses to sell in populated places, sometimes charging percentage taxes on the goods sold, or even massive annual fees to keep in business. It takes a mixture of bookkeeping and charisma to make a living at it, which can seem in short supply when trying to get started.

The key to a successful merchant is not the type of goods (although it helps) it is instead the ability to make one's goods seem better than they are in a way that will not cost the merchant more than the sale will be worth. Even the Veerkit monkey of Entat IV can sell something for exactly what it is worth or less, a true merchant will get the buyer to believe he is getting a deal when he is actually paying over the odds.

Once a merchant has determined the worth of an item with a successful Knowledge (commerce) check (DC 15), adjusted up or down to account of the item's rarity or commonness, he may adjust the price by haggling with a buyer. Anyone trying to sell something above its worth can attempt a series of Bluff skill checks. This can be resisted by either the Appraise or Sense Motive skills, but every time the merchant succeeds he may add 10% to the starting cost of the item for this sale. Should the merchant fail the price slips down 10%, but this process of haggling can continue. Buyers will often only stand for a number of attempts equal to 5 minus their Intelligence modifier before realising they are 'being had' and wish to move on.

Successful merchants will soon find themselves in business relations with several traders and cargo suppliers that will frequently seek them out to purchase their wares. They will need to balance their income

### New Feat

#### Expert Hagglor (General)

You are extremely versed in the marketplace science of haggling. Either through a shrewd business sense or years of experience behind a merchant kiosk, you have a knack for making goods seem worth far more than they should.

**Prerequisite:** Appraise 6 ranks, Charisma 14+.

**Benefit:** You may add a +3 expertise bonus to your Appraise, Bluff and Sense Motive skill checks when haggling over the price of a good or service. In addition, you may force an opposed Charisma check to continue any concluded haggling process for another round of skill checks.

### New Skill

#### Knowledge (Commerce) (Int)

Accessible by any character willing to learn the ins and outs of the galactic market, this skill is the primary tool of any career trader or merchant. It gauges profit over price, worth over expectations and loss over gains. Anyone adept at this skill can know, to a certain degree, just how successful a sale, purchase or other trade will be.

In game mechanics, this skill is what traders and merchants use to get a market value on any commodity. The market value is what will determine how much profit can be made on a single trade or sale. In a simple mercantile exchange, a Knowledge (commerce) check (DC 15), can determine a close approximation of what a commodity would be worth, allowing for the trader or merchant to set his price accordingly. In larger transactions, trade route management and so on, this skill is used to determine the profit or loss margins of an extended deal. See page 102 for more information on larger deals.



with the amount of funds they spend on new goods, advertising (when applicable) and extra staff in larger circumstances. They must always have product to sell without allowing their goods to become obsolete or out-of-style, but also cannot allow their stock to vanish before its prime. It is a complicated set of checks and balances that a good merchant will keep in mind at all times.

Although the merchant has a great deal of control over the selling process when a customer comes to the sales counter, a large part of his business will be due to the traffic of possible buyers. Renting a decent commercial space on a trade outpost or populated station may cost upwards of 500 credits a week, with sales licensing adding half that again. Choosing the right location is paramount to a successful mercantile business.

For instance, a fully-fledged storefront in Babylon 5's (in)famous Zocalo costs 700 credits a week. The sales license requires a 200 credit application fee and a pre-paid 5,000 credit bond to legally open said storefront. Combined with the capital required to stock a store that size, then the cost of decorating it attractively. This total can easily grow into tens of thousands of credits quickly, a sum far out of the reach of most starting entrepreneurs.

This is why many merchants are not self-started or employed. Companies that wish to sell their wares will gladly front the credits to get an establishment such as this off the ground, applying the amount like a debt over the store's manager/employees. Some mercantile contracts like this result in years of near-servitude, splintering off into side agreements when new employees begin their work for the company. Corporate power bases often have hundreds of these small franchises in their collective, using the trickling profits to fund larger projects and eventually become self-provisional.

Self-reliant merchants that do indeed make a handsome living are rare, but do exist. Many of these examples are retired freebooters or inheritors that wish to use their wealth to live in relative relaxation behind a kiosk desk or accounting monitor. These businesses are powerful reminders to the populace that it is possible to get out from under the thumb of enforced employment, if only rarely.

## Becoming a Merchant - Worker Class Specialisation

Any Character who wishes to turn their white collar worker into a merchant must meet the following requirements:

- ③ Must possess the Contact feat
- ③ At least 4 ranks in Appraise or Bluff
- ③ Has applied for/currently owns a Merchant License
- ③ Games Master permission to be employed at a market or by a corporate sponsor

If they do, they may make the following adjustments to their worker class:

- ③ Drive and Technical (any) cease to be class skills
- ③ Knowledge (commerce) and Sense Motive become class skills
- ③ Double funds gained through use of the Profession skill.

Merchant class workers also have the legal rights and ability to try and make as much of a salary as they can, but Games Masters should note that unless the character started the process with a very high amount of credits (or an alternate permissible situation, as seen fit by the Games Master) the store or stall they work at/own is probably subsidised by a larger company or trader. This relationship should be expanded by the Games Master and the player involved, and could be the source of a great many plotlines and sessions.

Merchants can be of any class, but those of the white collar worker class are the best suited to jump into the life it offers.

## Galactic Free Traders - The Veins of Commerce

The process of taking a need, finding the exact necessary process to fill it, obtaining it and then completing the transaction might seem daunting to some, but it is exactly what free traders live for. Eternal middle men, traders bring goods to the customer and make a decent living at it in the meantime. Some are pilots, running their own cargo from outpost to outpost. Others are suit-and-tie businessmen who arrange shipments that require entire freighter fleets to ship property. They are the lifeblood of the industry and several of them know it, happy to be so important to so many.



Their decisions can steer the price of food on a starved planet, or lower the cost of medicinal supplies during a bloody war. They can withhold resources until they become scarce or flood the market with hordes of brands of the same product just to lay waste to overhead costs. It is this fiscal power that requires the vast majority of them to find backing by a larger cog in the great trade machine.

Free traders rarely have the kind of funds required to buy 50,000 metric tons of purified freshwater or arrange for three jumps' worth of fighter escorts with a day's notice. They are often provided for by their superiors, where much of their profit is forwarded in exchange for their impressive influence. Companies like the Brakiri Conglomerates, the Vree Spacer's Guild and the House Callo Merchant Fleet often allow free traders to represent them as third-parties.

Brokering deals with credits numbering sometimes in the hundreds of thousands, experienced traders study market practices and going rates like pilots study star charts and hyperspace signals. They are expected to make sure a deal is perfect, or as close as they can make it. They are paid well so long as they remain profitable and successful, but are always the first corporate casualties when a brokered deal goes sour.

Becoming a free trader requires very little as far as early preparation is concerned. In fact, most traders only need a halfway decent understanding of the market and someone to empower them to make deals. Not just anyone can agree on behalf of IPX to buy a gross of sonic picks and environ-tents, but one of their licensed trade brokers can without so much as a question. Having friends in a business helps, as most who come forward to help move resources and arrange sales without invitation are likely thieves or raider-accomplices.



There are self-made traders who find a resource that they can monopolise, giving them exclusive power over its sale and trade. These trade entrepreneurs rarely last long; but the rare individuals who do become true power moguls when all is said and done. Many companies like Edgars Industries, Fairspace Jump Resources and Ka'lynn Purchasing are always on the lookout for these up-and-comers, if only to offer them huge salaries to come and work for them instead of on their own. Prized traders can fetch salaries upwards of 200,000 credits a year if they are worth it, but are quick to vanish from the public eye when they are not.

Trading is more than a game of chance where its players hope to make the most out of their situations. Instead, it is like playing poker with a Centauri; the trader is always on the lookout for the best hand to play while always aware his opponent is probably cheating. Like poker, the object is not necessarily to always win the big pots, but instead to take the majority of the small victories until your opponent looks down at his chips and realises he has been giving them to you all night. Good traders know when to take a loss, especially if it means a big win is around the corner.

This takes practice, determination and clever negotiation skills. Like merchants, traders have to make their buyers and sellers believe they are winning at all times.



Sometimes it takes months to seal a big deal, but it is often worth every minute when the trader's share of the profits come rolling in.

As a standard rule when free trading, average traders make roughly 5% of any trade they broker. Larger deals will often have higher percentages of bonus commissions, roughly an additional 1% per 20,000 credits of the deal's original worth.

For example, Harki Jakku brokers a prime transit deal to sell 100,000 credits worth of medicinal supplies to the colonial medical corps on Janos II. She has bartered the deal at 120,000 credits. Her employer pays an average commission, so she will make 12,000 credits commission (5% + 5% bonus from size of original worth = 10% of 120,000 credits).

Some traders might negotiate better commission rates, but few are able to get better than 10% of all deals, so long as they are legitimately traded resources. When dealing with illegal goods or services, all common rates are off and the limitations are only based on one's own morals and ability to collect.

Getting started as a licensed free trader depends solely on the area in which the would-be broker is trying to work. Applying for a license from the various galactic governments is relatively easy. The following is a list

of licensing fees to perform duties as a free trader in the listed government's galactic territory.

Licensed traders can then apply their abilities in open markets, seeking out companies, or being sought out by them, to broker the many exchanges that pass through the myriad of trade outposts and transfer points in the galaxy. Some places may require extra bonds or insurance be paid to do business in their property, but it is often far better to pay the fee rather than the accompanying fine should the trader try and do business on the sly.

Trading in uncontrolled, or neutral, space does not require a license to do so. It is always a flooded market and neutral transfer points and trade centres are rarely low on would-be brokers. With no direct legal repercussions from any single governmental force, neutral trading attracts the less-moral examples of free traders and many of the illegal trade goods and services to be bought or sold. With lessened risk, prices are often higher, but not directly having to watch code and commission limitations is worth the lost revenues.

Getting licensed and finding a good trade centre to do business near is only half the battle to fortune. Companies, runners and other brokers need to learn about the up-and-coming trader. His name must pop up in all the right circles and be the first to come to mind

Type of License	Application Fee	Expiration	Notes
Brakiri Commerce Agency	750 cr.	Bi-Monthly	Can be revoked at any time by licensing company
Centauri Mercantile	500 cr.	Monthly	
Earth Alliance Commercial	400 cr.	Six Months	
IPX Antiquities Brokerage	N/A	N/A	Only given to IPX employees
League of Non-Aligned Worlds Trade Marshal	100 cr.	Monthly	Fee is 100 credits per League Member Race territory covered by license
Minbari Border Allowance	N/A	N/A	Only by special permission
Narn Free Marketer	250 cr.	Monthly	
Vree Spacer's Guild Purchaser	1,000 cr.	218 Vreetan days	Only applies to resource purchasing, never sales
ISA Trade and Economy	200 cr.	Monthly	Only available after 2262

For more on the powers of these particular licenses, see their government's information in the following section;  
**Mercantile Careers**



when a shipment must be arranged. This can be done in a hundred different ways, but most just try to perform as many small duties as possible in the beginning. The more a trader's name or company comes along on shipping logs, flight paths and eventually resource request forms the more likely the larger deals may come his way.

When the deals start to happen, and when the trader becomes confident with his ability to broker the deal properly, he will soon need to find cheaper transportation for his deals, which means finding a decent cargo runner.

### **Becoming a Free Trader (Worker Class Specialisation)**

Any Character who wishes to turn their white collar worker into specifically a free trader must meet the following requirements:

- ⑤ Must have the Contact feat
- ⑤ At least 4 ranks in Bluff or Knowledge (commerce)
- ⑤ At least 2 ranks in Diplomacy

If they do, they may make the following adjustments to their Worker Class:

- ⑤ Drive and Technical (any) cease to be class skills
- ⑤ Diplomacy and Sense Motive become class skills
- ⑤ Any further choice of taking the Contacts feat will also gain an additional Contact in the commercial trade industry

Free trader class workers are better suited to pursue a life of galactic trade. They can seek out licensing for certain areas, try to stay in neutral territories or even sink into the shady element of illegal trades or trading. Games Masters should note that unless the Character started the process with a very large amount of credits (or alternate permissible situations, as seen fit by the Games Master) the Character's trading efforts are probably subsidised by a larger company or firm. This relationship should be expanded by the Games Master and the player involved and could be the source of a great many plotlines and entertaining sessions.

Free Traders can be of any class, but those of the white collar worker class are the best suited to jump into the life it offers.

### **Cargo Runners - Delivery Men of Hyperspace**

When the merchant runs out of a particular product or the trader is sitting on a prime shipment but it just cannot wait any longer, they seek out a cargo runner. They load their ships down with items from all over the galaxy and spending days and weeks in Hyperspace trying to deliver them. Cargo runners have to be fast, reliable and willing to take a few risks to get the best wage at the end of each run.

Some runners are professional freighter pilots. They haul enormous loads of bulk cargo or finished product sometimes from one end of the galaxy to another, before picking up a new load and taking it somewhere else. They live most of their lives in the crash couch of a transport cockpit, getting sick in any gravity that is not artificial and amassing enormous wealth in the process. There is a great deal of money in the willingness to ferry cargo and these commercial pilots know it better than anyone else.

Of course, anyone can run cargo if they can make the right deal with someone. Items small enough to fit in a securi-case might only require one man and a transport ticket. Items of great importance or significant value will want several guards and escorts. Huge transfers of raw materials must be moved in supply lines on bulk freighters. If someone fits the prerequisite for the job, a trade broker might hire anyone for the right price, especially if his offer is cheaper than the competition's bid.





Freelance runners appear at every transfer point, looking to set up terms with the traders there. They tend to be flashy, overconfident and probably have a gimmick. Most boast of their individual vessel's abilities, some even deliver on them. Consistent traders rarely use these 'fly by night' freebooters, rather keeping a solid and dependable crew on retainer instead.

Cargo running, especially emergency runners filling in for a trader's regular route, can be a fast way to make a few thousand credits, the typical freelance runner makes anywhere between five and ten thousand credits per shipment. Although a great deal of this wage goes directly back into the transit fees, docking charges and ship upkeep it still leaves a large sum for the ship's crew. Some traders pay extra for faster deliveries, others give a bonus for secrecy. Successful cargo runners learn who pays the most for the least trouble. The exception, of course, is any job that seems like it pays far greater than the work required as it will likely be the source of much trouble.

Few runners care what they are hauling so long as it does not get them into any sort of legal trouble. Denying knowledge of what sort of cargo they have on their ship rarely goes very far with the authorities, and getting a ship back from any governmental agency is as good as going bankrupt. For instance the Earth Alliance Trade Commission will allow the payment of sizeable fines to get back a vessel, while the Vree Spacer's Guild will apply all fines directly to an interest-bearing account on Vreetan that will be held over the ship owner's genetic line until paid in full.

Between possibility of harsh penalties and the ever-present threat of raider attack, good cargo runners leave illegal trade to the smugglers. It is preferable to run five times as many legal loads to make the same kind of profit one contraband shipment, no matter how tempting it might seem. There are always some who sneak in one Dust run here and there, risking it all for a few thousand credits more, but true cargo runners stick to legitimate trade and commerce.

When employed, a cargo runner must navigate the best route possible while taking into consideration many things. Certain jump gates require fees for their use. Some jump routes might be close to higher gravity worlds, slowing down or manipulating nearby ships. Areas that are known for raider attacks should be avoided as much as possible, but wide arcs around them could cost time and fuel. With so many border

skirmishes that permeate the galaxy, certain routes could endanger the vessel itself. Runners who make frequent trips through particular areas of space will need to stay up to date on current events, political tensions and the rate of success of other pilots in the area. It is a lot to keep current on, which is why so many commercial freighters stick to well-used routes and vary little from their contracted assignments.

Professional commercial cargo runners are generally contracted to a certain trader or trade company, giving them constant access to their ship(s) when needed, but

### New Skill Use

### Gather Information - Traffic Report (Cha)

Pilots who frequent the trade outposts, space stations and transfer points that break up the space lanes have a certain knack for gossiping about what they have seen. They go on about where they have seen it, who they saw it with and how they survived it in one piece. After a while it becomes a language of its own, and jump route regulars learn to use it and avoid hairy situations altogether.

By making a Gather Information check while listening to pilot banter at any space-based gathering point, the navigator of a trip can cut a percentage of time off of the length a full transit (from point A to point B) will take. Higher rolls will result in a better percentage saved, as shown:

Skill Check Result	Travel Time Reduction
15-19	5%
20-24	10%
25-29	15%
30+	20%



paying a steady salary instead of a wage based on each individual trip. Such a relationship has its benefits to both parties. The cargo runner gets his vessel(s) repaired and refuelled at the expense of the trader normally, with faster refits arranged when possible, and the trader has access to the runner's services whenever needed. It may not be the fast track to fame and fortune like freelance transit hauling but it is steady and reliable work that can always result in bigger contracts later from companies aware of their work.

Making a living at running cargo for the galactic trade market can be difficult at first, sometimes taking years before a constant contract makes itself available, if ever. Some take what little they have made and become traders themselves, others become embittered towards the industry and use what they have learned against it, becoming raiders themselves. The responsibility can be taxing, with many crews falling apart after just a few runs gone sour. Depending on the route it may be as dangerous as Dust peddling on Praxis IX, or as easy as the Sol-Proxima Transit Circle, it all depends on the ability, knowledge and prowess of the runners travelling it.

### **Becoming a Commercial Cargo Runner (Worker Class Specialisation)**

Any Character who wishes to turn their blue collar worker into a commercial cargo runner must meet the following requirements:

- ⑤ Spacecraft Proficiency feat
- ⑤ At least 4 ranks in Pilot
- ⑤ Access or ownership of a cargo-capable starship
- ⑤ A trader or corporate sponsor willing to put character on retainer

If they do, they may make the following adjustments to their worker class:

- ⑤ Appraise and Drive cease to be class skills
- ⑤ Pilot becomes a class skill
- ⑤ Any further taking of the Contact feat will also gain an additional Contact in the commercial trade industry
- ⑤ Docking, repair and refuelling fees are paid by employer (unless determined to be impossible by Games Master)

Commercial cargo runner class workers are better suited to pursue a life of galactic resource transit. They can seek out shipments through friendly or hostile territories, try to stay in neutral space or even sink into the shady world of illegal trading under the nose of their employers. Games Masters should note that unless the character started the process with a ship of their own (or alternate permissible situations, as seen fit by the Games Master) the character's cargo hauling efforts were probably subsidised by a trader or trading company. This relationship should be expanded by the Games Master and the player involved and could be the source of a great many plotlines and sessions.

Commercial cargo runners can be of any class, but those of the blue collar worker class are the best suited to jump into the life it offers.

### **Commercial Telepaths – A Mind for Fair Trade**

Having become an integral part of the galactic trade process since its full legalisation in 2195, the use of commercial telepaths is commonplace to the market. The liberal and sometimes redundant use of these telepath 'lie detectors' has made those businessmen able to afford them almost infallible in profitable decisions. In fact, many human corporations keep a team of Psi Corps licensed commercial telepaths on retainer at all times (for more information on the commercial agents of the Psi Corps, see The Psi Corps sourcebook).

Not all traders are human by any means, or represent human interests. The Psi Corps only has jurisdiction over human telepaths and there is always the demand for a good commercial telepath from the dozens of other sentient races that involve themselves with external trade.

A good commercial telepath will serve one party or the other during a contract negotiation, sometimes serving as a combination of witness and lie detector for the proceedings. By keeping a continual surface scan on the party in question, the telepath should be able to decipher if what he is saying is truthful or if negotiations should be altered to take new evidence into account. If a delivery service claims to be able to get to a particular outpost in ten days, but really cannot inside of two weeks, the telepath is contracted to inform his employer. Disasters, both financial and tangible, have been averted countless times by a simple surface scan by a commercial telepath.



Contracting a commercial telepath can be as easy as asking at a governmental office, or as difficult as trying to drag one out of a crowd of alien faces, it all depends on the species, site of negotiation and willingness of the telepath in question. Contract fees are generally consistent with those charged by the Psi Corps – in a galactic effort to stay competitive with the organised group – but can vary greatly depending on circumstance.

The uses for a commercial telepath range from deciphering the true intent of a vendor in the case of a particularly beneficial deal, to seeking out possible eavesdropping competitors from a crowd, to investigating raider attacks using deep scans of captives. It is not an easy life to live, but many galactic governments have grouped telepaths with commercial talent AND formed them into guilds, companies, sects or clubs.

The following is a list of a few larger (besides the Psi Corps) commercial telepath groups that traders may need to make use of throughout their travels.

### Erysa Guild (Abbai)

Made up of mainly Abbai men (lower class citizens in the Matriarchate) who rate at least a P4 or higher, the Erysa (eer-ee-sah) is the primary collection of commercial telepaths amongst their people. Trained extensively in the collective scanning for eavesdroppers, looking for feelings of sabotage or violent intent, the Erysa do their best to protect shipments. Hiring out to medical supply transfers, refugee ferrying services, food freighters and other 'good will' trades, they seem to care less about the profit margin of the deal in respect to the importance of the goods themselves.

#### Common Commercial Telepath Fees and Psi-Rating Required (as printed in The Psi Corps sourcebook)

##### Commercial Services

Service	Minimums	Base Cost
Simple veracity test (contract scan)	P3	60 credits
Advanced veracity test (special contract scan)	P3	110 credits
Multi-target veracity test	P3	+30 credits/person
Deep scan	P5	250 credits
Memory retrieval	P5	150 credits
Interpretation	P5	200 credits
Telepathic investigation	P6	250 credits
Counter-telepathy	P10	300 credits
Long-term hire	Varies	100 credits/day
Special requests	Varies	Varies

These fees are subject to alteration by the Games Master depending on the situation. For instance, a Drazi telepath might drastically increase his prices to act against his own people while an Abbai might act on behalf of a medical convoy for free. Ultimately it is up to the Games Master to decide the final fee, but the above chart is a good starting point to work from.





### **On-Witak (Brakiri)**

Fully trained as Ak-Habil legal advisors in addition to being at least P3 commercial telepaths, On-Witak (ahn-wee-tohk) members are elite negotiators schooled by some of the best Brakiri contract law professors on Brakos. They have the legal power to start, witness and sign their own trade service contracts, fully backed by the Ak-Habil Conglomerate. Their services are never cheap, sometimes ten or twenty times as expensive as other telepaths' might charge. The On-Witak are relentless in pursuit of debtors against the Brakiri, each fully licensed as a League Trade Marshal. They are frighteningly efficient, using their legal and telepathic powers in tandem to recover delinquent accounts.

### **Merchant Fleet Telepath Provisional (Centauri)**

Non-seer or Mindhawk telepaths primarily from House Callo, the Provisional are little more than telepathic slaves used by the house in their sizable trade services. Any telepath can be sequestered to the Provisional, normally if they have done something to deserve some form of social stigma as it is not a prestigious position to other Centauri. Most see the organisation as a network of telepathic spies House Callo uses to keep tabs on their peers, which is not wholly false. In support of these claims, they rarely hire out the Provisional to anyone but their own people. Anything is possible for

the right price to the Merchant Fleet, but any trader sitting at the table with a Provisional should expect all of his financial secrets to soon be common House Callo knowledge.

### **Der'ak'vol Market Club (Drazi)**

Drazi telepaths of no lower rating than a P7 can apply for membership in the secretive and cliquish Der'ak'vol (durr-ock-voll) through any number of Freehold agencies who use them regularly. Telepathic guardians of the Freehold's assets, each member is fully trained as an agent of the government and licensed as a League Trade Marshal for all League member races, paid for by the Der'ak'vol funding. They actually hire out to any and all who can pay their surprisingly low fees, making note of all information learned during their scattered dealings. The agent is required to record monthly findings in a data journal, sending the collected market readings and other important facts found to the Freehold financial research scientists on Zhabar. This information is, in turn, used to manage many of their government's fiscal decisions.

### **ISA Telepathic Trade Monitor (Minbari, some others)**

Created in 2264 after the Telepath Crisis, the Monitor is the Interstellar Alliance's attempt at keeping the



kind of power brokering the Psi Corps was masterful at, out of current politics. By using selfless Minbari telepaths and a few scattered others who show a similar will to fight corruption, President Sheridan created station-based telepaths of very high rating (P8s and P9s mostly, with a few P10s) to watch over other commercial telepaths on Alliance outposts and transfer points. Former Psi Corps supporters claimed that he was merely making a new 'alien controlled' Corps, but such allegations never found merit.

## Becoming a Commercial Telepath (Telepath Class Specialisation)

Any character who wishes to turn their telepath into specifically a commercial telepath must meet the following requirements:

- ③ Psi-rating of P3 or higher
- ③ At least 4 ranks in Telepathy
- ③ The Adaptive Mind feat (even if planning to only work for own race, must be prepared to deal with outsiders)

If they do, they may make the following adjustments to their telepath class:

- ③ At least 2 skill points per level must be spent on Telepathy, Knowledge (commerce) or Sense Motive
- ③ Knowledge (commerce) becomes a class skill
- ③ Any further taking of the Contact feat will also gain an additional Contact in the commercial trade industry

While any telepath character could manage to be hired out to traders or trading companies, this specialisation shows the character's focus on his dealings and input on the galactic market. Unlike other trade-related class specialisations, a commercial telepath does not need to have any form of backing or licensing to serve in trade negotiations. Most successful businessmen will not hire an untested or unregistered telepath for the sake of their financial secrets. Any commercial telepath without any form of credentials (forged papers do count, however) will need to persuade possible clients before ever finding employment.

Should a commercial telepath have backing in one form or another, employment will be far easier to attain but will generally absorb between half and two-thirds of any wages collected. The Games Master and player should work out the feel and type of relationship the

telepath has with its specific employers, as it can be the source of a good amount of plotting and roleplaying for the campaign as a whole.

### Faking a Commercial Telepath

Traders with lower morals or available funds may not have access to a real commercial telepath. Instead they might hire an actor or con artist to act as though they were a telepath. This is risky business and can lead to a lot of trouble for anyone caught performing such a fraud (for both the actor and the hirer).

Trying to make someone believe they are being scanned is a simple Bluff check, resisted by a Sense Motive check. The following are adjustments to the Sense Motive check due to circumstance:

### Fake Scan Modifiers

Altering Circumstance	Sense Motive Modifier
Actor has witnessed a scan previously	-2
Target has witnessed a scan previously	+2
Actor has been scanned previously	-4
Target has been scanned previously	+4
Actor reports correctly after 'scan'	-6
Actor reports incorrectly after 'scan'	+6
Target is actually a telepath	+2, plus target's Psi-Rating



# Ten Rules to Galactic Trade

There are countless ways to conduct commercial transit and trade across the galaxy and everyone has their preferred method. The following list contains the unofficial laws to live by in the galactic market, as tested time and time again by the tens of thousands who do business on a regular basis. After each rule is a brief description of what the rules intended meaning is and a few views concerning its actual application in the galaxy.

## 1. Stay Neutral

While trying to do business with a large cast of buyers, sellers, traders and merchants, a good businessman will not let personal politics or patriotism sway a good deal. Body language over a comment or in the face of purposeful baiting can alter a deal's outcome, it is always best to stay neutral in such matters.

*'Neutrality is the key to any good financial relationship. To allow brutally chaotic factors such as emotion into dealings such as these can only be detrimental to the outcome of the negotiations.'*

*Trade Captain Zet'I, Vree Spacer's Guild*

*'Bah! Would you have me set my ship down on that accursed rock and be pawed at by Narn? Would you ask that I open my atmospheric vents to the unforgettable aroma of Melat? Neutral? I know not a single soul that can claim such a thing!'*

*Commerce Captain Dedradi Callo, Centauri Merchant Fleet*

## 2. Never Accept the First Offer

Haggling and negotiation are the very heart and soul of galactic trade and anyone involved with it knows that the first offer is far too low or too high in order to begin the delicate process of bidding. To usurp this process from one side or the other by hastily accepting an initial bid can be considered rude to some and may end any further offers from the same employer in the future.

*'This could not be said without truer intent. The Great Exchange requires not only the giving of goods, but also of thought and intent. I would not*



*do business with anyone unwilling to offer their idea of fair price for mine. No, never.'*

*Tllarnat Pho, Llort commodities trader*

*'If the first offer was sweet enough, I'd bite. Credits are credits, why give them a chance to rescind the deal?'*

*Harolde Brotherton III, ex-trade commission officer, EarthGov*

## 3. Never Negotiate Under the Influence

This should be common sense. Binding agreements that could hold sway over hundreds of thousands of credits, endanger crew or cause local economies to falter in the wake of bad decisions should never be handled with an addled mind. Drugs, alcohol, certain foods and even social extravagance might cloud the judgments of a negotiating party. It is foolish to arrange terms in such a manner, and good businessmen never risk it.

*'I have a hard enough time getting it all straight sober, I can't imagine trying to chart a seven system jump route after a few sunspots! Save the drinks until after the deal is set.'*

*Artuis Holbrook, navigation officer of the Cometsong trade freighter*

*'Great Maker! With so much at stake, why would you ever want to be sober?'*

*Yarri Hessius, Centauri negotiations expert*



#### 4. Never Open the Cargo

When transporting sealed cargo, no matter how suspicious, it is never a good idea to open or otherwise inspect your cargo. It might be hazardous or susceptible to the elements, in which case opening and exposing it could ruin the entire container and bankrupt the deal. Also, ignorance of the contents of a shipment will not be used against the carrier in most galactic governments and is verifiable by any commercial telepath. Finally, the buyer may not trust opened cargo or the seller might be slighted by the carrier's distrust. Unless the contract states it, it is best not to involve oneself in the contents at all.

*'All of our cargo haulers are magnetically sealed and individually numbered, if we found out that even one of our shipments was poked at by alien fingers... I-I, I just don't know who I'd go after first!'*

*Chozhal Kakk, Drazi antiques broker*

*'It seems foolish not to know exactly what you are carrying. It could be something truly horrible. Like weapons. Or drugs. Or weapons and drugs! It is always better to know.'*

*Deidra Oasall, Captain of the Yarie trade frigate of the Abbai Matriarchate*

#### 5. Use a Reliable, Licensed Telepath

In the hectic world of fee negotiation and contract arranging, there are many untrustworthy and dishonest businesspeople one can come into contact with. A good way of weeding out bad deals and partners is through the use of a commercial telepath. For a sizable expense a trader can hire the services of a licensed, bonded and verified telepath through any of the major telepath commercial agencies; Earth's Psi Corps, the Drazi Der'ak'vol and the Brakiri On-Witak for instance. Using a telepath with no credentials can be dangerous, unsecured and illegal in some systems. It is not worth the credits saved.

*'Using a blip, or unregistered telepath, for your commercial dealings can wind up being more costly in the long run. They are not trained properly, and could actually do harm to one or both parties, even themselves, while they are performing their duties. It would do you... and them... well if you reported any unregistered telepaths immediately, it is safer for everyone involved.'*

*Alfred Bester, Psi Corps*

*'One teep is as good as any. Hell, you never know if they even do anything while they sit there anyway, so why not save a few hundred creds?'*

*'Rich Overnight' Zales, Praxis IX tradesman*

#### 6. Stick to the Plan

A route should be structured and stops should be figured into the original route before the first leg of a journey takes place. Altering course, routine or number of stops might add cost or risk to an otherwise perfect plan. Some employers like to keep a close track of where their goods are going and straying from a plotted and agreed upon course could worry them unintentionally. Such infraction could be considered a breach of original contract, resulting in loss of employment and credibility.

*'When our navicom plots the best course, it stays plotted. Why change perfection?'*

*Xinos, Vree Spacer's Guild*







*'In all my travels I have found one absolute truth in the universe: no plan survives beyond its first step.'*

*Max Eilerson, Interplanetary Expeditions*

## 7. Pay Fees, Fines or Taxes Early

While travelling the galaxy for the sake of market trading, there are dozens of reasons that charges can be applied to an account in transit. Some of these charges are calculated with great amounts of interest every day or week they are not paid, others compound hourly. Delays in paying such fees can result in corporate embargoes, banning further attendance at that station or outpost or even property seizures. For the sake of their employers and further employment, traders should take care of debts as soon as they can rather than letting them grow.

*'Losing an entire load of Q-40 to a League Trade Marshal over a few delinquent taxes felt worse than anything else I have ever known. On the bright side, I will never forget Zhabar's lift-off tariffs ever again.'*

*Yoshiro Takanara, freelance freight pilot*

*'If you use aliases, remember which transit points you dodged out on and never ever look back... you can save a fortune!'*

*Captain Crispus Starre of the Anonymous, wanted in seventeen League systems for financial fraud*

## 8. Do Not Traffic with Criminals

With some shipments of certain cargo being as important and expensive as they can be, having any contact with the assortment of hijackers, raiders, thieves and terrorists that plague the space lanes is inviting trouble. Some unscrupulous traders might think it is safe to make friends with these socio-political parasites, but bringing their ilk closer to their business is a disaster waiting to happen. One can never know when they will turn on the relationship and make a target out of their supposed allies. They are, after all, criminals.

*'Would you ask a Nakaleen Feeder to watch your children? No. Then why would you ever invite a raider to the business table?'*

*Graccus Jaddo-Mollari, retired corporate spokesman*

*'For a few hundred creds and a cut of the final sale, friends of mine in the Choshaka will attack my competition. They take what they want from them and I reap the benefits. How is this a bad deal?'*

*Zhozhak Ro, Drazi licensed Trade Marshal*

## 9. There is Safety in Numbers

In the expanse of the void between systems and jump gates, a single ship can easily become lost or overwhelmed by raiders. The safety of the ship, its crew and cargo is paramount to a successful trading exchange, and the best way to eliminate the threat is to



join with transit fleets. For a small fee a ship can often join these commercial convoys, and take advantage of their numbers and security measures. If not available, even a few escort ships going in the same direction as a trading shipment could dissuade lone attackers from trying to waylay the vessel.

*'When we are looking for a prime target we look for the stragglers, the lone ship trying to make quota. Attacking a full convoy or commercial fleet is suicide. Any good privateer knows that.'*

*Captain Ussuro Vallain, Free Mars supporter and known raider captain*

*'I'm the best damn pilot this side of Beta System. Why should I share the profit with wingmates when I would probably outrun them and the raiders?'*

*Curtis Sollars, pilot of the Archangel's Feather*

## 10. Some Deals are Too Good to be True

There is a certain pattern that most traders discover in the industry, and experience dictates that some items are worth a great deal, while others are not. When approached with a deal or contract that does not fit the accepted pattern, most traders realise that something is amiss and should not accept the deal. When offered something for nothing, there is always some form of catch or risk involved that the trader may or may not be aware of. Such transactions rarely go as planned and most are far more dangerous than the trader could have ever known or guessed.

*'Faust thought he got a good deal too. Look how that turned out.'*

*Lt. Danielle Chaucer, Earth Alliance trade commissioner*

*'We are harried by raiders, alien attack fleets and competing runners every time we set out into that big black nothing. The job is risk. We knew that going into it. I say it's about time, bring on the Devil himself - show me where to sign!'*

*Captain Kyle 'Shoehorn' Jepenski, freelance cargo runner*

## What to Expect Out of the Life

The galactic market may not be the war-torn borders between Narn and Centauri space or the rebellious tube cities of Mars, but it has its share of heroes, villains and casualties. Bombs made of revenue fall from peaking prices to destroy scavenging freelancers while corporate warriors knock out the competition. Companies wither and die, moguls rise and fall.

It is not all metaphorical and when the number of digits in a wage or sale increase, so does the risk involved. High-priced trades attract sometimes unwanted attention and privacy is in short supply when credits are at stake. Unscrupulous power brokers use underhanded or sometimes brutish methods to steer the market their way and more than one assassin-for-hire cashes trading company paycheques when circumstances require it.

Here is a brief look at what to expect out of the aforementioned trade-related lifestyles.

### Life as a Merchant

Of all the trade-related lifestyles available to the people of the 23<sup>rd</sup> Century, becoming a merchant is the most mundane day-to-day career. The level of responsibility is based directly on the amount of control the merchant has in his own store, shop or stall. A kiosk peddler working for a directing owner might act more like a clerk in his duties than say, the self-made storefront manager with no other employees. The more a mercantile employee has to lose, the more he will care about his performance in the market. It is a rare merchant employee that puts in a greater amount of effort than his return profit deserves.

Merchants rely on the consumer to find, be attracted to, shop and buy the goods of his business. There may be some shifts where a merchant talks his throat raw until his store is nearly empty. Other days might be a complete waste of manpower as he looks at the empty halls of a marketplace, trying to raise the attentions of the few customers that come into view. Consumer traffic is the making or breaking of a merchant's day and sometimes of his career.

Depending on the location of the merchant's business, stress can be very high. High-crime areas see a greater number of shoplifters and pickpockets. Sectors with far more diverse alien populations may have translation or



cultural clashes, resulting in difficult haggling and possible sale-ending blunders. Times of war drive certain items into near worthlessness, but swell the price tags of others. It is the merchant's job to figure out the ramifications of all of these factors and many more, in order to adjust his selling methods and take advantage of them, rather than be crushed in their wake.

It is rare for a merchant still remaining at store level be any more financially successful than any other white collar labourer. When the credits are steady, a merchant will often begin to dabble higher up the chain-of-trade. He hires employees of his own to run his shops, becoming an owner rather than a worker, and normally takes on the role of a trade broker for his budding business, with possibly larger endeavours in his future. Those merchants who do truly love their careers may stay with it for long years after they could have retired or moved into different fields, even if they might sit upon a fortune in accumulated profits they remain as support.

Between juggling inventory orders, customer service issues and general store upkeep most merchants are commonly busy with some form of duty for the business every day. It can seem a daunting task for some, but it is the sort of commitment required to stay one step ahead of the competition. It is a cutthroat industry, sometimes quite literally in less savoury marketplaces, and a good merchant will do whatever it takes to gain an advantage over his neighbour.

While rarely glamorous, the merchant lives in a certain degree of control over himself and his business. It is more than can be said for the dockworker or the shipwelder. It can be a good life if the right person puts the right effort into making it so. Anyone can sell junk on a street corner, but a merchant makes you want it bad enough to ask for it.



## Life as a Free Trader

Arguably the most stressful career choice in the galactic market, traders have the most to gain, at the risk of making small errors that could ruin their careers. It takes a lot of trust to become a free trader. They must trust the buyer to pay promptly. They must trust the vendor to deliver the goods on time and without incident. They must trust the freight pilots not to fall into raider hands or fall to a myriad of other interstellar hazards.

The most of a trader's life is spent researching and preparing between negotiations. Successful traders will have a dozen different deals – some buying, some selling – in his mind every day. Most will invest in a good mass-memory datapad in order to keep prices, scheduling and contracts at a finger's press away. The busier and more successful a trader gets, the worse this frantic pace becomes.

Traders are generally obsessive over their deals, focusing all of their mental efforts toward making the most out of them. It is an uphill battle, even with a corporate sponsor, and the market is littered with the remnants of those who could not survive it. Career traders know the ramifications of each credit's worth of a seller's price and what really is the cost of buying at 'market plus 2%'. It is no surprise they tend to seem so



affluent and elite amongst their peers, who take the first bid, hire the cheapest transport and make only enough profit to fund a meal or two.

It can be worth the risk, even if 90% of the free traders in the entire market make as much as the other 10% do. There is no telling what a trader might be willing to do to become one of those 10%. There is a big difference between a 'fair' trade and a 'good' trade, and morals rarely help make that extra commission. A sad fact but a terribly real one.

Traders can become powerful amongst the financial elite. A string of good choices and hard sales could turn an up-and-coming broker into a trendsetting titan. They can amass fortunes and trade fleets for themselves, with some of the most successful never having to leave their homes to seal deals worth more than their peers might make in a lifetime. With the ever-present possibility of making the right decisions and becoming one of these power moguls, there is little doubt why most people get into galactic trade in the first place.

The life of a free trader means carving out a living amongst their unforgiving, relentless and covetous peers. They would have it no other way.

## Life as a Cargo Runner

Perhaps the most exciting, and therefore most physically dangerous, career in the galactic market, cargo runners spend their time in the void between systems in order to make their wage. Piloting or crewing ships laden with any number of resources or goods, a cargo runner knows his vessel's hold is worth far more than he is in the grand scale of things. Raiders, saboteurs and terrorists abound in the space lanes. Few of them care a great deal if a freight pilot or cargo loader survives to spend his meagre wages, making every trip a risky effort for any runner.

There are two distinct groups within the numerous cargo runners in the galaxy; commercially funded and freelancers. They live two very different lives even though they share the same risks. They do the same job for their trader employers but look upon it drastically differently.

Commercial runners are typically on retainer from powerful traders or companies, making consistent runs along high-traffic routes. Although paid less than their freelancer brethren, these runners are nearly always

insured against their ship or contents by their employing company. While the risk of raider attack remains high and pilots could die in a fire fight, a commercial runner will have no qualms about abandoning a ship to the raiders if it means saving his life. After all, the company will no doubt set him up with another when he returns to them with news of the attack.

Freelancers do not get the same luxury. Using their own vessels (or one loaned by high-interest silent partners) to run cargo along faster, less patrolled routes means fewer taxes, quicker runs and greater payoffs. It also means higher risk of legal entanglements, raider attacks and ship malfunctions. Unlike commercially insured ships, a freelancer's vessel is his life. Leaving it for raiders is akin to shooting themselves with a PPG, so they must fight as well as their often second-rate vessels can perform. This can lead to freelancers dumping cargo in exchange for their lives, or entire shipments being 'lost' between transfer points.

Cargo runners live dangerously and they know it. They can be cocky, prideful and overconfident in respect to their successes. Freelancers who have managed to make a good living are seen as roguish mercenaries by their commercial counterparts, who may secretly long for the freedom such a life presents. It can be taxing to spend so much time behind the console of a starship, and cargo runners of both varieties try to make the best of the times they can 'stretch their legs'.

A good and safe route can fetch steady work, and fast runs through contested systems can offer a quick score. Cargo runners rarely work longer than it takes to weather their first raider attack, but the determined persist to become regulars at transfer points and trade outposts all across the galaxy. Good runners do not need to seek work; it finds them.

## Life as a Commercial Telepath

Being a telepath of any variety has its ups and downs, but finding a focus and a calling helps normalise an otherwise surreal life. Having to constantly worry about accidentally scanning someone, being used in some political plot or scheme and not going insane with the constant hum of outside thoughts, it takes a strong will to get through each day mentally intact.

Commercial telepaths tend to have an edge over unfettered telepathic agents. They must keep up to date on mundane market details, common pricings,





contract law and the newest trade scams. This tends to keep their minds focused and dedicated to the root of their activities, rather than allowing it to wander. They have to be trained and steady when scanning multiple trade parties and learn early on how to shut the outside 'static' out to hear the intended thoughts of the deal they are participating in. Other telepaths might claim that non-commercial work is harder but a good and solid commercial telepath is sometimes hard to find.

Considering most commercial telepaths belong to one organisation or another, there is very little chance for riches or fortune for any particular individual. This allows them to live comfortably, but not extravagantly. Their employers will sometimes take better care of some than others depending on reliability and production, but most fall into the 'high middle class' of their races.

Those rare freelance telepaths who manage to attract a decent clientele, or a healthy retainer contract with a particular company or trader, might have any level of financial security, it all depends on the size and wealth of the retaining employer. Freelance telepaths just starting out are often meek and secretive, trying to get involved wherever they can. The more successful they get, the bolder they can be. Without a major governmental watchdog reigning in the amount they take in for their jobs, there is the possibility of huge wealth for a telepath. This increases their visibility

however and every telepath knows of the enemies their kind has made over the generations. The money and lifestyle might be nice but it certainly makes a target out of the telepath in question.

Most commercial telepaths can look forward to a secure and safe career, with solid work and a dependable income. It may never make them rich and powerful without accompanying risks but it is a role that can no longer be ignored in the galactic trade industry. There is something to be said for their job security when one of the hiring prerequisites

is part of their evolution. A good commercial telepath will never need to look far for work and most will have it arranged for them by their employing organisation. They have nearly become a living commodity in and of themselves and some recognise that fact. Those that do not realise that potential will soon be recoiling in the backwash of those who do.



# Mercantile Careers

*'I do not care if everything is for sale! Some prices are just too high.'*

*Ambassador Kalika of the Abbai*

## Trade Amongst the Galactic Governments

There are over two dozen governments, conglomerates or political conjunctions that commit funds to the galactic market. Each one has its own major wants and needs and commerce between them has become commonplace. Some of the larger trade communities, like the League of Non-Aligned Worlds, have overlying laws and codes to govern the smaller contributors but all have a certain say in the grand scheme.

Each contributing government has its own views on goods and services, making one prize an item more than another which governs prices and availability; the essence of supply and demand. The market fluctuates constantly, but these commercial trendsetters are often bound by the needs of their people. It is a cycle that keeps the market in general flux, but essentially stable when looking at the larger financial forecast.

The galactic governments are strong enough to meet nearly any vice the market can offer to fill their peoples' wants. They put a particular emphasis on a certain item or resource, driving its price up until every intelligent trader on the routes adds it to their own brokering. The market gets flooded, no one can sell at the current prices and the traders are soon forced to lower rates to compensate the resource hike. There are a few exceptions to this massive swelling and falling of costs. For example, Quantum-40 (used for building jump gates and engines) stays at a consistently expensive rate for its actual rarity and overall monopoly on the hyperspace industry. Anyone foolish enough to lower their prices by more than a slight percentage may be able to sell massive amounts of their stockpile but will never have enough funds to fully replenish it. After all, a trader must always think of his next sale too.

While there are so many players in the galactic market, there are actually less than a dozen major contributors. They have their own styles, views and quirks that make dealing with each one of them complex to say the least. It is often worthwhile however, as governmental

contracts in any shape rarely show a loss. They protect their funds and their resources well, and do not quickly forget a profitable and 'painless' transaction with a reliable trader.

The following text is a collection of general views on the major galactic governments and trade players. There are dozens of other races, governments and even individual systems that might have their own particular views or standards and we encourage the Games Master to come up with any that would benefit their own campaign setting.

## Abbai Matriarchate



The co-founders of the League of Non-Aligned Worlds, the Abbai have always been interested in socio-political relations with other races they come in contact with. In their early expansions into space, they commonly offered their own technologies and resources to budding races or would-be allies in exchange for new resources, goods or even just signatures upon a treaty. Their galactic hand-shaking made them well-known amongst the other races and allies with many of them.

While their 'give it away for a promise' view has been hardened by war and strife over the centuries, they still are very forgiving and eager to make deals and contracts, even if it means not quite making the profit they ought to. Abbai are not aggressive by nature,



so their trade views tend to be Safe rather than Risk-Taking (see page 44 for more on trade attitudes), and they try to focus on gathering resources that they could later use to pass on to their League allies. Somewhere under the crashing waves of Abba there is a resource storage facility larger than the Babylon 5 station filled with decade's worth of traded goods, ready for use at any time.

The Abbai do not completely retain these selfless views upon trade. Only a portion of their funds are focused upon stockpiling for League use - maybe 30%. Much of the rest is a strange dichotomy of alien weapon technologies for defence studies, luxury items and food products unobtainable in their own systems (15%, 20% and 25% respectively).

The Abbai rely heavily on civilian transit companies to ferry their trade across the galaxy. They have dozens of agencies on retainer at all times, paying their wage to traverse the jump routes in their name. Heavy believers in defending their investments, the Abbai have escort fleets dispersed throughout the Matriarchate to patrol the space lanes. They do not forgive transgressions against their agents in their own territory and raiders are a rarity within it.

The Abbai also fund and keep a semi-secret sect of 'counter-raiders' in their employ. Using decommissioned vessels and cobbled starships seen in the hands of raider cells in several systems, their Abbai crews seek out hostile groups of raiders and hijackers. Although rarely seen outside of the Matriarchate's territories due to the scandal it may cause amongst their peers, these unnamed hunters serve as an offensive police force against the enemies of Abbai trade.

While the Abbai may seem like good-natured benefactors in their dealings, they are very savvy negotiators and do not relinquish profitable terms easily. They are always well-informed, well-protected and ready to look elsewhere for the same deal in the blink of an eye if necessary. Haggling with the Abbai over price can sometimes seem futile but every single percentage gained should be considered a victory. They understand just how many allies they have made in their galactic cooperation and their financial advisors are very aware of how many favours that leaves to call in. Nothing persuades a stubborn trader like a gentle nudge from their taxing government after a friendly call from an Abbai ambassador.

**Common Imports:** Industrial supplies, food and medicinal resources, weapon technology, luxury items

**Common Exports:** Medical technology, distilled water, shipbuilding resources

**Trade Attitudes:** Protective, Safe

**Trade Agreements:** Brakiri, Hyach, Markab (pre 2231), League of Non-Aligned Worlds Collective Trade Agreement (post 2231), ISA (post 2261), Earth Alliance, Narn Regime, Centauri (pre 2261)

**Restricted Sources:** Centauri Republic (post 2262)

## Brakiri Syndicracy



Possibly the most business-oriented government in the entire galaxy, the Syndicracy is actually run by several large 'power families' that evolved from the original warring water clans of the early population. Some are directly descended from the water clans; the Ak-Habil Conglomerate, Ly-Nakir Industries, Pri-Wakat Military Concepts & Solutions and Im-Rehsa Technologies. These four commercial powerhouses actually control and manipulate the majority of the Syndicracy's decisions, both political and financial.

There is a saying among traders: 'always trust a Brakiri to never trust you'. This is a very truthful statement. Brakiri trade brokers and negotiators are always on the lookout for loopholes, contract weaknesses or exploitable clauses due to the fact they themselves are always concocting them. The corporate solutions that dominate Brakiri society have bred most of their powerful members to be cutthroat manipulators, but steadfast in the legal codes of their Trade Marshals. A single error or mistake could mean a fiscal disaster, leaving the company in question with a weakness that can be used against them.



Embodying the essence of the market mentality, the Brakiri are involved in nearly every economic endeavour on more than half of the outposts, stations and transfer points across the galaxy. They do not seem to focus their attentions on any particular place or resource, but rather spread their influence thickly anywhere they are allowed. This overextension of their commercial control may seem foolish to some, as any trembling in the market will cost them more than someone who has focused efforts elsewhere. However, the Brakiri are well aware of the risks and know that where prices fall in one place they must rise in another, which they are quick to capitalise on.

The Brakiri do not seem to have any primary imported goods - they buy whatever they want or can so they can peddle them later! This fractious importing is mostly due to the many views of the Syndicracy's ruling corporations, who never agree on what may be important at any given time. These internal power struggles and corporate politicking is what keeps the Brakiri from having a true monopoly on any particular resource or commodity. In the rare case that the governing companies come together to back any one target, its success would be assured.

Although spread in many directions concerning purchase trades, the Brakiri have only a few exported items of their own. Normally turning some imports directly into exports, they see their ability to profit in the industry as export enough. Enough other galactic governments hire the Brakiri to broker deals they cannot handle themselves, that free trade is as much a resource as any amount of minerals or processed goods.

Confident in their contractual skills and ironclad ability to seal a deal that the Devil himself could not worm out of, the Brakiri employ anyone. Freelancers, retainers and even commercial convoys are hired alongside corporate tradesmen without a second thought. A similar view to their import trading, the Brakiri spread their influence in civilian transport and freelance runner circles. Those who can keep up with the hectic pacing and legalese of the Brakiri traders are an understandable asset. Those who cannot, rarely survive the repossession clauses of their elaborate agreements.

Escort protection is sparse unless a shipment deserves such treatment and common resource or commodity trade rarely warrants an armed escort. Important shipments are informed to do their best to stick to mapped hyperspace lanes, frequently stopping at

armed outposts to ensure raider activity stays to a minimum. The Brakiri insure their goods with their allied agencies, but rarely put a single solitary credit toward a freelance vessel's insurance. No Brakiri law is immutable, and many contracts will include pages of addendums and amendments to protect the investors, the traders and the cargo running vessels, in that order of importance.

With so many others in the commercial market in debt or service to one Brakiri company or another, there is very little chance that they will ever gain enough of a true stranglehold on anything other than their employed trade force. Between the infighting and political struggles with their close 'friends' the Drazi and Gaim, the Brakiri are a mainstay within the galactic market but will never fully control it.

**Common Imports:** Varies

**Common Exports:** Starship components, commercial legal services, import sales

**Trade Attitudes:** Informed, Secure, Widespread

**Trade Agreements:** League of Non-Aligned Worlds Collective Trade Agreement (post 2231), Centauri (pre 2262), Earth Alliance, Narn Regime, ISA (post 2261)

**Restricted Sources:** Centauri Republic (post 2262)

## Centauri Republic



One of the earliest multi-system governments in the galaxy that still relies heavily on the trade industry, the Centauri once conquered nearly a third of the galaxy in their prime. They learned of a great many resources and goods in their expansion, goods they would later have to buy or barter for when they would recede to their



later boundaries. Creatures of luxury, passionate about their desires, the Centauri are forced to actually pay for the assortment of items they once had controlled. In essence, their own greed and material avarice forced them to become so involved in galactic trade.

Within the many royal houses of the Centaurum, House Callo controls the largest percentage of their traders and cargo vessels, otherwise known as the 'Merchant Fleet'. The Merchant Fleet operates across the galaxy in any known system it can, buying mainly rare luxuries and foodstuffs they cannot produce elsewhere. They gladly sell weapon systems, art and mineral resources mined from their many controlled planets and moons. The Republic, while not the 'Lion of the Galaxy' as they once were, still remains a powerful force of industry.

The Merchant Fleet is as much a wing of the military as it is purely commercial. It consists of somewhere between 7,500 and 10,000 vessels, half of which are military-grade escort ships. Attack cruisers like the Vorchan and the Darkner surround trade convoys, ready to eliminate any and all threats with extreme prejudice. The Centaurum grants the Merchant Fleet the ability to defend shipments with as much force as they see fit,

something that keeps raider activity relatively low on well-travelled Centauri hyperspace routes.

Eager to trade with nearly anyone capable of fulfilling their wants, House Callo wears a friendly face and keeps great social standing with their peers in the galactic market. Alien races who trade with them often find that Callo prices and availability is unmatched amongst the other houses of the Centauri. They have created a working monopoly within their government and the market benefits from their good fortune.

Although much of their power does stem from good financial choices and a sizeable network of contacts and retained outside trade companies, they did not get to their position without foul play. Occasionally another house or freelancer will try and take a large deal or contract without even consulting the Merchant Fleet. Most are ignored, but a few are large and profitable enough to warrant action by House Callo.

Calling in a favour from a lesser house subsumed in 2245 called the Sorrati – bloody-handed assassins used for generations by the many houses – Callo can eliminate these traders or their allies before the deal takes place. Called 'Bloodcrests', the assassins of

### The Merchant Fleet – Post 2262

House Callo's extensive Merchant Fleet escort ships were the source for many of the Drakh-inspired attack vessels piloted by Shadow technology in 2262. The patriarch of the house, Danallis Callo, was amongst the first wave of Centaurum members to be controlled by the Drakh through their insidious 'keepers'. Danallis gave up his escort fleets for the refits without telling the transit captains of the Merchant Fleet, many of whom summarily perished at the hands of raiders in the weeks to come.



After 2262, the Merchant Fleet consists of half the number of ships it once did and relies on freelance escort pilots to protect them. With the number of enemies the Centauri made while in league with the Shadows and their allies, trade outside the Republic has slowed to a trickle.



The following is an addition to the list of Noble Houses seen in The Centauri Republic Fact Book

### **House Sorrati (pre 2245)**

**House Patriarch:** Diro Sorrati (Status 89, Social Debt (-12))

**House Symbol:** A pair of Coutari on either side of a blood-dripping Ducat

**Notable Assets:** Gambling houses, sporting events, hunting and safari, assassination

**House Alliances:** Mollari, Refa

**House Enemies:** Durnado

**True Alliance:** None

**True Enemy:** None

House Sorrati was the hub of the many vices the Centauri noble houses revolved around. Gambling, women, illicit substances and high profile animal poaching were all their major sources of known income for centuries. Every other house had at one time thrown a 'Sorrati party' and every noble partook of one. All Centauri are known for their love of excess, and the Sorrati personified that flaw better than anyone else in the Republic. They were not fools however, and used the drink-loosened lips of their patrons to goad many nobles into hiring their less known services against their enemies as assassins. Their 'Bloodcrests' were some of the most skilled and infamous murderers in the Centauri Republic. When a noble wanted another noble dead and wanted to make a bloody example out of them, they hired a Sorrati Bloodcrest to do the deed. There was a time long ago when the whole Republic would pay respects to the Sorrati just to keep low on their list of potential targets. In fact it was one of these bloody assassination attempts on Emperor Turhan conspired by several other allied houses that caused the fall of the Sorrati.

### **House Sorrati-adjunct to Callo (post 2245)**

**House Patriarch:** Diro Sorrati (No status, presumed dead by Centauri Republic)

**House Symbol:** A pair of Coutari on either side of a blood-dripping Ducat in front of an image of Centauri Prime

**Notable Assets:** Illegal animal trade, mineral and resource smuggling, off-world fencing

**House Alliances:** Kodiro (in secret)

**House Enemies:** None

**True Alliance:** Callo

**True Enemy:** Varga

When their allies abandoned them after a botched attempt on Emperor Turhan's life, Diro Sorrati fled to escape the punishments of the Centaurum. His house was left in a shambles and was moments away from being exiled completely when Danallis Callo stepped forward and extended his hand. Having felt the sting of the Sorrati Bloodcrests before within his family, he saw an opportunity to control these skilled madmen. By swearing never to take another true patriarch, House Sorrati was allowed to stand under the banners of House Callo. Their relationship has been one of employer and employee ever since, with the Bloodcrests performing at the ushering of House Callo instead of at their own behest – at least officially.



**New Feat****Bloodcrest Assassin (Centauri)**

As one of the highly trained Bloodcrests of House Sorrati, you are especially adept at the unseen killing blow – especially against your own people. You no doubt have a signature deathblow that leaves your targets maimed and the deed recognisable as your handiwork.

**Prerequisite:** House Sorrati Centauri only, Sneak Attack class ability.

**Benefit:** +1d6 to your existing Sneak Attack damage. In addition, all Sneak Attack damage dice are doubled when performing a Sneak Attack against another Centauri.

House Sorrati make horrific examples of the Merchant Fleet's foes in order to steer others away from usurping business from the powerful House Callo.

With so much political – and visceral – control over trade peers within the Republic, many Centauri companies that do not wish to use the Merchant Fleet for one reason or another will look to freelance traders and cargo runners to aid them. While not as foolproof as Brakiri contracts or as asset-threatening as a Spacer's Guild embargo, Centauri agreements are often high-paying.

The Centauri can also be elusive or even misleading in the cargoes they contract to be moved. They are a people of many vices, many of which are illegal in several systems. While some traders or pilots may not have an issue moving these products, many do. Most Centauri would much rather lie to the first available vessel for the right price than have to wait for a ship who will not care about legal issues. This can lead to problems in dealing with them, but the pay is normally worth the effort.

Until their general seclusion in 2262 on account of their dealings with the Drakh, the Centauri were omnipresent in trade circles and were a powerful entity in the galactic market. When they withdrew to stand alone, the market felt their absence greatly. It was a massive void that soon filled with freelancers from all over the Republic, but few with the same style and power of the government.

Working for the Centauri is profitable and risky, especially when in areas populated

by large amounts of Narn. There are some Narn that would sabotage or destroy a freelance cargo shipment; so long as they felt it hurt the Centauri in some way. They are good employers who take good financial care of their employees, but have no problems turning a blind eye if trouble comes their way.

**Common Imports:** Luxury foods and goods, illegal substances, industrial supplies

**Common Exports:** Starship components, weapon technology, alcohol

**Trade Attitudes:** Risk-Taking, Widespread (pre 2262)/Localised (post 2262)

**Trade Agreements:** League of Non-Aligned Worlds Collective Trade Agreement (post 2231/pre 2262), Earth Alliance (pre 2262)

**Restricted Sources:** All (post 2262)





## Drazi Freehold



‘Trader’ is not often the first thought that comes to mind when thinking about the Drazi, but perhaps it should be. One of the largest members of the League of Non-Aligned Worlds, the Drazi Freehold is home to a dozen different trade-related outposts, which differ from their military outposts only by the ratio of barracks to storefronts. They know the galactic market very well, and like so many other aspects of their species, they come at it with fists flailing.

The Freehold keeps very few trade organisations under its constant employ, preferring instead to hire, fire or abolish them with the heat of each individual moment. While this does make for a high number of foolish mistakes, it also means very few trade empires rise from out of the Freehold, leaving the control in the hands of the government. This ultra-competitive arena of traders battling for attention, often literally, forces Drazi professional traders into becoming better than their peers. There are casualties every month, both financial and physical, but those at the top always make a great profit.

Some Drazi who do not get the chance to sign high-profile government contracts will seek out employment elsewhere in the free trade circles of other races. They tend to be overbearing and far too intimidating to deal with on occasion, but few can argue against the passion with which they work.

Considering there is no Drazi vessel in existence without weaponry, their shipments are rarely heavily escorted as they prefer to battle with any ‘foolish’ raiders who might try and ambush them. This leads

risking the shipment, but most Drazi feel the fight is worth the risk and the loss if necessary. Only truly important shipments like new weapon technologies or Quantum-40 is placed with massive escorts of Drazi military vessels, but even then the cargo pilot may try and fight if an engagement occurs!

A close trade partner with the Brakiri and the Gaim, the Freehold shuttles many of its contracts in trade between these territories. Never fully trusting in anyone, Drazi agents hide amongst the traders and runners to look in on what ‘secrets’ their neighbours are hiding. Even when occasionally hiring outside freelancers they pay extra for return trips back to the Freehold, turning their trade agreement into a lesser form of reconnaissance. Trade pilots who deal with the Drazi on a frequent basis learn early on what they are looking for. Some play along and get as much information as possible, others do not wish to get involved in inter-ally espionage and would rather miss out on the deal.

Raw materials are commonplace in the Freehold, with a number of mining outposts along the Zhabar-Fendimir jump routes stockpiling in transfer points at every jump. These resources are the primary source of income to the Drazi trader, and places it is collected become gathering points for would-be freelancers and buyers.

Always on the lookout for alien weapon technology, ship components and livestock, the Drazi pay well to those who can deliver on time. They are very protective of the contents of their cargo and tampering with magnetic seals or securi-crates can result in very unhappy Drazi buyers. Not as rampant as other races, the Drazi are known to try and sneak illegal goods onto a legal shipment, turning the unaware runner or trader into a smuggler without saying anything about it to them.

Working with the Drazi in their trade circles can be as dangerous as fighting a star battle, but as exciting as well. Half as devious as a Centauri, but twice as aggressive when taking a loss, Freehold contracts are best left to their own people or freelancers willing to brave the struggles to make higher wages. It is exactly what one would expect out of the Drazi, except with high profits and inter-corporate plots that sometimes boggle even the mind of their galactic neighbours.

**Common Imports:** Livestock, ship components, weapon components



**Common Exports:** Industrial resources, Quantum-40

**Trade Attitudes:** Protective, Risk-Taking, Widespread

**Trade Agreements:** League of Non-Aligned Worlds Collective Trade Agreement (post 2231), Centauri (pre 2262), Earth Alliance, Narn Regime, ISA (post 2261)

**Restricted Sources:** Centauri Republic (post 2262)

## Earth Alliance



Considered by many to be the most social of the trading governments, the Earth Alliance has sent traders to nearly every corner of the galaxy, including the Minbari Federation! They are among the youngest of the spacefaring races, yet they have become more common in the market than many other races combined. In fact, English (the Earth Alliance's primary language) has become the most used language in face-to-face trading and is second only to Interlac for trade as a whole. In their 'short' time amongst the stars they have become a powerful commercial agent and their freelancers are virtually everywhere.

Coming from a culture that respects and rewards free trade, human traders found a welcoming similarity in the galactic market. Knowing the best ways to avoid loss while maximising profits, many humans soon grew into power moguls. Just as they had on their own planet, the human corporations swelled their power bases well beyond their intended limits, and now exist on hundreds of outposts and planets across the galaxy. These human corporations pay exorbitant taxes to EarthGov, and employ hundreds of thousands of employees every year. The Earth Alliance encourages these companies to also hire from outside workforces

native to the places they are doing business, but some prejudices cannot be overcome.

Similar to the Brakiri in the respect that they do not have any particular import which they focus upon (other than technological components) the humans try to work from an even power base. Some corporations will have a degree of control over one resource or service; others will fill in the vacancies they leave. The resulting quilt of corporate influence gives the Earth Alliance strong control over the galactic market as a whole without looking as though they are reaching for any one monopoly.

One way the Earth Alliance tries to keep its trade businesses fair and open to other races is by offering heavy tax breaks and contract windows to companies that have offices in outside territories. There are those who would rather pay huge transit fees and higher taxes in order to keep an all-human staff, which had better fetch a profit or else the office might not survive the hectic market fluctuations. Companies that stay so self-centred and racially-minded rarely do very well on a grand scheme and stay solely as Earth Alliance trade giants, dwarfed by those who stretch across the systems.

Growing or limited companies will look to outside assistance in the form of freelancers or even allied companies to get their shipments in or out on time. Happy to pay a slightly higher rate to a runner on retainer with someone else, human trade companies understand how tough it can be and rarely cause major problems for contracting traders.

With possibly the largest 'neutral' diplomatic station in their control, Babylon 5 is the main trade hub for Earth Alliance trading as a whole. Used as a transfer point, sales outpost and negotiations rendezvous, the station is always swarming with human traders and business contacts looking for work or workers. Until the issues it had with its own government in 2260, Earth Alliance relied on Babylon 5 for a high percentage of their trade negotiations with alien governments. When the station seceded from the Alliance, EarthGov leaned heavily on their 'patriotic' companies to turn inward and only trade outside of allied races when absolutely necessary.

Just as with the facets of their everyday lives, humans are too individual to regulate how they do business or with whom. Each example could be drastically different than any other, and no rule concerning them



would apply to all. This is their strength, the diversity of how they trade, for what they trade and who they trade with makes them a commercial enigma that others can only try to predict or react to. Working for any given Earth Alliance trader can surprise anyone, and could take them to any corner of the galaxy.

**Common Imports:** Scientific technology, shipbuilding materials, Quantum-40

**Common Exports:** Food products, starship components, jump engine components

**Trade Attitudes:** Patriotic, Public, Widespread (pre 2260)/Localised, Protective, Racist (post 2260)/Patriotic, Safe (post 2261)

**Trade Agreements:** League of Non-Aligned Worlds Collective Trade Agreement (post 2231), Centauri Republic (pre 2262), Lumati Dominion (post 2259), Sh'lassan Empire (pre 2259), ISA (post 2261)

**Restricted Sources:** Ch'lon Hunting Grounds, Koulani, Centauri Republic (post 2262)

## Gaim Intelligence



Possibly one of the most alien species to participate in the galactic market, the Gaim have only recently begun to fully participate in the fluctuating science of mercantile trade. Through generations of the genetic manipulation of their ambassador breeds, the Queens have instilled a sense of 'gain over temporary loss' in a select few.

Until their creation, the Gaim could not understand giving up goods or services for the promise of payment, or future deliveries; it seemed illogical to give something up without an immediate replacement. Flawed. Inefficient. Upon the hatching of this new

breed, the Gaim began to see trade in a different light. Rather than a weakness to be exploited, it became a new frontier to be controlled.

Gaim traders are very difficult to deal with, as they have already weighed the costs, shipping variance, timeliness and final profits in their insectoid mind long before their would-be client or partner even says hello. Negotiations are often short and contrived, with a certain margin of haggling decided ahead of time. Most Gaim traders rarely even appear for face-to-face negotiations, instead sending an offer in Interlac, to be accepted or refused. If accepted, the fees are paid and transit begins seconds later (the shipment would be lying in wait before offers were made). If refused, the Gaim rarely counteroffer. Rather they simply move the offer along to the next logical choice for acceptance.

Industrious to a near personification of the word, the Gaim have a great abundance of minerals, ore and rare materials they unearth from their planets' crusts. They are their primary, some might say only, exports. Matching market prices to a hundredth of a credit per kilogram, they break their sales up into as many separate shipments as it takes to make a solid profit. The Gaim genetically cannot fail their appointed duties, so the seemingly complex methods they take in their trading are truly a matter of instinct. While efficient, this does make trade with them rather taxing for freelancers or more spontaneous-minded traders. However, at least trade is now a possibility.

The Gaim do not keep anyone on retainer, as this sort of arrangement requires the ability to adapt to each given. Due to this practice, Gaim traders are in constant search for business partners. Free traders, cargo runners and even merchants are constantly signing short-term deals with them. If a trader can look past the stalwart views of the Gaim and the sometimes odd numeric values or wages they choose, the Gaim are an excellent employer.

They reward their best employees with additional offers and rare bonuses, but perhaps the best fringe benefit of working on a Gaim trade contract is their willingness, or rather compulsion, to have armed escorts. The Queens believe there is a particular threat to any shipment that leaves Intelligence space, and it requires a definite level of protection. Should a cargo envoy arrive with ample escort protection there is nothing said at all, but if the Gaim trader concludes that the shipment is not adequately protected it will immediately offer gunboats



and assault craft to fill the void. This makes Gaim-sponsored shipments notoriously hard to steal and most raiders have heard tales of what a single warrior Gaim can do to hijacking raiders.

The Gaim are an excellent source of income but can be problematic if you allow them to be. Free traders have a great deal to gain, and even a single successful contract will put them on the list of traders the Gaim will work with in the future. Mistakes are never forgiven or forgotten and trade thieves or con artists rarely survive long enough to spend the money they steal.

When dealing with the Gaim, traders must always remember the finer points of Interlac. The Gaim language is totally alien to all other races, even other insectoid ones, and translation modules can be expensive. It is a necessity, as a single mistake of communication can not only end the deal but all future deals.

**Common Imports:** Starship hulls, scientific materials, livestock

**Common Exports:** Industrial minerals, metallic ore, Quantum-40

**Trade Attitudes:** Protective, Public, Safe

**Trade Agreements:** League of Non-Aligned Worlds Collective Trade Agreement\* (post 2231), Earth Alliance, Narn Regime, Centauri Republic (pre 2262), ISA (post 2261)

**Restricted Sources:** Centauri Republic (post 2262)

\*In 2231, when the Abbai and the Markab issued the idea of the 'League of Non-Aligned Worlds Collective Trade Agreement', the Gaim were added as a point of order. They did not actually begin trading fully until several years later.

## Interstellar Alliance (ISA)

Founded in 2261 from its core leaders on Babylon 5, the Interstellar Alliance is actually a collection of several various governments, systems and peoples. It has a share of all of them in its makeup, but still has a distinctive feel of difference from the sum of its many parts. Each individual member is allowed to police their own trade and governmental decisions in their own territories, but an overlying code of conduct exists within the ISA in order to ensure the most benefit from their joining.



A group of ex-traders and businessmen appointed by the various member races called the 'Interstellar Trade and Economy Board' dictates what is a fair practice between the member races. Formed in 2264, it allows each territory to tax their own borders, within reason, and keeps track of munitions and weaponry sales. In exchange for their cooperation in these matters, the ISA will protect their shipments with their own resources, most notably the White Star Fleet.

The ISA really only monitors trade between its members and outside cultures, rather than directly participating. They do have licensed market traders that work directly for the many races, but do not themselves trade on behalf of the ISA. Instead, they have the rights to involve themselves with the lesser trade matters of ISA members.

What the Trade and Economy Board is always on the lookout for is a stockpiling of arms, or unexpected leaps in technology that might come from outside sources - like the relics of the First Ones or the Drakh. Designed to observe and possibly assist, the Board informs the ISA President if anything out of the ordinary occurs, if only to keep a record of which member race might be planning a 'sovereign action' that is contrary to the ISA's goals.

There have been unfounded rumours that there are several Rangers who masquerade as traders and merchants throughout space, reporting in routinely to their superiors when certain items are acquired or services employed. While it is true that the Rangers are invariably dispersed throughout the walks of life, the idea that President Sheridan would specifically



appoint 'economic spies' seems like the ramblings of paranoid traders.

Most ISA friendly jump routes are routinely protected by the White Star Fleet in addition to whatever escorts the traders themselves may have arranged. The White Stars cannot be everywhere, and many emergency probes float near transit points and some outposts to inform the nearest flight group if trouble should occur. Raiders are rarely foolish enough to go up against even a single White Star, so their presence is enough to chase any would-be attackers away. Some raiders have begun to figure out what sort of timing it takes to attack and disappear before the White Stars can arrive but most never want to risk an early arrival and subsequent encounter.

**Common Imports:** Varies

**Common Exports:** Varies

**Trade Attitudes:** Informed, Secure, Widespread, Protective

**Trade Agreements:** League of Non-Aligned Worlds Collective Trade Agreement (post 2231), Centauri Republic (pre 2262), Earth Alliance, Minbari Federation, Narn Regime

**Restricted Sources:** Centauri Republic (post 2262)

## League of Non-Aligned Worlds Minor Members



The League of Non-Aligned Worlds is a massive collection of smaller races that combined under the ideologies set forward by the Abbai and their Hyach allies generations ago. The Antares Sector, Cascor Commonwealth and several others make up a swarm of minorities in the eclipse of major races like the Gaim or the Vree. This does not make them any less important to the galactic market.

In 2231, when many of the minor members became aware of the treaties and trade agreements they were being left out of, they clamoured to the peacemaking Markab explaining their feelings of inferiority and the anger it brought with it. With murmurs of yet another civil war within the League, the Markab went to the Abbai for help in resolving the issue. Three months of heated debate and legal management later, they had created the League of Non-Aligned Worlds Collective Trade Agreement.

The League as a whole would recognise the trade and resource controls of any member race, no matter how small or resource poor, and allow them to police their own trade. So many of the major races were appalled at being at the mercy of 'lessers' that the Trade Marshal amendment had to be put into place and immediately into effect. It allows any trader, merchant or related officer of the market to purchase the ability to trade within a member race's territories. The licensing fees would automatically be forwarded to the member race in question, guarantying that any race involved in the Agreement would at least make a small sum, even when dealing with far poorer beings that might be peddling common materials within their large and powerful territories.

With the Brakiri and the Vree both major members, the League is a powerful force in the market regardless of the smaller territories making any deals to effect them. In the wake of their financial movements, the lesser League governments get overlooked as potential trade partners in favour of larger deals elsewhere. This is often a mistake, as the minor races have the most to gain and are willing to pay extra for it. Where the Brakiri or the Vree can pass on small contracts or commonplace agreements, those like the Grome Autocracy cannot. A good and open-minded trader can make a good living meeting the needs of the smaller territories alone and have far more confidence they are not trying to rob him blind.

Dealing with small governments has its drawbacks. Most do not have fleets of any real capacity, especially not any extra vessels they can use for anti-raider protection or escort duty. This makes these deals potentially more dangerous, as small raider cells may have similar views as small traders; that the minor member races are a good place to start a career. There are exceptions of course. The Pak'ma'ra have an adequate picket fleet of immense warships packed with deadly plasma technologies. The Hyach use similar



laser weaponry found on Abbai vessels, but have far more practice and precision with them. The Hurr have orbital guns that resemble the matter cannons of the Dilgar protecting the smallest of their investments. It takes some research to decide which systems are worth the trouble and which may be just as deadly as gunning for a major government.

Such a vast assortment of varied thoughts, mentalities, wants and needs makes for a very unpredictable market in their sectors. The League tries to keep its overall trade to a certain pattern to keep market research constant, but with chaotic buyers like the Llort and the Grome putting their bids on anything that strikes their fancy, it is a hard task to say the least. When preparing a trade for the minor League members, it is sometimes best to realise that a dozen small deals will be far easier to sign than one or two large ones.

Those that succeed can be integral to trade with their own people, using their own understanding of their kind to help others make deals with them. Sometimes they come back to their home systems to aid their brethren in following in their footsteps, or to grow into powerful trade companies like Rik'tathu Recycling, the Pak'ma'ra's foremost refuse purchasing and collection company. Becoming semi-famous examples of their kinds, these traders also gain a certain political clout and most gain ambassadorial status with the governments they work with after a few years of success.

It is difficult to narrow down what the many member races might include as their primary exports and imports but any character can attempt a Knowledge (commerce) skill check to research the going rate on any trade he is placing in the following week. The following table shows the racial modifiers used for that deal. Apply such modifiers to the Base Gain table found in the Commerce, Taxes and Profit chapter (page 101).

**Minor League Commerce Adjustments**

Knowledge (Commerce) result	Loss (–) or Gain (+)
1-14	– 25%
15-24	Even
25-29	+10%
30+	+25%

Trading with the minor races of the League is difficult away from their controlled systems, but possible at a number of League-friendly trade outposts and transfer points throughout their half of the galaxy. Places like the Devado Station, Lumat Trade platforms and even Babylon 5 are prime areas to find those looking for a deal.

- Common Imports:** Varies greatly
- Common Exports:** Varies greatly
- Trade Attitudes:** Varies (most are Localised)
- Trade Agreements:** League of Non-Aligned Worlds Collective Trade Agreement (post 2231), ISA (post 2261)
- Restricted Sources:** Centauri Republic (post 2262)

**Minbari Federation**



The enigmatic and powerful Minbari are not terribly interested in true trade like the many other galactic governments. They have all the resources and goods they need created, shipped and controlled within their territory and their neighbouring Protectorate. Even though they are wholly self-providing and needless of the wares of others, they still maintain a very small group within their Worker Caste to serve as traders and brokers.

Using the ideology that these workers are 'building' metaphysical bridges between the Minbari and the races they deal with, this group deal primarily in items of cultural significance only. Art, literature, music and historic records are the primary targets of their commercial ability. By offering technologies the Minbari perfected generations ago, they rarely get turned down by the younger races. In fact, most of the



traders they deal with leave the negotiations with the feeling of getting far more than they should have for the items they parted with. Both sides win.

These trades are few and far between. Minbari traders are a rare breed and few have ever sat across a table from one, let alone know where to look for them. They are selective and secretive; seeking out those that can provide the type of goods they are interested in without granting too great an advancement to them in exchange. Mysterious invitations to Minbari trade proceedings appear to those they wish to work with, and never again if the deal is lost or appointment missed.

Due to their own security, they never use public transportation for their goods. They carry them with them on Minbari Flyers and other small craft, never trusting business matters to go as planned when relying on civilian craft. This works both for and against them. Raiders and anti-Minbari groups (especially those based from Earth after the war) target shipments of Minbari goods out of greed or spite and knowing that such a prize lies in the hold of an old cargo freighter is a temptation. However, when looking at the fusion cannon-laden ships the Minbari actually use, they can rarely afford to go up against them. Those who do have the firepower to do so could not care less what or whom they might hurt in the process.

There are a very select number of outside traders who commonly associate with the Minbari trade group before the creation of the Interstellar Alliance. After 2261, most, if not all, trading goes through the Board members of the ISA. No matter the era, the Minbari remain aloof of typical monetary wealth trading and should be recognised for what they are really doing. They are not truly participating in the galactic trade market, but rather using it to choose their own individual exercises. Even with it being rare and difficult, the resulting goods or data given by Minbari traders are generally well worth the hassle.

**Common Imports:** Art, historic records, literature, cultural items

**Common Exports:** Scientific technology, processed technical goods

**Trade Attitudes:** Private, Protective, Safe

**Trade Agreements:** Earth Alliance (post 2250), ISA (post 2261)

**Restricted Sources:** None

## Narn Regime



Turned into an aggressive spacefaring race from their origins as agrarian spiritualists by the plundering of the Centauri on their homeworld, the Narn adapted to life in space in record time. They expanded quickly like their former oppressors had shown them. Not as powerful as the Centauri, they were only able to conquer a small number of neighbouring systems before realising their limitations. When confronted with the choice of becoming true shadows of the Centauri, they refused and turned to trade.

Mostly concerned with trading in arms and ship technologies they had scavenged from the leftovers on their worlds, the Narn were seen in the market as gun runners and little more than financial mercenaries. In their search for a leg up on their hated former masters, they passed up many opportunities to become giants of an industry, turning down lucrative deals in favour of a small weapons trade.

It took them several years after their involvement in the Earth/Minbari War, where they sold powerful laser weaponry to the humans, to learn that other avenues of growth may be preferable to their current course of action. They turned to the many factories, mining installations and production plants the Centauri left on their worlds for new resources. They found that kind of work was hard, but far more people throughout the galaxy wanted the types of goods they could produce.

Becoming an industrial hub for many League races, and keeping pseudo-friendly relations with the humans, the Narn Regime created many freelance trade groups loosely based around certain products or services. The



Kha'Ri felt that not creating fully organised 'companies' would keep their commercial enemies and competition from doing any real damage. Like the guerrilla wars they fought against the Centauri, their trade companies would strike hard and fast at the market from out of nowhere.

Outside trading with the Narn is remarkably easy. They can be found in nearly every non-Centauri controlled outpost in publicly travelled space. Hard to miss, easy to understand and generally true to their word, Narn traders are a good resource for the average trader. They do not look down on freelance work, they tend to pay as fairly as they can and are usually up front about arms shipments. They are taxed only slightly by their own government, which passes costs and profits down the chain to the buyers themselves.

The only catch with dealing with a Narn is any connection the trader may have with the Centauri Republic. There are several Narn businessmen who refuse to work with anyone who would aid the Centauri and more than a few raider cells have Narn informants to target such market players.

In the height of their existence the Narn had a sizeable navy, with several small vessels dedicated specifically to keeping their trade routes free of raiders. Frequent Sho'kos police cutters lie in wait for transmissions of attacks, ready with their system-disabling weaponry. One standing law of Regime commerce is that any shipment (raider or other unexpected ships) taken into custody by their police cutters becomes the property of the Regime, to be returned only when proper fines or wages are paid in full. Running routes through the Regime is always a gamble, but one that nearly every trading race takes in order to reap the profits the area offers.

In 2259, during the Narn/Centauri War, Narn trade became a maelstrom of ups and downs. The early stages of the war went very well for the Narn, who gladly purchased raw materials and ship components as fast as they were offered. Later, when mysterious allies of the Centauri tipped the scales in their favour, Narn markets dropped like the very asteroids assaulting their homeworld. Towards the end of the war, the Narn were hard pressed to make any sort of profit whatsoever. When the dust settled, all legal trade was now to go through the Centauri Republic Merchant Fleet.

That is not to say that the Narn did not have trade opportunities after the war, but such things would actually fall under smuggling rather than trade. Extended rules and information on smuggling can be found in The Zocalo sourcebook.

After the Shadow War, and the conspiracy against Centauri Emperor Cartagia freed the Narn, they focused their trade upon the rebuilding of their lives. Seeking medical and ecological implements, they wanted to minimise the damage caused and slowly put their lives back in order, if possible. This meant that dealing with their traders was a delicate dance. Prices could be higher due to the massive needs of the Regime, but an offer too high would be refused by the financially damaged government. Offers that seemed too low would be taken as an affront and considered charity to the proud race.

Much of their fleet was destroyed during the war and few remained to help in the Shadow War. By 2261 the Narn joined wholly into the Interstellar Alliance, and thankfully gained access to the White Star Fleet to escort what trade they could muster. It would take decades to undo the damage dealt to them by the Centauri.

Trading with or selling for the Narn is highly dependant on when in their history the attempt is being made. There is money to be made in any circumstance and where some attempts can have the trader make a killing, some will surely get him killed!

#### **Pre-2259**

**Common Imports:** Raw materials, weapon and starship technology

**Common Exports:** Industrial goods, finished metal, weapon and starship components

**Trade Attitudes:** Public, Risk-Taking, Widespread

**Trade Agreements:** League of Non-Aligned Worlds Collective Trade Agreement (post 2231)

**Restricted Sources:** Centauri Republic, Minbari

#### **Post-2260**

**Common Imports:** Food products, ecological equipment, medical supplies

**Common Exports:** Labour, mined resources

**Trade Attitudes:** Protective, Localised

**Trade Agreements:** League of Non-Aligned Worlds Collective Trade Agreement (post 2231), ISA (post 2261)

**Restricted Sources:** Centauri Republic



## Vree Conglomerate



The Vree have always been interested in dealing with other races as far back as any other 'young' race can remember. They have a powerfully logical opinion of the galaxy, seeing each encounter in a way to further the status and power base of their own race. They took this mentality to war a few times early in their spacefaring days, but soon found that it did far less good in the long term than what a bit of trading would accomplish - and with far less loss to Vree vessels.

Such was the birth of the Spacer's Guild. Taking their entire military fleet and 'converting' them into a merchant force unlike any the galaxy had ever seen, the Vree spread their financial influence to nearly every race's borders and into their markets. Their quiet, unassuming and fair traders can be found wherever profit can be made and seeing their recognisable saucers orbiting outside an outpost can draw in thousands.

Where the Brakiri became brokers of many things, the Vree chose to monopolise the technologies market. Already masters of the rare and powerful sciences controlling antimatter, the Vree have a near limitless array of minor devices, applications and even design equations they can offer in exchange for an assortment of goods they can add to their further trading. They have created market agreements that could boggle the mind and are quite possibly the wealthiest government in the entire galaxy. Their minds run solely on logic, on binary choices of good or bad, and create nigh-magical amounts of profit from otherwise average trade business.

This mathematical prowess of creating profit from nowhere has caused the Vree some trouble with their fellow League members, who felt the Conglomerate was growing too powerful. It was discovered then that the Vree have little need for a power struggle with their fellows, as they do not aspire to political power but rather the furthering of their own people's society.

Trading with the Vree is often very one sided, as they never use outsiders to sell their goods or technologies. Vree are very private with how and where they deal with their own goods and it is suspected they have somewhere in the number of a thousand hidden resource and data stockpiles throughout the League. Whenever making a sale one of their saucers appears at the transfer point to offload the shipment. It is never undertaken by freelancers or anyone other than Vree traders.

Purchasing for the Vree is another matter entirely. They sell licenses to proven profitable traders who are not involved with any sort of retainer agreement to purchase goods on their behalf. Bestowed a certain allowance of fiscal worth per month, these licensed traders can seek out good deals for the Vree and schedule shipments back to Vreetan, or rather one of the public docking stations orbiting above it. The Vree themselves participate in a few minor purchase agreements here and there, particularly those involving scientific or military technology.

Those who do manage to somehow prove themselves worthy of purchasing on the Vree's behalf can expect to earn nearly 10% of any gains their deals garner, but also a signing bonus of 1,000 credits; the exact amount it costs to apply for a purchaser's license for the Spacer's Guild. The Vree understand the need to reward their employees at the beginning, but always reserve the right to revoke such privileges at any time they wish.

The Vree are completely ruled by logic, which makes them far more intelligent than most other races and capable of outsmarting most business partners. Unlike the selfless logic of the Gaim, Vree rationality makes them shrewd and tactical businessmen. They know exactly how much of a loss they should take on one deal to make a massive gain elsewhere, or know the difference in a gain of 0.03% interest over seven years. It is not to say they do not haggle or negotiate, just



that it is extremely difficult to get past their simple yet unyielding arguments. To show this expertise, any member of the Vree Spacer's Guild who engages in a financial or trade-related opposed skill check may choose to use their Intelligence modifier on the related skill instead of the normal attribute modifier.

Interlac translators have become standard issue to any Vree trader, as their language is indecipherable to most races. While many Vree understand several languages other than their own, it gives a common ground on which all transactions can be made and avoids messy emotional statements like threats or begging, which mean little to the Vree.

They are a powerful financial force in the galactic market and no race can rival their ability to micromanage their trade/military fleets. Their outgoing shipments are protected by the very vessels carrying them and their incoming transits rarely stray from an escort saucer or two. It might take years to get their attention as a starting trader but the possibilities for financial security are worth it. Just serving a few months as a Spacer's Guild purchaser can be enough to have corporate retaining offers for years afterwards!

**Common Imports:** Scientific supplies, raw materials, various bulk goods

**Common Exports:** Scientific components and products, imported goods

**Trade Attitudes:** Informed, Protective, Secure, Widespread

**Trade Agreements:** League of Non-Aligned Worlds Collective Trade Agreement (post 2231), Earth Alliance, Centauri Republic (pre 2262), Narn Regime, ISA (post 2261)

**Restricted Sources:** None

## Building a Trade Empire

It is the ultimate goal of most novice traders to eventually live off the hard work of others, letting their subordinates do all the labour while they spend the profits. It takes determination and skill to become one of these powerful few and more than a little luck and ambition.

A successful business requires the trader to keep a high reputation amongst his clientele, at least at first. When starting out it is wise for him to take any employment he can, buying and selling the least of commodities for the tiniest slices of profit whenever possible. Eventually he will begin to become self-supportive. Depending on the amount of capital the trader initially used or

borrowed to start his business, this could take a long time. Starting traders should take on as few employees or partners, as each extra person involved will cut back on the growth of the budding company.

After the long struggle to profitability the trader should have a sizeable client list, or a few major regular clients. He may even have an arrangement with pilots, security or consistent buyers. Ready for the next step, the trader should purposefully take on more work until he believes he can no longer handle the workload. His focus should be on hiring employees, arranging combined routes and weighing contract pricing against one another, to make sure one sale will not harm a buy or sink another sale.

By repeatedly testing the limits of his growing business, a trader can keep up with the level of profit and loss he is comfortable with, eventually settling into a comfortable pattern of growing pains tolerable to the head(s) of the trading company. There are many directions and styles a trader can take his new company, with each having its strengths and weaknesses.

## Company Trade Attitudes

There are some definite patterns that trading companies or associated groups take on in their rise to financial power. Some refuse to deal outside their own systems, others do everything themselves. These 'trade attitudes' are the building blocks of a personalised and unique trading community.

The following is a list of several types of trading company attitudes and ideologies a character could adapt with their own company and what sort of general effect it has on the trade levels of that company.

### Informed

An informed trade company keeps very good details on the market as whole. They probably know what is buying and selling, how much it is going for, and who is mainly involved in it. These companies work longer on preparation between deals, making sure all of the numbers are right for the market at that time. They also tend to do the most background checking on freelancers and rarely use unlicensed employees.

**Benefit:** Informed companies may never take a loss on a trade they had sufficient time to prepare for (see drawback).

**Drawback:** Informed companies must take 1d3 extra days to research any deal before accepting.





### Localised

Companies that have localised themselves, or have been localised through blockades and such, deal only within a single jump, maybe two, of their home system. Something has made them either distrust or fear their neighbours, or they are not expansive enough to take their businesses too far out into the stars. They have the protection of their home territories, but lose any access elsewhere in the galaxy.

**Benefit:** Localised companies are always considered to be Protective in their home systems.

**Drawback:** Localised companies lose half of all profits gained outside their controlled territory.

### Patriotic

Patriotic companies have a special bond with their own people, knowing how to talk with them and help wherever they can, sometimes at the expense of profit. They would rather do their brethren a favour for a slight loss in order to further the strength of their own economies.

**Benefit:** Patriotic company traders and merchants gain a +2 bonus to Bluff, Diplomacy and Sense Motive rolls when dealing with their own people.

**Drawback:** Patriotic companies can never gain more than 10% off any deal or trade with their own people.

### Private

Companies that take on the private approach are in complete control over where their traders are, what they are trading in, and whom they trade with. They do not allow outsiders to know the information, choosing instead to trade on their own terms and in their own ways. This often stems financial flow greatly, but does not allow for misinformation to alter or endanger a deal in any way.

**Benefit:** Private companies can research a trade for as long as they wish to before approaching their target trader, giving them a +2% profit increase per week of preparation if the deal is profitable.

**Drawback:** Private companies may not be contacted for business, they must set all trades.



### Protective

Companies that spend a great deal of time in the space lanes should try and be protective. These companies own or have access to numbers of escort ships and generally patrol their routes often. They are attacked by raiders less, but also spend more of their funds on escort wages or upkeep.

**Benefit:** Protective companies can request up to 1d3\* escort fighters/light combat vessels per shipment.

**Drawback:** Protective companies must always sacrifice 10% of the worth (gain or loss) of any trade per escort vessel they wish to arrange for a shipment.

\*This become 1d6 if company has military backing and can trade 2 fighters/LCVs for a single capitol ship

### Public

Public companies announce their trade intentions long in advance in an effort to drum up as much business as they can in as short a period of time as possible. This attracts freelancers and would-be employees, but can also attract the shadier side of the market. These companies also print negotiation terms and corporate profitability numbers annually to try and gain more financial sponsors or attract other business. It becomes free information, which can possibly be used against them later.

**Benefit:** Public companies can cut 5% from any freelance wages or fees due to the sheer volume of applicants.

**Drawback:** Public companies have a 10% chance of attracting a con artist, fraudulent trader or raider informant each time they trade.

### Quirky

Companies that have become quirky often have problems dealing with new clientele, who can be worried about the antics the company suffers from. From the Llor's inability to trade without 'exchanging' something, to the sexual pacts required by the Lumati, there are countless quirky things companies do to make the lives of their clients interesting. Those who learn to work around their strangeness often find them to be good business partners.

Games Masters should work with their players to come up with their company's quirk.

**Benefit:** Quirky companies can add +5% to any profitable trade.

**Drawback:** Quirky companies lose 15% of the worth of their very first trade with any client, unless they were informed of the quirk ahead of time.

### Racist

Some companies resent the success or even existence of other races in the galactic market. These racist companies find ways to squeeze every single credit out of a trade with an alien race, but cut corners and save money on deals with their own kind.

**Benefit:** Racist companies who trade with an alien race can set their tariff level and try to mislead or bully clients into paying it with a successful Bluff or Intimidate skill check (resisted with Will save). If this occurs successfully or not, the client will never trade willingly with the company again.

**Drawback:** Racist companies give up half their profits made from any trade with their own people.

### Risk-Taking

Companies defined as Risk-Taking look for trades that will break the records and fill the bank accounts. While capable of smaller deals, these companies keep their eyes out for potentially high-yielding offers that might equally cost them dearly. Great risks can offer great rewards or greater losses. It is a gamble these companies are willing to take.

*NOTE:* Risk-Taking companies may never also support the Safe attitude at the same time.

**Benefit:** Risk-Taking companies have no maximum of possible profits gained on any trade or deal.

**Drawback:** Risk-Taking companies have no maximum of possible losses on any trade or deal.

### Safe

Safe companies look for the right deal at the right time, never extending themselves too far financially. They go for the sure things over the big risks and are happy with small trades over huge scores. They will probably never see massive wealth in one lifetime but neither will they know poverty.

*NOTE:* Safe companies may never also support the Risk-Taking attitude at the same time.



**Benefit:** Safe companies can never lose more than 10% on any deal or trade.

**Drawback:** Safe companies can never gain more than 10% on any deal or trade.

### Secure

Either through unbreakable contracts and controlling clauses, or through the inability to haggle over even a single credit, Secure companies know what to expect from nearly every deal and have no intentions of losing money on them. With the proper preparation time, the company can put together a binding deal that protects them from losses. Should they make an error in their legalese or calculations, the loss would be great – which is why they only ever hire the best.

**Benefits:** Secure companies can adjust any loss/gain percentage by 10% in their favour with a successful Knowledge (commerce) check at a DC equal to 10 + the Base Gain + Racial Modifiers percentage (see the Commerce, Taxes and Profit Chapter).

**Drawbacks:** Secure companies that fail their adjustment roll (see benefit) adjust the percentage 20% against the company.

### Underhanded

Some companies rely on Underhanded tactics to ensure a deal goes in their favour. By trafficking with raiders and con artists, these companies either set up the opposition for failure and loss or manipulate their own clientele to make the most on a trade before moving on. They are typically smaller organisations that can skirt the laws of the territories they work within, but are no less responsible for their crimes when caught.

**Benefit:** Underhanded companies can use outside forces (threat of raiders, criminal intentions, and so on) to augment their own trades by  $2d6 \times 5\%$  in their favour on their loss/gain percentage on any trade.

**Drawback:** Underhanded companies have a chance equal to the final gain percentage on any trade in which they influence the outcome (see benefit) to attract the local trade authorities or allies of the client being duped in such a way.

### Widespread

Widespread companies have offices, workers, agents or outposts all across the galaxy, speeding up their ability to make trades and making them omnipresent

in neutral trading areas. This makes them a regular option in most markets and very reliable in the eyes of many clients. It does spread their escort forces very thinly, and some may even have to rely on freelance escorts or cargo runners to make up the difference.

**Benefit:** Widespread companies can cut delivery times by 30% and add +2 to Knowledge (commerce) checks due to their galactic network of traders.

**Drawback:** Widespread companies must pay freelance employees +50% of their normal wages and reduce the number of escorts they receive from the Protective attitude by 1 (minimum of 1).

## Gaining Trade Attitudes

The above attitudes are not automatically gained by a company when it begins its career in the market. They are slowly earned over the growth of the company. They do not just represent the evolution of a company, but rather the moulding of it by the hands of its director(s). The Company Growth table on page 48 shows the progression of trade attitudes for a company, similar to the class level structure for characters. Except instead of character levels, there is a certain number of trades (noted as profitable or not) to achieve the next stage in the company's evolution. While players are hopefully keeping track of their own budding business, the Games Master should also keep a tally.

## Employees and Unions

Any growing company will soon find the assistance of subordinates is infinitely easier to maintain than a dozen deals at once on their own. Hiring just anyone will sometimes complicate matters, as would hiring someone with more experience or ambition than the company director. A competitor could be out to sabotage the company's profits or a raider cell could be trying to plant an informant to feed them expensive shipments. Most of those who would try to gain employment with a trading company should be actually looking for work, but there are always some who have ulterior motives.

Evaluating a would-be employee's background can be as easy as checking his references or making a few commercial calls to former employers. Of course these calls and references can be faked, but only a few miscreants would ever go to those lengths. Unless part of some larger anti-company conspiracy, an hour's work on the communications unit can attest to the veracity of



## Company Growth

Deal Progression of Company	Minimum # of profitable deals	Chance of New <sup>1</sup> Trade Attitude <sup>2</sup>
5 closed deals	1	100%
6-10 closed deals	3	25%
11-20 closed deals	9	10%
21-30 closed deals	12	25%
31-40 closed deals	20	50%
41-75 closed deals	32	25%
76+ closed deals	50	100%

<sup>1</sup> 'New' attitudes can replace old ones if the Games Master feels they should

<sup>2</sup> Rolled and chosen by the Games Master, describing the activities or circumstances of the company's activities

an applicant. It should be noted that all Sense Motive checks over a commlink are at -5, reduced to -2 if the connection also has a video transmission. Crafty companies might simply use their extensive Contact feats to look in on the possible employee but this would take a greater amount of time.

Once satisfied with the employee's background the company must decide on a fair wage to pay him. Sometimes involving a bit of negotiation, most companies set a wage and the employee either accepts or does not accept the position. Knowing the type of work and how cruel the industry can be at times, few new recruits will pass up even a *mediocre* paying position, if only to get work. Arguing over a few credits a week could sour the offer and every trader knows there are a dozen others waiting in the wings for a chance to accept something even lower if need be.

A flat wage is not always preferable to a starting company. If business has been bad, or a massive deal fell through, the company must still pay wages to its employees; even if it might bankrupt them! Cunning trade companies can get around such fiscal death traps two main ways; bonuses and commissions.

Companies that pay bonuses promise extra pay to employees





who perform extraordinary duties or services. A buyer that gets a shipment at half cost or a runner who makes his route in a third as many jumps would receive a set sum of extra credits for their superior work. This might not seem like a way to *save* funds at first, but when looking into the rarity of these bonuses and the generally lower regular wages of the employees it comes out greatly in the company's favour. Also, when these bonuses are paid employee morale always grows greatly, often increasing productivity. The other employees trying to get their own bonuses as their peers did, and the company thrives that much more in the meantime. If these bonuses are based on the topmost performer, the company gains the benefits of an internal productivity race between their employees but only ever have to pay out one bonus at a time.

Commission-based employees are a very safe way to always gain financial ground, but have the most possibility for sale-profits lost. Companies that choose to pay a flat commission rate per trade, run or deal to their employees basically never lose out to their employees if deals go poorly or if business is slow; the employees simply do not get paid. Employees that know they are getting a share of the sale work harder for a larger profit but also must understand that they might go weeks without pay between deals. It is the danger of working for commission and they know it.

Those who are skilled in the industry will often look specifically for commission contracts because they have the most to gain. A flat wage or bonus has a maximum on it and, unless the company says otherwise, commissions do not. If a merchant can manage to yield a massive profit margin on a sale, he can look forward to a larger cut of that profit. The company may not make as much on the sale as they would in a bonus scenario, but they still make more than expected, even if they are forced to give more to the employee as well. Commissions are one of the best ways for a starting company to hire employees without endangering their capital investments, unless the employee is thoroughly inept and loses more than he gains, in which case his employment will need to be terminated.

Terminating employment can be as easy as asking for transmission or license codes, or as difficult as trying to repossess a shipping freighter from a wayward runner on the rim. Careful companies will never terminate employment over a long distance or in a situation where a disgruntled employee could cause harm to the company or its owners. Besides simply explaining the



termination to an employee, which works in a majority of instances, some companies use other methods to end employment.

Merciless companies might simply revoke licensing or access to crew quarters, threatening legal action for trespassing if a now-former employee does not leave peaceably. Others, particularly those with the Underhanded trade attitude, might go as far as 'erasing' the former employee altogether in an effort to keep company secrets safe. There are bad people in all walks of life and some have entire companies in their thrall.

Larger companies, or companies with the resources to do so, may seek a connection with one of the hundreds of employee unions found in the galaxy. Employee unions are like companies in and of themselves, but deal in the hiring and placement of employees in their related fields. A union of cargo freight pilots might have a hundred good cargo runners at their disposal, receiving a small fee from both the company and their own members for arranging employment. Like freelancers, but with a near-corporate backing to assure employers, the unions make employees easy to attain.



Working with unions has its flaws. They tend to be extremely tightly-knit communities that look out for their own and when one member of any given union feels as if he was treated poorly or discharged prematurely, rest assured the remaining members of his union will know about it. Like commercial gangs the unions wage battles over jobs with one another, fighting with bad publicity, open arguments and sometimes even corporate sabotage. Any company that sides with one union over another runs the risk of becoming embroiled in these issues and might suffer the consequences.

Employee unions also cost the company a bit more to utilise. Depending on the union, the type of work and the number of workers they arrange, a union agreement can cost a company anywhere from 5-15% of the employees' wages *in addition* to paying the employee. This money is solely a loss, paying a finder's fee of sorts to the union for arranging the employment and hopefully making sure the employee is trained fully for the company.

The benefit of a union is not simply the ease of finding workers, but also the security it represents. Most unions do not allow poorly trained or unchecked individuals to join and nearly all of them carry a certain insurance against the ineptitude of any union worker. More than one company has become very wealthy from a work-related mishap on account of a union employee's negligent error. A good union will cover somewhere between 100-300% of the cost of the mistake, refunding arrangement fees and employee wages as well. This insurance makes working with unions very attractive, even with the amount of baggage it sometimes carries.

## Sample Employee Unions from the Trade Industry

The following are good examples of trade-related unions that starting companies can contact for employees. Each short description is followed by their annual cost, their wage percentages and their insurance rating.

### Beta Niner Market Specialists

Actually based nowhere near the Beta System at all, but rather from Mars Colony, this union is primarily focused on good negotiators and level-headed market analysts. They are hired by trading companies to oversee large deals or to research market levels before undertaking a deal. They are remarkably well-informed and supposedly have contacts in the Martian Mafia,

which is why they rarely lose out on contracts when bidding with other unions.

**Annual Fee:** 6,000 credits

**Wage Percentage Costs:** 7%

**Insurance Rated up to:** 125%

### Chak'haf'a Worker Union

One of the earliest attempts by the Gaim to insert breeds other than the ambassador breed into the galaxy under other pretences, the Chak'haf'a is the Queens' way of profiting from their industrious workers without risking important diplomatic or trading breeds. Just one worker breed Gaim can do the manual labour of three men, survive on very little sleep and food and simply die at the end of the contract; genetically engineered to do so. These 'disposable' loaders and movers make several of the other more traditional unions very nervous and few would ever agree to work next to one.

**Annual Fee:** 20,000 credits per worker

**Wage Percentage Costs:** N/A

**Insurance Rated up to:** 100%

### Naval Assembly of Hyperspace Pilots (NAHP)

Although its origins hail from the Brakiri Syndicracy, NAHP is now a multi-cultural, multi-species collection of freight pilots well versed in hyperspace navigation. Hired specifically to pilot trade ships whose crews cannot, or will not, traverse certain areas of hyperspace, supposedly there is nowhere they will not attempt to go. Barring blockades or governmentally quarantined jump routes, the NAHP will pilot someone else's vessels wherever is necessary for the right fee.

**Annual Fee:** 2,000 credits

**Wage Percentage Costs:** 12%

**Insurance Rated up to:** 210%

### Vartas Exchange

Solely made up of Llort religious experts who 'understand the power of the Great Exchange' and who carry a surprising amount of Trade Marshal status within the League, the Vartas Exchange are hired to companies as expert negotiators when dealing with the minor races of the League of Non-Aligned Worlds. They sign malleable contracts and request a small commission of every trade, of which they will pay back a slight amount at the end of the employment contract. Many companies only ever work with the Vartas



## Reining in the Unions

Several governments have seen the power and potential of union workforces but they have also felt the sting of their work strikes, corporate strangulation tactics and personal politics. To combat the detrimental effects these unions can have on the greater economy, many governments have placed threatening codes and laws into their legislature, constantly reminding the unions who is in charge. Here are a few examples.

### Covelli Principles (Centauri Republic)

Actually a collection of smaller rules and regulation that form into one union-controlling code, the Covelli Principles are the primary way the Centauri keep a close eye on the labour unions of the Republic. Formed in the height of their rise to power, the principle code is named after Albero Covelli, the head of the transit union of that time. Covelli tried to turn his union into a house through intermarriage and social debts, but was soon crushed under the weight of older and worrisome noble houses. The Covelli Principles allow for any house to accumulate enough wealth to absorb a work union into themselves, granting them as many rights as any other adjunct group, be it as slaves or peers.

### Kimitoki Purchasing Code (Brakiri Syndicracy)

In typical Brakiri fashion, the Kimitoki Purchasing Code gives the power conglomerates of the Syndicracy the ability to quell any work disagreements of unions through the sheer weight of their credits. The Code requires all unions to put a net worth on each of their members, therefore putting a final 'price' on the union as a whole. Publicly displayed in commercial records, Kimitoki gives any Brakiri citizen the ability to *buy* a problem union in one fell swoop; either eliminating the problem or the union at their leisure!

### The Rush Act (Earth Alliance)

Formed and approved by the Senate of EarthGov during the Earth/Minbari War, the Rush Act gives military personnel and government officials incredible powers to end union and corporate strikes when the need arises. This law grants such individuals the authority to resolve any kind of strike or union action which endangers the operation of a military base or operation by any means necessary (as seen in the *Babylon 5 Roleplaying Game and Fact Book*).





Exchange once, even if they know the many smaller League governments better than most do.

**Annual Fee:** 4,000 credits (1d3 x 1,000 credits returned at end of year)

**Wage Percentage Costs:** 2d6% plus 1d3% trade commission

**Insurance Rated up to:** 200%

### Zhabarian Escort Pilots Association (ZEPA)

A collection of ex-military Drazzi fighter pilots, ZEPA is unsurprisingly based on hiring escort pilots to any trading companies using jump routes through Freehold space. They are extremely patriotic, being ex-military, and feel their role is to keep foolish freebooters off their space lanes. They often harass freelance pilots, cargo runners and suspected raiders by sending threatening messages and occasionally even maliciously vandalising their docks or ships. They still consider themselves protectors of the Freehold, but get paid far better for it and do not have to answer to anyone but each other.

**Annual Fee:** 8,000 credits (4,000 for Drazzi employers)

**Wage Percentage Costs:** 10% (5% for Drazzi employers)

**Insurance Rated up to:** 110% (150% for Drazzi employers)

## Choosing a Trade Route

One of the most important choices a growing trading company can make is *where* to take their business. Sometimes a mixture of personal politics or patriotism might steer a trader's views, or see a savage price hike as a chance to excel with just one sale, but successful businessmen stay blind to anything but the effect a trade route would have on their profits. It is, after all, the reason they are using it in the first place.

A company should look at three deciding factors when thinking about setting up a new trade route: how fast, how expensive and how safe. A good trade route should either cover all three adequately or at least two completely. For instance; the militarily controlled route that runs between Sh'lassa and N'chak'fah is devoid of gravity wells and has few hyperspace riptides, making it very quick. It also is regularly patrolled by Gaim warships, which require specific permission to traverse or they will open fire without question, making it very

safe. However, it costs nearly 3,000 credits per trip to travel the route, making it one of the most expensive space lanes in the galaxy. Fast, safe, but certainly not inexpensive.

As far as a trading company is concerned, there are only six types of trade routes they can choose to utilise: short, long, segmented, restricted, neutral and threatening. These very general terms to describe intricate and complex hyperspace routes, but traders and trade companies do not need to concern themselves with much else.

**Short** routes are generally set on a hyperspace lane between two points without any stopping points between. They are the simplest and least time consuming routes, but tend not to yield a great deal of profit per trip. Taking docking and refuelling fees in consideration, short routes require the trader to make multiple trips to make the same kind of profit that a single longer shipment might yield. These routes are rarely very dangerous, as they are almost always too close to patrolled areas to attract raiders in any quantity. Short routes are a great starting place for beginning traders, but experienced companies know that they are sometimes not worth the amount of paperwork and upkeep it takes to profit from them. The route between the Orion and Proxima systems is a good example of a short trade route.

**Long** routes span much greater distances with two or three transfer points between them. Days can be spent in hyperspace on these routes and inexperienced pilots might go a little stir crazy in the meantime. Traders who employ long trade routes can expect better rates for their goods, as they can take them much farther from where they are created in order to sell to those without access to them. They can be taxing on crews, so traders are recommended to have a separate deal negotiator handle the sale/purchase at either end of the route as hyperspace fatigued crew rarely haggle at peak efficiency. Long routes may promise higher profit margins, but they also carry with them a very real threat of raider attack. With so much empty space between jump points there are many places to hide in realspace in waiting for lone ships and unescorted convoys. Long trade routes are a good place for traders with good escort support or very fast vessels to profit highly on the faraway places that cannot normally get their wares. An example of a good long trade route is the lane between Shambah and Centauri Prime.



**Segmented** trade routes are complex pathways that specifically stop at multiple points to refuel, offload or pick up a deal or two at each point and circle eventually back to their origin without retracing any leg of the route. Also called 'trade orbits', these routes are sometimes difficult to plan or arrange for. Segmented routes rely heavily on each stop to prepare for the next and one bad trade or deal gone sour early on can cause the rest to do the same. Only traders with a great deal of trust or control over their clientele can participate regularly on segmented trade routes. Those that can see massive profits with each ship returning from its 'orbit.' Companies that keep the same route over a long period of time might eventually feel the sting of raider attacks, as any easily attainable pattern such as these routes create are easy to intercept. Few companies use more than a handful of these routes in tandem with common routes, if only to hedge their bets against the high-risk of a segmented route occasionally coming up empty. The path that runs from Melat to Narn Homeworld, to Brakos and back is a commonly used segmented trade route.

**Restricted** trade routes are unsurprisingly *restricted* from common use by either governmental or environmental blockades. Normally due to the existence of a military fleet route or 'hidden' outpost that a government does not wish to see civilian traffic, or from the threat of a collapsing star or unstable hyperspace tide, these routes are not used heavily by trade shipments. Sometimes restrictions are placed on particular routes for commercial reasons, boycotting travel to and from a neighbouring system on account of war or other politics. Frustrating as it may be to traders, some routes are just not available to them no matter how fast or safe they might actually be for commerce. Some governments do allow special licenses or travel arrangements to be made on these routes as a way to make extra income off the rare traveller and to monitor their activities. Raiders are never a problem on these routes unless they too make some sort of deal with the route's 'owner', which sometimes is the very reason the route is restricted. Environmental hazards are sometimes an issue, especially if the restriction is due to their effects on hyperspace in the first place, but most governments would inform anyone they allow to use them of these hazards. Restricted routes are rarely worth the risk of sneaking onto or the credits it costs to do so legally for common trade. They should only ever be used for special deals and extremely high-yield runs and even then only rarely.

**Neutral** routes are those found between the galactic territories, without governmental patrol or policing to tax the traders or to dissuade raider cells from blooming like weeds. They are often short, concise and used heavily by smaller companies and freelancers looking to skirt around legal issues like licensing or tariffs. Trade companies with governmental backing sometimes use neutral lanes to avoid opposing governments to their own, or in order to not show any favouritism to one neighbour or another. Traversing neutral trade routes requires good escorts and shared communications frequencies with others using the same route, if only to warn one another when the frequent raider attacks take place. Many less-than-noble freelancers keep communications scanners active at all times to listen for these cries for help, inspiring the old cargo pilot adage, 'My ship does not need to be faster than the raider's, just my competition'. Companies can save quite a bit on governmental taxes and transfer fees by using neutral routes but the risk of shipments being delayed or attacked may or may not be worth it. Highly used for commerce, the route between Janos system and Devado Station is a neutral trade route.

**Threatening** jump routes are far too common in the galactic trade market of the 23<sup>rd</sup> Century, with more being labelled as such each year. To be classified as 'threatening' to a trader, a jump route must have a high probability of harm that could come to any shipment moving along it. Whether from a well-known raider base or from alien races protecting ancient holy sites, the route is a hazard for civilian or lightly armed escort vessels. Only those looking to profit from the sheer rarity of trades undertaken along these routes attempt to use them, or those that have special ways of circumventing the hazards found there. Anyone with the bad luck to live or work along these routes are sometimes willing to pay much higher prices for goods that reach them, making for a very tempting possibility for a trader looking to make a fast score. With the serious danger to cargo, vessel and life or limb this is rarely worth the risks, but some choose to do so regardless of warnings. The jump route passing through the Omelos system is rife with space debris and ultra-high radiation from when their primary star went supernova, making it understandably a threatening trade route.

Setting up any trade route is not as simple as purely choosing to run your ships along it. In most cases, that might be considered smuggling. With the exception of neutral space, which in itself may cause problems for



some, the mapped jump routes fall into one or multiple of the many galactic territories. If an amateur trader or beginning trade company would simply begin to ship cargo along their routes without at least checking to see if they can, the government could get offended and possibly levy high taxes or even impound the ship and cargo until further notice. Most governments invite traders to their territories, posting simple taxes and limitations openly on the communications boards at their trade outposts and transfer points. There are some that are not so welcoming to trade, requiring special communiqués in advance and individual licensing to simply bring any cargo through their space lanes at all. Traders will need to feel out and learn where they can start their own routes and where they should wait until they are large enough to afford it.

Once a trader has their preferred – or only – trade route(s) established, they can begin to set up meeting and deals to buy, sell or exchange goods and services along them. Successful traders start small with just a few routes and work their way into huge networks of jump-capable ships travelling the galaxy filled with their wealth.

## Acquiring Trade Licenses

Even the largest trade companies in the market are required to purchase their various trade licenses to legally work routes in a particular territory. Beginning traders and growing companies do too. Each license will vary as to what manner of powers it grants to the trader or the limitations they must abide to in order to run their businesses without hassle or complications from the governing power. It is a necessary cost for traders looking to do legitimate business, and any operating without the relevant licences will soon find itself labelled as a ‘smuggler’.

Applying for a license can be as easy as paying a small fee to a commercial agent at any given trade outpost, wiring a certain amount of credits to a government or even filling out a common form at any of a thousand offices throughout the territory. There are some agencies and governments who make it a bit harder with qualifying examinations, background referencing and extensive waiting periods but most are quickly undertaken, so the traders may begin to boost their territories’ economy immediately.

Here are the major licenses that a Character could apply for as a trader. Merchants also generally pick up these licenses to alleviate any difficulties buying or selling larger quantities of stock. For a quick reference chart on the licenses and their costs, see the table on page 13 earlier in this book.

## The Brakiri Commerce Agency License (B-CAL)

Each individual power conglomerate within the Brakiri Syndicracy carries its own version of this trade license, and may be applied for from any of them depending on the type of goods the trader is involved in. Even though the different companies carry individual licenses, they are not supposed to hold any ill intentions upon traders carrying those of their competitors - all are to be recognised by the Syndicracy and its agents.

Easily attained, the Brakiri sell their licenses quickly, with applications containing simple yes and no questions. Filled out either over a series of short communications or in person with a corporate legal official, the application runs a mere 750 credits and takes less than a day to produce a viable license. These tests and fees repeat every two months in an effort to weed out the amateurs and only keep the ‘serious tradesmen’ in the market.

Losing a Commerce Agency License is deceptively simple and hard to avoid on the behalf of the trader when the major conglomerates begin their commonplace power struggles. Any company that chooses to license an individual may disconnect all ties to a license whenever they please, revoking it instantly. This can be due to a trader being rumoured to work with a competing conglomerate, a single deal gone wrong at the last minute or even taxation downsizing by the company. It takes only two corporate signatures to cancel a license and it happens frequently. Luckily, a trader could go to any of the other conglomerates or Syndicracy companies to receive a new one.

Traders with their ‘B-CAL’ can freely set up and execute trade deals and mercantile stands anywhere within Syndicracy space and are only subject to a 2% taxation on any sales over 10,000 credits payable to the licensing company.



## Centauri Mercantile License

Handed out primarily through the agents of House Callo, a Centauri Mercantile License is more than just an invitation to free trade in the Republic. It also grants the holder access to the frequent Merchant Fleet festivals and celebrations on Centauri Prime. These gala events are sometimes second only to Ascension Day festivities, and are fantastic places to meet and persuade others in the industry.

Garnering a Mercantile License in the Republic was once by invitation only, in the heyday of the Centauri. Now House Callo understands the need for free and outside trade, not to mention less Centaurum politicking, and offers these licenses to outsiders. Applying for the license requires the applicant to 'sit in' on three Merchant Fleet transfer point meetings and one actual trade before starting to pay the 500 credit monthly dues. Once this has been accomplished, the license is normally signed over. There have been rare instances where either applicant behaviour or untimely disasters have not allowed for completion.

Once granted, these licenses remain empowered until one of two things happen. First, the trader could stop paying the monthly dues for longer than two months consecutively, at which time the license is automatically revoked. Second and more rarely, any ranking member of House Callo can request the license be investigated and removed. If the 'Game of Houses' status system presented in *The Centauri Republic Fact Book* is being used, this manoeuvre should cost the Callo 20 Status.

Anyone holding an empowered Mercantile License can freely travel and trade in any non-restricted Centauri Republic space or system. This also includes any occupied territories the Republic might currently have, or will conquer, during the license's life. It was through several licensed outsiders that Vir Cotto was able to smuggler so many refugee Narn out of dangerous areas in 2260, during the aftermath of the Narn/Centauri War.

## Earth Alliance Commercial Agreement

Until the rise of President Clark's 'Earth first' mentality, and once it had passed, these licenses were easy to attain and keep active. The Commercial Agreement gives the owner access to any number of trade-related periodicals put out by the Earth Alliance's many free presses, invitations to dozens of large corporate

meetings every month and the ability to contract space at any trade outpost or neutral transfer point that the EA has territory on. In essence, it is a contract with the Earth Alliance to be able to add to their economy through the owner's business.

In addition to being able to legally trade wherever the EA owns or rents space, the Agreement is a binding writ that disallows any EarthGov taxation to rise higher than the percentage listed on each license; normally 6%. While it cannot stop additional station fees, jump gate costs and escort wages from soaring to exorbitant levels, it does keep the government out of the matter on a grand scale.

Applying for this license requires a long form to be filled out and sent to Earth, where the proper agencies will perform an extensive background and history check. This takes anywhere from 48 hours to two weeks, but is only ever rejected upon discovering unanswered criminal history or prior records with fraud or smuggling. Part of the form requires an Earth Alliance credit transfer number, from which the license fees are deducted every six months.

It is very difficult to lose the ability to carry an Earth Alliance Commercial Agreement. Only through proof of criminal activity, particularly smuggling or terrorism, will the license be immediately cancelled for 90 days, or until the criminal sentence has been served, if any. Any trader's crew who has their leader taken from them has 72 hours to purchase licenses of their own to replace the one they were working under before.

The Commercial Agreement is physically built into any Earth Alliance identicard and any EA scan of the card will automatically forward current trader locations to a list of accepting companies, merchants and other traders who subscribe to an electronic bulletin board for members of the galactic market.

## Interplanetary Expeditions (IPX) Antiquities Brokerage License

Granted only through employment with IPX itself, a Brokerage License is an empowerment on behalf of the mega-corporation to buy, sell or trade any item uncovered through their research. Once their items pass through customs scans and quarantines, they are free to try and fetch any price – these licenses do not have maximum trade caps. Interplanetary Expeditions has



offices and specialised storefronts all across the galaxy, each one ready to accept licensed IPX operatives' finds. Monetary gains are passed on to the company, but license holders can expect bigger seasonal bonuses in their wages (sometimes tens of thousands of credits) for exceptional deals on their behalf.

IPX does not charge its own employees to attain these licenses, actually quite the opposite. The company pays to several colleges and training facilities to school the employee on market research, storefront haggling and even alien-species negotiation tactics. Once graduated, the employee achieves a 'junior broker' license and is attached to a senior broker. When the senior is satisfied, the junior broker is promoted and soon given assignments.

Anyone losing their job at IPX would summarily lose their brokerage license of course, but not everyone who loses their license will immediately be terminated. A string of bad decisions or unlucky losses might give IPX cause to revoke or suspend a brokerage while the employee either goes back to schooling or heads into a different field within the company. Many are still terminated without severance, but most retain *some* form of employment with IPX.

## League of Non-Aligned Worlds Trade Marshal Contract

Possibly the most complex license with the simplest execution, becoming a League Trade Marshal is sometimes a daunting process. Trade Marshals can detain, search, scan or otherwise interact with any trade-related person, place or thing within the territories their individual contract covers. There are anti-terrorist Abbai specialists, Drazi bounty hunters constantly after debtors, Vree collection agents and more.

Becoming a Trade Marshal, with so much individual power, is never an easy task. The first and most Herculean task is to get at least three League race representatives to have a meeting on behalf of the would-be Marshal. These three races must have conjoining borders in space – defined as having only one or less neutral jump gate hubs between them – and must *unanimously* grant the new Marshal the legal rights in their territories. There is no question why bribery and blackmailing has become such common practice in the process and many Marshals began their roots in such dirty business.

Once the meeting has taken place and the initial Marshalling contract was been written, the new Trade Marshal can bring his contract to any other League territory to add them to his 'jurisdiction'. Considering these licenses are paid for monthly per territory covered, 100 credits every month to the governments that licensed the Marshal (calculated differently based off the chronology of when each League member signed the contract) most Marshals set up drainage accounts to handle the withdrawals automatically. It is far easier than trying to get to each race's homeworld monthly to drop off a measly 100 credits.

For Marshals that cover huge territories and several dozen member races, this can become extremely expensive. There are a high number of 'dirty' Marshals who give aid to raiders, extort from shipments and confiscate legal cargo to sell themselves, in an effort to make a wealthy living while still retaining the powers granted to them by their contract.





Once established, due to the initial wording of the amending act that created them, Trade Marshal contracts are notoriously difficult to revoke so long as fees are paid. Only in a fully provable criminal act that affects *all three* of the initial contracting governments, can the license be summarily revoked for 'illicit behaviour'. Otherwise, all a League race can do is withdraw their support for that Marshal. Some more militant member races like the Drazi or Hurr have no qualms about hiring outside influences to deal with problem Marshals off the record, reinforcing their displeasure with physical threats or bloody reminders.

While it is not necessary to be a Trade Marshal in order to trade properly in the League, it offers a great amount of freedom to a company to have one or two on their payroll... officially or not. Their very presence can influence deals one way or another and some of their kind carry a certain prestige with them, or a particular infamy.

### Minbari Border Allowance Pact

Not so much a license as an excusing from regular Worker Caste duties, the Border Allowance is the Minbari Federation's way of keeping track of who is *allowed* to give away their technologies and goods outside of Minbari protected space.

Only Minbari of the Worker Caste can request a Border Allowance and even then only one from a fane dedicated to commerce and galactic relations. It is represented by a solemn-looking black chit that is pinned to the collar of the Worker's robes or clothing, and *should* keep other Minbari from interacting harshly with the Minbari trader. Some will still look unfavourably upon dealing with the younger races as they do but most understand the importance of galactic interaction.

Minbari only have to explain their heart's calling to become a Border Allowance trader but losing the status is also deceptively simple. Should any superior in the Worker Caste or a servant of the Grey Council insist that the trader cease his actions, for any number of reasons, benign and malicious, the trader will be recalled to so do. It is not necessarily considered a dishonourable request, but it can be depending on the circumstances of the recall from duty.

Without such a 'license' any Minbari freely handling Federation items and technologies (even outdated

ones over a hundred years unused by Minbari) will be considered a smuggler and can be punished through a series of defaming public debates and the eventual exile from the offender's fane, or even Caste, in extreme situations.

### Narn Free Marketer License

Working for the Narn is an exciting dance between mercenary arms running and altruistic supply drop offs. Anyone from any race – except Centauri – can become a Free Marketer of the Narn Regime. Depending on the personal politics, capabilities and scruples of the Marketer, there can be a massive amount of wealth to be made in the Regime. Even with the few 'speed bumps' of financial progress that the Narn suffered through the years after their rise to galactic government status.

Acquiring a Marketer license requires the Narn to perform a very dedicated background search looking for any dealings with the Centauri, Dilgar or any other race that might have stood against the Narn in the past. Considering the circumstances of some past employment, the Narn will inform the applicant within 60 days as to whether or not their background was acceptable. The first monthly 250 credit payment would be due immediately after acceptance and business can begin thereafter.

Free Marketers have the ability to traverse and deal within anywhere 'the light of Homeworld's star shines on Narn faces'. This rather fluid and utterly malleable terminology is normally viewed as covering Narn territory only - even though the light of that particular star now shines on millions of Narns all over the galaxy. All transactions will carry a certain percentage fee to the local Narn ambassador or governmental offices. This fee is rarely higher than 7% or 8%, but rose almost to 15% when the Narn/Centauri War began to go poorly for them.

The Kha'Ri only governs the Free Marketers as much as saying 'do not harm our people and we will be fine with your business'. This means that most Marketers have kept their licenses a very long time no matter what they might sell or buy in the Regime. The Narn have no problems with companies making their trade in arms or so-called protected items elsewhere, they understand the struggle to survive. They may openly scold or fine a Marketer trying to bring such items through disallowed territories, but few licenses have ever been revoked.



### Free Marketers after 2258

At the beginning of the Narn/Centauri War, Free Marketers were very busy, easily charging half again what they normally would to move supplies from one 'civilian' outpost to another. By the time the war had turned in the favour of the Centauri, most non-Narn Marketers had given up the business in favour of staying out of the Republic's way, especially when rumours spread about civilian ships being targeted.

After the Centauri bombed Nar'Shal with mass drivers, the Narn Free Marketer program was dissolved and swallowed by House Callo and the Merchant Fleet. Some fled and created businesses of their own, some joined the Centauri and still others refused to move or participate and were soon casualties of a shooting war.

After the conflicts, when the Centauri eventually left the Narn to themselves again, the Free Marketers were the first aid for refugee transit and re-supply lanes but only to those willing to work for next to nothing. The Narn were all but crushed until joining the Interstellar Alliance and their economy showed it.

Eventually, with the help of the ISA, the Narn Regime got back on its feet and things returned to a semblance of normal. Even so, it took decades to fully restore the Regime to its former wealth and glory, and many Marketers found it a hard place to exist within.

The only way to get the Narn to revoke their trade license is to be discovered as working with or for the Centauri, or against the interests of the Regime as a whole. License revocation is always taken care of in person and in public, where no one could contest the displeasure of the Narn government over the matter. Truly despicable acts might incur further 'unofficial' punishments, especially for any Narn who is found to be trading against the wishes of the Kha'Ri. These traders are seldom found.

There can be great opportunities in the Regime for sale and purchase of an assortment of goods, especially for traders or companies that can quickly move items of questionable intent to the many fronts the Narn expect to be battling on. The credits are nice, but even carrying the license could get someone labelled as an arms dealer or smuggler, which could be problematic for those that actually are!

### Vree Spacer's Guild Purchaser License

Extremely particular in the way they do business, the Vree Spacer's Guild only carries a license that allows outsiders to *purchase* for their import reclamation programs. Never trusting non-Vree personnel to sell or barter officially with Spacer's Guild assets, they grant growing allowances to their licensed purchasers. This keeps a very strict control on all funds being spent, but does not make the Vree seem quite as insular as say, the Minbari.

The Purchaser License can be applied for at any Spacer's Guild outpost office in League of Non-Aligned World's space. Their external stores and offices in other governments are not 'rated high enough', nor are the captains of their many mercantile fleets. The application is very short, with only a few questions. There are four questions about personal judgments and morality (which the Vree simply wish to research, caring little what the answers are) and a fifth that is a complex mathematical equation concerning the profit



margin of a single grain of Vreetan natural soil. An accurate answer to this is not needed, merely to show the would-be trader's appraisal abilities. Solving the equation requires a Knowledge (commerce) check (DC 35 but any result above DC 20 is normally acceptable for a purchaser). Vree sellers (who do not require anything but Spacer's Guild membership) must solve the equation completely.

The qualifying purchaser test will also dictate the amount an initial licensee will be allowed to work with on behalf of the Spacer's Guild. Most receive an initial monthly allowance of up to 5,000 credits of purchasing power, doubling with each trade or deal that results in a profit margin higher than 6.32%. This allowance is never handled in cash or credit chips but always remains in a secure account in Vree Conglomerate space. At the end of the month, 15% of anything unspent is transferred to a personal account as a wage.

Purchasing licenses exist for exactly 218 revolutions of Vreetan (which is actually only 198 Earth Standard Days) for a single bonding payment of 1,000 galactic credits. These 1,000 credits are basically a security deposit on any mistake made during the trader's employment with the Spacer's Guild. The bonding payment is immediately invested and grows as the Purchaser works and a general tally of 'loss insurance' is held for him by Vree accountants. The license is automatically renewed for any Purchaser who has not had a loss in 90 days and is immediately revoked for those who have.

Working for the Vree is not necessarily a very profitable approach to trade, but with whom prolonged work can be very rewarding. After a few years worth of purchasing power doubling and unused wage commissions, a Spacer's Guild Purchaser can be a very powerful financial force. If it were not for the extremely binding clause in a Purchaser's contract to never use Vree-paid funds for non-Vree commercial trading, it would be a fantastic place to start a personal business.

## Interstellar Alliance (ISA) Trade and Economy Boardment (TEB)

Gaining a Boardment license with the Interstellar Alliance is a task only undertaken by those who truly love the field, and who live and breathe the credits of the galactic market. It is a full time job wrapped in a life's calling with a hint of obsession thrown in for good measure. The Trade and Economy Board only accepts 100 applicants each year to be licensed and with the type of competition that stacks up before each fiscal quarter and only the best financial minds of the galaxy are ever chosen.

Applying for the license consists of getting at least ISA-recognised referees to vouch for the would-be trader's skill and market knowledge, then paying the first three months of license fees up front; 600 credits for the quarter. If all the references check out, and the fees are fully paid, the applicant has about a 30% chance of getting a commercial TEB over the hundreds of other applicants. Once licensed, the paths will unroll in front of him and time will be the only constraint from immediate profits. The ISA sends daily communications to licensed traders to steer them towards deals and trades that the ISA's many member governments require assistance with, willingly or not.

Losing the TEB is simple; get caught smuggling or performing any illegal action while acting as a commercial agent of the ISA. All powers will be revoked, assets seized, deals cut and contacts informed. It is the end of any trader's career and should always be on the forefront of their mind when endangering it.

It grants full financial access to companies rooted to the ISA's member systems and the rights to set up deals and trades in all of them without having to worry about external governmental taxation. The ISA trades their licensed traders a flat 8%, and disallows adding extra fees to a transaction for space rental or time consumption on behalf of the owning system. ISA traders are not always well-liked by their peers and are sometimes seen as governmental spies, something that is never well accepted by 'free' traders.

With access to such great information and such a diverse market group for trading, the ISA licensed trader has a veritable buffet of choices to profit from. In exchange they have to keep an eye out for bad practices and dirty dealing, then hopefully do their duty and turn the situation over to the Board.



## Successes of the Galactic Market

Every trader knows they have to share the market with hundreds or even thousands of others just like them. It is a tough career that can be just as competitive and bloodthirsty as a Mutai fighting ring and in a similar aspect there are casualties and champions. The casualties fade away into the likes of bankruptcy and smuggling crews, while the champions rise to become the household names and power brokering trade moguls that the next generation of traders long to be.

The following text describes several of the largest champions of trade that dominate the market and will be the largest competition, if not the most direct, to any young trade companies. After each description there will be a handful of the trade attitudes listed above that each individual company possesses, what their primary trade goods are (if any) and the average amount of their trades. These should give both the Games Masters and the players a good translation of what true market success can mean and what their characters could strive for.

### Ak-Lanyr Cooperative

A longstanding offshoot from the Ak-Habil Conglomerate, the Ak-Lanyr Cooperative is one of the Brakiri's most successful 'private' companies that did not directly rise up from the water clans. Formed from a trio of like-minded entrepreneurs in the lower echelons of the Ak-Habil, the Cooperative was one of the first private companies to break away from the power families and survive.

Rumoured to have thrived for the first few years on blackmail and corporate sabotage alone, the Ak-Lanyr specialises in the collection and redistribution of civilian starships in six Brakiri systems. Employing a massive fleet of specially-equipped Falkosi fighters built for disabling vessels, the Ak-Lanyr have well over a hundred ex-military Trade Marshals scouring the Syndicracy, Freehold and Intelligence space territories for unlicensed traders, raiders or derelict craft. This fleet of Marshals is responsible for bringing in millions of credits worth of salvage and confiscated vessels, funding the vast majority of the Cooperative's endeavours.

The primary export capabilities of the Ak-Lanyr are civilian starships, either in parts or whole packages. With over ten thousand ship mechanics and dock workers employed at all times, they can turn a battle-scarred bulk freighter into two complete trade cruisers in under two weeks. Many of the ships they salvage or repossess are cannibalised to fix or complete other vessels to be sold. They are expert scrappers and unless a disenfranchised former owner can come up with payment very quickly, their ships will no doubt be 'unavailable for purchase' by the time they do. Once claimed by the Marshals, there is little that can be done in the short time allowed by Ak-Lanyr directives. The Brakiri are shrewd in their contracting, and repossession is nine-tenths of the law in Syndicracy space after all.

Besides the 'acquisitions and alterations' staff listed above, there is a large number (around six thousand) of sales negotiators travelling the galaxy trying to sell their ships. They are often found going from trade outpost to outpost in one of their fastest and most attractive vessels, eager to sell it to the first buyer who can afford the sizeable price. Once sold, a share of the funds is used to get back to one of the Ak-Lanyr shipyards to pick up another.

These traders are strictly commission based and can sometimes seem very pushy towards hesitant buyers. They do offer excellent rates for excellent products, so their behaviour is often overlooked. The Ak-Lanyr Cooperative is a good source for transport and utility vessels, but buyers beware; a ship that was shot down once is said to be prone to problems forever, even if scrapped and rebuilt.

**Trade Attitudes:** Informed, Protective, Risk-Taking, Widespread

**Primary Product Focus:** Commercial and utility starships

**Average Trade:** 30,000,000 cr.

### Eclipse Incorporated

There are some items that are overlooked and taken for granted in the daily lives of galactic citizens. The ink burners in the *Universe Today* dispensers. Water purification filters on passenger transport toilets. Even the lubricant used on tube hatch doors. Tiny things that no one even sees, but are nonetheless important. These are the bread and butter of the Eclipse Incorporated board of directors. Working like a wraith behind the



view of the public, 'eclipsed' by the companies they work for.

Beginning as a transit company for Earth Alliance free traders, Eclipse Inc. is now a leading supplier of commercial components to other corporations. Resource managers and shipping experts, they have dozens of contracts with a hundred different industries to serve as their sole supplier of one component or another. Their prices are rarely higher than expected, and they surplus a vast amount of their saleable goods in a warehouse/station near the Proxima system. It is the galactic shipping hub for the Eclipse, and a dozen or more freight vessels come and go every day, making it a well-patrolled and manned station of nearly eight thousand employees, including three fully operational Hermes-class starships; the EAS *Attrition*, EAS *Voice* and EAS *Wiltmoore*.

With much of their business devoted to bulk sales to other companies, they have little need for personal traders or merchants. Instead they rely on the negotiation skills of small teams of traders that go out to companies yet to be contracted and set up arrangements for subsequent deliveries. Unlike most traders, who go to points of general commerce to negotiate, Eclipse dealing teams try to set up appointments with corporate representatives at their headquarters, offices or otherwise *their turf*. The belief is that a buyer will feel far more at home talking about large contracted purchases in a friendly environment rather than the sometimes hectic and foreign commons of a trade outpost or transfer point.

Licensed to work primarily for the Earth Alliance, Eclipse Inc. also deals on the outskirts of Centauri and Narn territories. While many companies might be fearful to work with both sides as they do, their goods are minor when compared to the arms dealers and scientific information brokers that share these trade routes.

Other than labour employees and freight pilots, Eclipse has very few common employees. Just a few dozen trade teams of five or six negotiators, the board of directors and a teeming mass of cargo haulers and loaders. Some systems are less hospitable than others, so personal security is rarely far behind a trading team in transit or on the job.

It is good to note that, in 2261, when the Earth Alliance was rocked with inner turmoil, Eclipse Inc. was a

staunch supporter of President Clark and helped enforce what they could of the boycott/blockade of Babylon 5. This did no good for the company's external reputation, but Earth-based sales were at an all time high. After Clark was removed, half of the board of directors revealed their support for the new Interstellar Alliance by applying for, and receiving, some of the first Trade and Economy Boardment licenses they had to offer.

**Trade Attitudes:** Localised, Safe, (add Racist between 2259 and 2262)

**Primary Product Focus:** Commercial and industrial components

**Average Trade:** 4,500,000 cr.

## Edgars Industries

Created by easily one of the most powerful men in the Earth Alliance, William Edgars, Edgars Industries is a Mars-based megacorporation that controls a massive amount of industry, medical science and other interests in human higher-class circles. Edgars has a say in most political debates through one of several intermediaries and his funding has made or broken candidates several times over. Edgars Industries is a primary example of exactly how *powerful* a solid company can become; a testament to the weight of the galactic credit.

William Edgars started his business small, just a few dozen interests, but it soon swelled into the multi-billion credit monster it has become. It employs anywhere from forty to seventy thousand employees at its countless corporate offices and has contracts, both on and off the books, with three times that number of freelancers in the galaxy.

Edgars once focused only on physical industries like shipbuilding, mining, refining and raw processing. While they still own a massive share of the Earth Alliance's contracts in such fields, they have also branched out heavily into hard science and medical fields in order to 'prepare for the future.' Edgars Industries funds over a thousand different research projects, some of which are unbelievably abstract or mythical in nature. They have patents on a dozen cures for illnesses that were fatal just ten years before. The wealth and power of a good trade-based company can be surprising if given the room and the ushering to grow properly.

Such power does have its corruption though, and pre-2262 Edgars Industries is no exception. Threatened by





the rise of telepaths in governmental circles, William Edgars helped orchestrate a powerful anti-telepath weapon with the funds of his corporation. With such unprecedented access to medical files, supplies and research data it took only a few short years to create what could have become a plague to kill all telepaths, possibly even those of other races as well. Luckily the plot was foiled and the plague never released, causing the death of William Edgars and leaving the business to his wife, Lise Hamilton-Edgars.

Lise's later marriage placed the company in the hands of Babylon 5's ex-security chief Michael Garibaldi, who turned the powerful corruption within Edgars Industries into a weapon against itself. Through a slow and steady purging of corrupt employees, elimination of foolish projects and dead-end research, Garibaldi forged a completely new face for the company.

After 2263, Edgars Industries became the primary research force for the Interstellar Alliance. Curing minor illnesses the ISA encountered, repairing technical issues with lesser race technologies and constructing new ship and weapon designs specifically for their use and these became the major avenues of wealth for his new corporation.

By 2267, they and a few allies came together to create the ISA's most magnificent flagship of their war fleets; the Victory-class destroyer. Along with the enormous battle vessel, Garibaldi saw the creation of a dozen new personal devices to help crew and soldiers survive the ongoing battles against the darkness.

Edgars Industries still receives most of its capital from the direct trade of patented goods to distribution companies and the occasional free merchant here and there. Governmental contracts rarely carry a price large enough, but the clout and reputation is worth ten times more than a simple commission or wage on such things.

**Trade Attitudes:** Informed, Patriotic, Underhanded (even Garibaldi occasionally uses less-than-legal means to get a job done, but rarely)

**Primary Product Focus:** Industrial, medical and scientific research

**Average Trade:** 65,000,000 cr.

### Fairspace Jump Resources

Named from a loosely translated phrase in an older Drazi dialect, 'Fairspace' is the stretch of open air, ground or other terrain between two charging combatants. Such is the mentality of the company that shares the term. The leading controller of the Quantum-40 refining market, this company has exclusivity contracts with over a hundred worlds that all either mine, smelt, refine or process Quantum-40.

Dreamed up by a few ex-raiders, who found out how good money is in the Q-40 market, Fairspace is everything its directors are; blunt, malicious, greedy and well-armed. Caring little for the use of the material after its refinement, Fairspace sells its precious cargo to several jump engine and jumpgate manufacturers. Even though there is a much higher profitability in actually creating the jump engines themselves, they are less interested in long-term products when a load of raw ore can fetch millions.

While definitely not a full monopoly, half a dozen League governments, including the Freehold itself, use the resources gathered by Fairspace. They sell various grades of Q-40 to a number of starship manufacturers, including some enemies of the Drazi Freehold. The attitude of Fairspace is that they are actually just giving an advantage to the enemy when they flee from the mighty Drazi armada.



Fairspace only hires the militarily trained or the equivalent, to fly their shipments or escort them. Their escort pilots are granted 'decommissioned' Star Snake fighters, but any outside cargo haulers will need to have their own vessels. Any shipment worth more than a hundred million credits will actually warrant one of a few fully operational military-grade Sunhawk warships to play escort, in addition to a flight or two of Star Snakes. Quantum-40 is a rare and powerful commodity that Fairspace just happened to gain a degree of control over and they did not become such a powerful name in the market by giving away shipments to raiders.

Their corporate headquarters exists on a mining station on Latig I, where huge defence satellites and escort craft patrol the jump gate for unwanted guests at all times. Employing somewhere between thirty and fifty thousand Drazi, Gaim workers, Brakiri and allied Golians, Fairspace Jump Resources is a diverse combination of League race workers and schooled traders. They hire freelancers only for escort or pilot work and rarely with more than a few hours' notice to reduce the opportunities for raider informants or hijacking plots.

Fairspace does keep a few loyal Trade Marshals on hand, but does not expect them to do much other than make security actions official. They frequently hire counter-raiders to deal with those that cannot be bribed or pushed aside and many of their freelance 'escorts' are little more than bounty hunters. It is rumoured that they have only recently begun to see the potential of a monopoly on Q-40 and their buying of mercenary contracts and war vessels was on the rise as of 2260.

**Trade Attitudes:** Protective, Risk-Taking, Underhanded

**Primary Product Focus:** Quantum-40

**Average Trade:** 75,500,000 cr.

## Interplanetary Expeditions Mercantile

One of the largest megacorporations ever to exist in the galaxy, Interplanetary Expeditions (IPX) has its fingers in countless projects and industries besides the exploration and exploitation of alien places. Several of them fall into the jurisdiction of the galactic market as a whole and over time they have been lumped together into one branch of IPX called simply 'Mercantile'.

Originally proposed by an IPX tradesman named Hellenbroch, the Mercantile project started as just a few dozen trades but eventually swelled into a multi-million credit network of traders, merchants and route managers. Through their diligent efforts IPX finds, unearths, appraises and re-sells resources from all across the galaxy.

In their constant searching for antiquity and relics, IPX scientists are consistently discovering veins of rare metals and minerals. Sonic scans of moons looking for indigenous life find pockets of fuel gases. While researching rumours on hidden artefacts leads to forgotten artwork stockpiles. While the IPX scientists cannot take advantage of such things, they are *supposed* to report the find in their daily logs, which will catch certain buzzwords and prompt the issuance of Mercantile employees.

They employ very few freelance workers except for local guides and scouts, but as for actual trade-related roles it is left solely in the hands of IPX employees. It is a matter of security in the workforce and IPX does not wish anyone that has not signed extensive non-disclosure agreements to know anything about their business. Merchants are considered extensions of IPX employment protocols and have extremely limited access to much other than the goods delivered to their doors.

Hellenbroch passed away from a rare form of radiation poisoning in 2254 and was replaced by a board of IPX directors who use strict profit/loss margins to gauge the worth of trades and hire teams of legal experts to draw up the rare freelance agreement or purchasing writ. IPX Mercantile is not the largest of its kind but with its parent company always looming nearby it is one of the most powerful.

**Trade Attitudes:** Informed, Safe, Secure, Widespread

**Primary Product Focus:** Raw materials

**Average Trade:** 600,000 cr.

## Ka'lynn Purchasing

One of the most successful personal achievements in the life of a true genius, Mik'oo Ka'lynn of the Abbai, Ka'lynn Purchasing saw an opportunity in the late 2230s and took it. Mik'oo was an aging pilot with several spawnings of children behind her, and wanted to create a legacy for her family. She began to dabble in local trade, which swelled into city-wide dealings,



which in turn earned Mik'oo enough power to get a slice of the market as a whole.

She soon realised that a rarely found but heavily used medicinal herb grown in the hot pools of Abba's northern oceans was running very quickly out of places to grow with city expansions and so forth. This herb, called *hyatpa*, is a primary ingredient in anti-inflammatory tinctures used for radiation sufferers. Mik'oo began to harvest the herb with all her ability, nearly bankrupting herself hiring labourers to aid in its careful storage and processing. In a few months the herb was no longer found anywhere naturally on Abba and Mik'oo set the second half of her plan in motion.

She revealed her synthetic *hyatpa* alternative, which she had created using the last remnants of the real plant, and began to sell it for an enormous profit. This profit created a huge company, now run by several of her daughters, that exists as a trade-hub for nearly all medicinal substances. Ironically, Mik'oo died from a spinal disease in 2241 that her own company now owns the cure for.

Freelancers who work for Ka'lynn are common, the company trusting them to do the best job they can with the materials or funds fostered to them for each trade. They are relatively forgiving of harsh circumstances, but prosecute thieves and raiders to the fullest extent of their Trade Marshals' abilities. Many of their own employees have left the fleet of cargo haulers in favour of communications work behind a desk at the main offices on Abba, allowing others to be endangered in the void of space instead of them.

Many minor medical breakthroughs in the League were on the shoulders of Ka'lynn funded scientists. After the Drakh plague infected Earth in 2267, Ka'lynn Purchasing donated roughly half their profitable revenue to research sciences angled toward finding a cure; a small thank you for saving them a great deal of pain during both the Dilgar War and the later Shadow War. For three years afterward profits were small and the company lost hundreds of employees, but it was well worth the efforts for their human comrades.

**Trade Attitudes:** Public, Safe

**Primary Product Focus:** Medicinal components

**Average Trade:** 250,000 cr.

## Infamous Market Failures

Just as there are several winners in the galactic trade game, there are countless losers. Sometimes a beginning trader bites off a great deal more than he could possibly chew, others make repeatedly bad decisions to spell their own financial doom. Here are a few tales of the most famous galactic trade blunders undertaken by traders, merchants or runners.

### 'Mr. Smythe goes to Dorac'

Sebra Maximillian Smythe, a bold and adventurous fleet-based trader who specialised in focused acquisitions in the 2250s, looked to make a place on the galactic map for his first stationary trade outpost. Borrowing a massive amount of funding from the 'moneylenders' on Mars, he put together a plan to build a market flotilla near Beta 4, a neutral territory jump route hub.

When he finally arrived at his destination he was shocked to find so little traffic but continued with his dream. With the several dozen workers and servo-bots he brought with him, the components of the pre-built market flotilla came together in just a few short weeks. All the while, he received only a few communications from passers-by asking for supplies, at which Smythe just kept saying 'come back soon!'

When it was finished and many of the workers left on their transports, there was a skeleton trading and operations crew, including Smythe, remaining. They waited for the traffic to increase but it never did. The Beta 4 he had been told of was a bustling transfer point begging for attention, this was a veritable graveyard. Not wanting to waste any more time, Smythe cranked up the power on his broadcasting communications systems and relayed the following advertisement into the hyperspace routing beacons:

*'Come to the Smythe Outpost Alpha! We have a little of everything, and we aren't afraid to see it go! Nothing lasts forever, not at these prices! Follow this signal and fulfil your wildest dreams! After all, we have whatever you need... all you have to do is coma and get it?'*

The advertisement did in fact reach several systems and draw much attention to the newly opened marketplace. Just hours after it began, the signal ceased, adding to the advertisement's mystery. When the first of the interested vessels tracked down the frequency and indeed followed it back to its origin, they found nothing but floating debris where the flotilla once was!



It would seem that Smythe's original navigations were terribly off, overshooting Beta 4 by a full leg of the route and spilling his project unawares into the Dorac system. Dorac is on the edge of the Vorlon Empire and close enough that his advertisement transmission would have reached the advanced sensors of one of their many observation posts long before anyone else. Should they have felt threatened or worrisome of the nature of the flotilla, or perhaps its words, it stands to reason they may have eliminated it outright.

*Moral:* Every trader or business builder should take great care with whom he shares his space, and to always double-check all facts before instigating a plan.

### **'Around the Galaxy in 90 Jumps'**

A crack pilot and savvy trader named Gion wanted to make a lasting mark in the market by taking a new and revolutionary product to every homeworld in the galaxy he could, Vorlons and Minbari excluded of course, in less than 90 transitions from realspace to hyperspace. He advertised across every known communications network he could find, announcing when and where he would be to sell signed copies of his 'product' for 1,000 credits each. If successful, he would be not only very wealthy from the run, but also a household name in market circles.

Gion purchased a gargantuan cargo freighter and packed it full of his new product, artistic paperweights that cost him nearly nothing to create and burn his signature in, and set out to begin his trek across the stars to fame and fortune. His advertising paid off and the first ten homeworld stops in the League of Non-Aligned Worlds were packed with onlookers and reporters, even ISN was there to get in a quick interview. He was well on his way and already had several hundred thousand credits to his name. The best part to him was that his trip was not even half over yet!

Then his vessel came out of hyperspace at the transit point above the Cascor Commonwealth, the next point on his list of stops. When he arrived, he found three normally-opposing raider cells lying in ambush for his now-famous ship and before he could perform any sort of trick or manoeuvre, they filled the cockpit with particle fire and soon were splitting up the several hundred thousand credits he had on board amongst them while the 'product' floated into the atmosphere to give the Cascor a brilliant lightshow while they waited for Gion's arrival.

*Moral:* Cargo runners should never advertise their exact route so far in advance, especially when carrying large amounts of credits or merchandise. It attracts raiders like flies to cow dung.

### **'Typhoid Mary 2.0'**

The bustling Tarkonnin trade company once ran an existing route through several adjoining territories belonging to several different species. Their route was concise and made a slight profit with each full route revolution. It was a good business venture, but taxation laws soon changed and the route was costing more to complete each time. A new stop would need to be added to make the route profitable again. Every day meant more and more of a slip into the red.

The Tarkonnin planners grabbed their galactic map and picked a small, backwater world between two of their current stops. The place was so underdeveloped that any technology they introduced there would be worth twice the normal market value. If things ran quickly and as planned, it would be a veritable gold mine.

Immediately the traders began to add the tiny planet to their route, dropping off loads of outdated tools and devices while picking up all sorts of interesting artefacts and native goods before heading off to the next stop. In just a few short weeks profits were back well above the green, and things looked up for the Tarkonnin Trade Co. At first.

In a month one of their stops began complaining about illnesses spreading through the spaceport and reports of actual deaths came to the company's ears. It meant another planet would have to replace that stop or profits would slip yet again. However, before they had a chance to set new stops for their route, another stop began to complain of illness. Governmental scientists were called in to remedy the spreading situation and it was soon easily tracked to the cargo containers from the Tarkonnin ships – or more precisely the parasite-laden products they were buying so cheaply from their new layover planet.

By randomly choosing a primitive and neutral planetoid in order to supplement their income without incurring governmental scans or taxation, the Tarkonnin Transit Co. neglected to do any research on the items they were buying and selling. Their foolish haste and inability to work through proper safety measures killed over two hundred people on two separate colonies and the subsequent civil grievance bankrupted them.



*Moral:* Always take the time to know what you are buying and the effects it has on future clients as a single allergic, religious or viral mistake could be devastating.

## Once Established

Every trader or merchant who tries his hand at the market will have his ups and downs, nobody gets it right on the first try. It should be expected that some sour deals will balance out the windfalls or good fortune, and if the right person has the right head on their shoulders, they might just make it to become a major player in the market.

Their company will grow, and with it will come a great amount of responsibility. It is up to each individual to decide exactly how fast and large they grow through the record of their good and bad decisions. Deciding when that growth will end is the key.

Small companies of only a handful of crew(s) and maybe a single route make up a high number of base trading companies. Larger ones dominate the market, but they still need to rest upon their littler brethren for economic support now and again when things look bleak. For a small company a trade blunder might cost a week's worth of wages, but a miscalculation on the side of one of the megacorporations could mean depression for entire colonies.

What a trader does with his company is the real test. Will the merchant use his shop to also play his hand in rumour milling, or will he sow seeds of political discontent to his customers? A trader might choose to never deal with a particular race due to old feuds, doing everything in his commercial power to make it difficult for others to do so as well. Larger power brokers might back the funding of important breakthroughs in order to own patents or gain praise from the public. Freelancers might try and smuggle on the side. The choices are as numerous as the goods they buy and sell, and few would ever argue their importance.

Becoming a trader, merchant or cargo pilot (freelancer or not) can be a lifelong choice just like any other profession. It can also be a nice hobby for those with the time and a few credits to wager against themselves for licenses and so forth. Many only trade when the need arises, involving themselves as they would any marketplace haggle. Sometimes the market is forgiving, other times it leaves crushed dreams and derelict cargo vessels on the floors of the transit points and trade outposts of the galaxy.

A trade empire does not appear overnight, but neither does it accumulate like dust. It must be worked at, and those who have the ability to make a living at it can live very comfortably. Between the work strikes, price hikes, resource droughts and raider attacks of course.

## Player Characters as Company Directors

Some Player Characters might decide it is a good idea to start their own trading or merchant company in some fashion. Using the details found in this book, and their own influences on in-game decisions, they have the chance to make a great deal of money or lose everything they have! The ups and downs of a new company can make for a very good plotline for Games Masters to follow and in the Babylon 5 universe there is just as much action behind the scenes of a boardroom negotiation as there is behind a bulkhead drug deal.

If a player's company grows to well beyond the scope of the Games Master's views, it may be best to offer subordinates and advisors (possibly through the Leadership feat's followers) to control the day-to-day activities of a business while the Player Character mainly decides greater policy and reaps the benefits. A mixed group of characters that are not all interested in the market and building of a company will be far more excited about helping the character in his activities than sitting next to him in eight hours' worth of trade price talks and contracting meetings.

No matter what the course of action, a trade company in the hands of Player Characters can support a new style of game and an angle not yet explored by some players. It will offer new threats, new enemies and new opportunities to become a different part of the Babylon 5 universe as a whole.



# Raiding the Space Lanes

*'What we do is no different than any government job. They get paid out of their citizen's taxes, don't they? Well, so do we. Those taxes come from citizens' wages. We just cut out all that cumbersome red tape and all the greedy middlemen.'*

*Raider Captain Kurei Tapagowa*

Raiding the space lanes for a living is dangerous, criminal and often a last resort for out-of-luck pilots or ex-traders who have fallen on bad times. It is a life of risk and stressful situations, relying on other criminals and unsavoury comrades to hold up their end of any deal to make the 'big score'. It promises a life of adventure and possible riches, even if the threat of that life getting cut short in a fiery splash on the backdrop of stars. There is some wonder why the life of a raider often gets painted in such a romantic light.

Living beneath the watchful eyes of the law, raiders live in tight cells in out-of-the-way locales and raider-friendly space stations. From score to score they exist like the pirates of ancient Earth, appearing out of the void to take what they want from the trade routes of the galaxy. Strike fast, hit hard and take what you can; the unwritten laws of the raider.

The term 'raider' implies a spaceborne pilot or crewman who attacks commercial or transport vessels between transfer points in order to take valuables; be it slaves, goods, credits or the ships themselves. There are some raiders who attack specific targets or that are on some specific agenda, but most fall into the category of simple space lane pirates.

Raiders are divided into individual cells run by experienced raider captains, sometimes more than a few per cell. While there have been examples of solitary raiders, they are rarely very successful and tend to be short-lived in the extreme. Cells give raiders the ability to take minor losses and still return with enough loot to fund the group for some time, giving the cell time to replenish the lost men. It might be a cold fact but



raiders know they are utterly expendable in the eyes of their comrades because they would not think twice about leaving them behind if the roles were reversed!

Being a raider can be an easy choice for a pilot to make as the Quantum-40 filled freighter sails through his crosshairs, or one that takes years to come to as a regular life slips farther and farther away. It is the decision between escorting or attacking that injured runner, and if the pay-offs are right, it could be a seductive and expedient path to fame, fortune... or an early grave.

The following pages will introduce a new character class, a reshaping of an old prestige class, new feats and skill options. It needs to be noted that these are all optional additions and should only be added to an existing campaign if the Games Master feels they will work well with what he has already accomplished. If the raider prestige class printed in the main rulebook better suits a campaign's needs, there is no precedence that forces a Games Master to use the additional



### The Original Raider Prestige Class

In the *Babylon 5 Roleplaying Game and Fact Book*, a raider prestige class with 5 levels for advancement was published. This was intended to give players an avenue to become raider-style fighter pilots like those seen in the episode *Midnight on the Firing Line* in Season One of the *Babylon 5* television series. It was a great way of adding a certain criminal element to a Player Character or for use by the Games Master. It lacked a certain completeness that the raider profession should have, but it filled a niche nicely for those who wanted to begin using them in their campaign.

This chapter contains a slightly updated reprint of that prestige class as a courtesy to players and Games Masters alike, allowing them to reference a single text for all of their raider material. This text also solves the problem of characters wanting to begin a life of raiding earlier or to continue it much longer than the original prestige class would have allowed. To alleviate such situations this section also includes a new base class: the raider. In order to eliminate any confusion between the base class and the prestige class, the prestige class is being re-named. All references to the raider ace prestige class cover the adjusted prestige class from the original incarnation, while all references to simply raiders relate to the new base class.

information found here. This information is best suited for a Games Master looking to expand his possibilities and add such an element to his campaign.

## New Raider Classes

This section introduces a new base class (the raider) and reprints a new and updated version of the raider prestige class from the *Babylon 5 Roleplaying Game and Fact Book* (raider ace). It will explain the varying abilities and class features of each and go into detail on how to use them.

There are several opportunities in the raider base class's advancement to branch off into the raider ace prestige class, which could result in a handful of duplicated class features. In their descriptions they will explain the benefits of having the class feature twice... if any. The raider base class is designed to be a good solid foundation for a dozen different paths. A player could remain a raider forever, retire into a different line of work or take on any number of prestige classes in his career.

No matter the route taken afterwards or the cause to do so, the raider class can be a fantastic starting point for any Player Character who wants to be an outlaw without necessarily being branded one for the entire campaign.

### The Raider Ace (Raider revised)

*'I just knocked out your jump engines, so what say we start talking about how much it will cost you to use ours?'*

*Droznak, Drazi Raider Ace*

It is a simple task to start shooting at cargo convoys and picking up the remains or to plot and plan attacks on others, but it takes a special sort to truly excel at the execution of such activities. Often found behind the console of an outdated or outgunned Delta-V 'chip fighter', raiders are only seconds away from an early retirement delivered by an enemy's weapons.

Those who do survive engagement after engagement grow into ace pilots that are more at home behind a control stick than any other, learning to make their vessel an extension of themselves like a second skin made of a few tons of metal and electronics. These veteran pilots are called raider aces, and they represent the elite ship-debilitating elites of any raider cell.

Raider aces are the flight leaders, the starscape snipers in charge of making sure a target is incapacitated, but not destroyed, for salvage. They must be precise in their targeting and powerful of voice to keep their comrades from getting too heavy on the trigger. Unlike their superiors, who might be found on the bridge of a battlewagon or a hulking Delta carrier, raider aces are always in the fray. They love nothing else but to feel the void of space around them, dancing through the firing lanes of a fighter 'fur ball'.



## The Raider Ace

Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special
1	+1	+0	+1	+0	Born to Fly
2	+2	+0	+2	+0	Bonus Feat
3	+3	+1	+2	+1	Pinpoint Shooting
4	+4	+1	+2	+1	Bonus Feat
5	+5	+1	+3	+1	Safe Distance

Becoming a raider ace is not an easy task. One has to earn the rights to lead fighter wings into a raid. They must prove they are deserving of the role and that the pilots behind them are not simply flying to their poorly-planned deaths behind an overconfident madman.

**Additional Hit Points:** 2

### Requirements

To qualify to become a raider Ace, a character must fulfil all the following criteria.

**Base Attack Bonus:** +4 or higher

**Skills:** Intimidate 4 ranks, Pilot 6 ranks

**Feats:** Spacecraft Proficiency, Weapon Proficiency (spacecraft weapons)

**Special:** Must either own an armed spacecraft or join a raider cell and succeed in at least three raids in which he was flying.



### Class Skills

The raider ace's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Appraise (Int), Computer Use (Int), Gather Information (Cha), Intimidate (Cha), Knowledge (trade routes) (Int), Listen (Wis), Pilot (Dex), Search (Int), Spot (Wis), and Technical (any) (Int).

**Skill points at each level:** 2 + Int modifier

### Class Features

All of the following are class features of the raider ace prestige class.

**Born to Fly:** Small fighters are the tools of the trade for the raider ace and he will spend a great deal of time practising manoeuvres that may one day save his life. The raider ace gains a competence bonus to all Pilot checks equal to half his class level, rounding down.

**Bonus Feat:** There is little honour among raiders and often the only person they can rely upon in battle is themselves. Each raider ace is expected to become the most competent fighter pilot he possibly can, even without the benefit of military training. At 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> level, the raider ace gains a bonus feat chosen from the following list: Dogfighter, Evasive Action, Fire Control, Improved Fire Control, Improved Vehicle Dodge\*, Pour it On\*, Vehicle Dodge and Veteran Spacehand.

\*See page 75 for new raider feats

**Pinpoint Shooting:** At 3<sup>rd</sup> level, the raider ace has become adept at targeting specific areas of his victim's spacecraft, disrupting control capabilities, destroying weapons and hitting engines, effectively crippling his prey. Whenever the raider scores a critical hit on an enemy spacecraft, he may freely choose which location it is applied to.



**Safe Distance:** Upon reaching 5<sup>th</sup> level, the raider ace has learnt to stand off from his target whenever possible, engaging it at greater ranges in order to keep his own craft out of range. The raider Ace may ignore the first range increment penalty when piloting a spacecraft of gargantuan size or smaller.

NOTE: If a raider Ace already has Safe Distance from another class source, he may ignore the first two range increments instead of the standard one for this class feature.

### The Raider (Base Character Class)

*'Listen here, at least mine is an honest profession. A pickpocket takes and disappears. A burglar sifts through your goods while you are away. Embezzlers scrape their profits off the top like the fat from the cream. At least you know where you stand with a raider. Now open your cargo hold already and prepare to be boarded.'*

*Louis 'The Artful' Dodger, infamous raider pilot*

Making a living off the goods and vessels of others, raiders are not simply the swarms of fighters spilling out of jump points or from shambling carriers. They have entire lives to live between raids. Repairs, preparations, trade route research and informant gathering takes a lot more work than simply hopping into a Delta-V and soaring into the path of a juicy find. Much more.

Not all raiders even see much time outside of their larger vessels. For every fighter pilot there are ten deck supporting crew and others waiting back at the base for their return. Technicians, planners, spies and soldiers; raiders can fall into any of these categories. It is true that all members of a cell must be willing to learn how to get into one of the cockpits at a moment's notice, but only if better qualified pilots are unavailable.

Common raiders can start at any age from any species, so long as they have the moral ambiguity it takes to occasionally fire upon seemingly defenceless vessels for the good of the cell.

There are rare instances where someone trains as a raider specifically to combat *other raiders*. Many of the abilities and skills of a raider can easily be turned against them and a handful of governments support these 'anti-raider' groups. No matter the source or the cause, these 'raiders' are few and far between and most who walk this path do so for self-centred reasoning.

**Starfarers:** The very essence of a raider puts the void beneath their feet and the wide horizon of stars above them. They need to be at home in a starship or on the spinning rings of a transfer point. Their chosen path requires a certain degree of control over spacecraft systems and jump route navigations; else they make mistakes and get caught by the authorities. There may be times where they are waiting for their prey for hours in tightly cramped cockpits or shaky crafts with no gravity, dodgy life-support and half normal fuel supplies. If that sort of thing bothers a person, maybe they are not ready to be a raider.

**Characteristics:** Raiders need to be the kind of people who chooses to ride the trade routes as commercial predators, stealing from and sometimes killing traders and cargo convoys in order to survive. Unless they fall into the tiny category of 'raiders against raiding', they have to have certain greyness about their attitude towards life and property. Some might honestly go to extra lengths to avoid injuring others, purely attacking to steal, but occasional casualties are always a reality and years of 'accidental collateral damage' will harden the best intentions.

**Background:** Raiders can come from nearly any walk of life, but there are some general similarities that often spawn the right type of person to become a raider. Many raiders are actually ex-military who find their pensions are not high enough (if available at all in some cases) or who never were able to get the rush of flying a combat fighter out of their veins. Adrenaline junkies that need the *realness* of a dogfight might find themselves in the docking bays of a raider cell, if only to fly once more.

There are also those raiders who fell into the 'career' on account of a different failing. Escort pilots who get their wages cut. Commercial transporters who find out mid-run of a price hike or buyer's demise. Traders who are bought out and disbanded. Security forces pushed aside for governmental agencies, or governmental agencies pushed aside for new policy. They all might



find themselves at a metaphysical fork in the road. One path leads to a legal alternate lifestyle, but the other might lead to the front door of a raider cell.

**Races:** Nearly any galactic race can become a raider for one reason or another. There are certain leanings due to instinctive proclivities and some with natural resistance to the lure of a raider's life. Humans, Drazi and Narn are possibly the most numerous, with a number of Centauri as well. Very few Minbari *ever* decide to walk the path of the raider and even those tend to be the rare and sinister Shadowsouled (for more information on Shadowsouled Minbari, see the *Minbari Federation Fact Book*). The only raiders that hail from the Abbai Matriarchate are generally part of their top-secret anti-raider projects.

Raider cells mainly consist of similar or compatible races in each cell, with like minds and needs occasionally steering groups of individual raiders into cliquish race-based cells. For some it is merely a bridge over the language barrier, for others it is a conscious choice based on prejudice or blatant racism.

**Other Classes:** Raider cells carry an assortment of supporting roles that might be better filled by multiclassed characters. Agents, lurkers, soldiers and blue collar workers are common routes for raiders to have multiclassed to or from. They form the specialists within the cell's ranks. Agent/raiders and lurker/raiders are best used in the information gathering and espionage missions the cell might require in public places, like those found throughout the decks of most trade outposts. Soldier/raiders find themselves as the cell's enforcers and fighter pilots, using their martial training to become the backbone of heavy-handed cells and bloody raids. Worker/raiders are what keep the cell in running order. Technicians and dock workers are never out of work getting fighters and other ships operational, and anyone with background in the trade professions (be it trader, merchant, runner or buyer alike) will become indispensable when a raider cell needs to unload his stolen goods. Solitarily classed raiders are very good at what they do, but they still require an assortment of allies to perform at their best.



**Multiclassing Priority:** Any raider base class character who chooses to multiclass into raider ace will find it a natural progression of this class. If a Player decides to do so, the new raider Ace can choose a Bonus Feat automatically from this list of feats due to the seamless nature of the two classes. Alertness, Contact, Dogfighter, Evasive Action, Fire Control, Improved Fire Control, Improved Vehicle Dodge\*, Lightning Reflexes, Nerves of Steel, Pour it On\*, Vehicle Dodge and Veteran Spacehand.

\*See page 75 for new raider feats.

### Game Rule Information

Raiders have the following game statistics.

**Abilities:** Raiders are varied enough to be able to work around personal deficiencies. A raider with a low Dexterity will rarely be allowed to pilot, but may make a perfect sensor operator. Low Intelligence keeps a raider away from the negotiation tables, but high Charisma makes for a great reconnaissance spy. Raiders are generally aimed at space combat and deceiving others on a common basis, so attributes and skills leaning that way are good for a raider to look for.

**Initial Hit Points:** 1d6+4.

**Additional Hit Points:** 2.



## Class Skills

The raider's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Appraise (Int), Bluff (Cha), Climb (Str), Computer Use (Int), Concentration (Con), Disguise (Cha), Drive (Dex), Forgery (Int), Gather Information (Cha), Hide (Dex), Intimidate (Cha), Jump (Str), Knowledge (any) (Int), Listen (Wis), Pilot (Dex), Profession (any) (Wis), Sense Motive (Wis), Search (Int), Spot (Wis), Survival (Wis) and Technical (any) (Int).

**Skill Points At 1<sup>st</sup> level:**  $(6 + \text{Int modifier}) \times 4$ .

**Skill Points At Each Additional Level:**  $6 + \text{Int modifier}$

## Class Features

All of the following are class features of the raider.

**Weapon Proficiency:** A raider is proficient with all melee and pistol weapons. In addition, they also gain Weapon Proficiency (spacecraft weapons) at 2<sup>nd</sup> level.

**Starting Credits:** A raider begins the game with  $(2d6-1) \times 100$  credits

**Automatic Languages:** Raiders start at 1<sup>st</sup> level with Interlac as a bonus language if they do not already possess it.

**Spacecraft Proficiency:** All raiders have had some access to the starships of their corner of the galaxy and have picked up at least a small understanding of them in passing. All raiders gain the Spacecraft Proficiency feat at 1<sup>st</sup> level.

**Infamy:** A raider is involved in underhanded dealings with unscrupulous people every day, and these sorts of people tend to rub off on one another. Criminals become aware quickly of one another, and as a raider continues down this path he will find that his body language, voice or even just plain looks might influence others as his reputation begins to precede them. Traders will learn the names of the most vicious and cargo might get dumped at their mere mention. As a raider advances in this class his Infamy rating will grow accordingly. The bonus listed after the Infamy trait on the level advancement table (+1 at 3<sup>rd</sup> level, +2 at 6<sup>th</sup> level and so forth) is added *automatically* to all Bluff, Gather Information, Intimidate and Profession (raider) skill checks. However, it acts as a negative penalty on all Diplomacy and Disguise skill checks when dealing with the industry the raider commonly targets. Starting at 3<sup>rd</sup> level, this number grows by +1 at 6<sup>th</sup>, 9<sup>th</sup>, 12<sup>th</sup>, 15<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> level thereafter.

**Hard Target:** Raiders do not survive as long as they do by being foolish or careless. They learn quickly how to duck from cover to cover or 'jink' their fighters awkwardly to make the most out of their speed and agility. Raiders that leave themselves open live very short lives. Therefore, this class ability grants a bonus to the raider's (or any spacecraft of Gargantuan size or smaller they are piloting) Defence Value equal to the number after the trait listed. First gained at 4<sup>th</sup> level, this ability increases again at 17<sup>th</sup> level.

**Glancing Shot:** Raiders are rarely out to destroy their targets entirely, which ruins salvage and could harm expensive cargo within. Raider pilots or weapon system operators must train themselves to specifically 'graze' a target with their weaponry, so as not to overly harm the target but still definitely get the raider's point across. Sometimes a few dancing particle cannon impacts along the fuselage of a transport will be enough to force surrender, but an unsteady hand might otherwise detonate the ship entirely. This ability allows a raider firing a weapon that requires the Weapon Proficiency (spacecraft weapons) feat to halve all damage dice (rounding down) the weapon would cause against a target larger than gargantuan size. If a critical threat is scored on a Glancing Shot, the raider may attempt a Reflex save (DC 15) to treat it as a normal attack instead (roll normal damage dice, but no systems are immediately effected). Any raider that successfully inflicts damage upon a target with a Glancing Shot can add half the damage inflicted





(rounding down) to any Intimidate skill checks against the target in the following round.

**Safe Distance:** Upon reaching 7<sup>th</sup> level, the raider has learnt to stand off from his target whenever possible, engaging it at greater ranges in order to keep his own craft out of range. The raider may ignore the first range increment penalty when piloting a spacecraft of gargantuan size or smaller.

NOTE: If a raider already has Safe Distance from another class source, he may ignore the first two range increments instead of the standard one for this class feature.

**Skill Focus:** Raiders who remain long enough in this field must take on secondary responsibilities within their cell in order to grow in worth in the eyes of their peers. This means branching out and becoming more reliable at certain things necessary to the general function of a raider cell. At 9<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> levels, the raider gains the Skill Focus feat for free, but may only use it in conjunction with the following skills: Appraise, Computer Use, Forgery, Knowledge (commerce), Knowledge (trade routes), Pilot and Technical (any).

**Raider Captain:** Raiders who excel at their careers tend to become more and more important to the cell or sect they belong to. Their constant survival is often enough to earn them higher rights and accolades from their peers, soon gaining the unofficial title of 'raider Captain' upon reaching 10<sup>th</sup> level in this class. Not only having a much greater access to his cell's assets (information, cash funds and so on) the raider Captain can make a Diplomacy or Intimidation (whichever is higher) skill check (DC 25) to gain temporary access to larger cell assets such as larger vessels, fighter support on personal missions and so on. The Games Master has final say on what can and cannot be achieved through this ability, but any raider Captain borrowing too much from the cell without giving it back with interest will soon find themselves in trouble with their own people.

**Crippling Shot:** Upon reaching 11<sup>th</sup> level in this class, the raider has a steady hand and a focused eye during a fire fight that can knock spacecraft systems out with ease. Larger targets are known for having massive crews to defend against assaulting boarders, internal defences and other annoyances that a raider may want to circumvent. By disabling internal gravity, life support or engines they can often persuade a ship's crew to give up in light of these new circumstances.

There is some risk in keeping attentions so tight upon a single target, as it leaves the attacking raider a bit unaware of the possibly dangerous surroundings he may otherwise be ignoring. A raider with this ability may focus all fire into a single spacecraft's system of his choice, doubling the Critical Threat Range of the weapons fired. Any round in which a raider performs a Crippling Shot he suffers a -5 to his own Defence Value until he performs a different action.

**Hasty Retreat:** Any raider understands that when things go badly in their line of work, they go *really* badly. They know that the law could be around any asteroid, or lurking in the hold of their targets, ready to pounce with guns blazing. In these eventual ambushes, discretion truly is the better part of valour. Raiders do not survive by fighting impossible odds and overwhelming numbers. A raider that reaches 13<sup>th</sup> level has become accustomed to 'getting away with it' and can quickly make a retreat when the need arises. By tapping into the 'flight' portion of their 'fight or flight' instincts, any raider with this ability can add half-again to their speed while moving away from all opponents (on foot or while piloting a Gargantuan vehicle or smaller) and add half their level (round up) to their Defence Value against all attacks from behind them. While it does not make them invincible while escaping, it does make them much harder to kill or capture.

**Kill Shot:** Sometimes a raider needs to make an example out of a vessel while targeting larger convoys or escort groups. One decimated ship scattering their contents and crew across the viewports of their fleetmates can alter their willingness to surrender very quickly. A raider that reaches 16<sup>th</sup> level has learned certain techniques while firing a spacecraft's weapon systems to bypass armoured hulls and cause massive internal damage to their doomed target. By spending one round aiming a weapon system at a given target and succeeding in a Concentration check (DC 20), the raider may unleash a Kill Shot at the target. The attack is a full-round action that must strike its target successfully. If the Kill Shot hits, no Damage Reduction of the target is used and all damage dice for the weapon are doubled (roll once, doubling result). If a Kill Shot is also a critical hit, no dice are rolled and the weapon system's maximum damage is doubled. Should a raider destroy any target with a Kill Shot, his Intimidate skill checks versus targets friendly with that vessel will be at a +6 circumstantial modifier.



### The Raider

Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special
1 <sup>st</sup>	+1	+0	+1	+1	Spacecraft Proficiency
2 <sup>nd</sup>	+1	+0	+1	+1	Weapon Proficiency (spacecraft weapons)
3 <sup>rd</sup>	+2	+1	+2	+1	Infamy (+1)
4 <sup>th</sup>	+3	+1	+2	+2	Hard Target (+2)
5 <sup>th</sup>	+3	+1	+3	+2	Glancing Shot
6 <sup>th</sup>	+4	+2	+3	+2	Infamy (+2)
7 <sup>th</sup>	+5	+2	+4	+3	Safe Distance
8 <sup>th</sup>	+5	+3	+4	+3	Skill Focus
9 <sup>th</sup>	+6/+1	+3	+5	+3	Infamy (+3)
10 <sup>th</sup>	+7/+2	+3	+5	+4	Raider Captain
11 <sup>th</sup>	+7/+2	+4	+6	+4	Crippling Shot
12 <sup>th</sup>	+8/+3	+4	+6	+4	Infamy (+4)
13 <sup>th</sup>	+9/+4	+5	+7	+5	Hasty Retreat
14 <sup>th</sup>	+9/+4	+5	+7	+5	Skill Focus
15 <sup>th</sup>	+10/+5	+5	+8	+5	Infamy (+5)
16 <sup>th</sup>	+11/+6/+1	+6	+8	+6	Kill Shot
17 <sup>th</sup>	+11/+6/+1	+6	+9	+6	Hard Target (+4)
18 <sup>th</sup>	+12/+7/+2	+7	+9	+6	Infamy (+6)
19 <sup>th</sup>	+13/+8/+3	+7	+10	+7	Raider Commander
20 <sup>th</sup>	+13/+8/+3	+7	+10	+7	Terror of the Space Lanes

**Raider Commander:** Career raiders that live and thrive long enough to become well-known faces within the cell can expect to be treated as legends in their own ranks. Young raiders will try to emulate and impress them, veterans know to fear them and allies can trust them to be among the best in their profession. This kind of personal influence gives a different sort of

power to the raider, who can now earnestly call himself a 'raider Commander' in every sense of the title. At 19<sup>th</sup> level, the raider can now call upon a number of raider Captains to attain assets for him. Once per month, a raider Commander can call upon 1d3 + his Charisma modifier in raider Captains to aid him in acquiring things as per the raider captain class ability (see above).



These 'average' raider Captains will succeed in their acquisitions on a roll of 12 or higher on a 1d20 each.

*For example, raider Commander Ritt wants to put together a little Battlewagon strike force to punish a few freelancers trudging through his cell's territories. He rolls a 2 on the 1d3, and has a Charisma score of 14 (+2 modifier) for a total of 4 raider Captains ready to give Ritt a hand. He asks them all to get fully loaded raider Battlewagons, and they roll 11, 13, 14, and 8 respectively. Ritt himself also uses his own 'raider Captain' ability and passes easily. At the end of the day when they reconnoitre, Ritt had a total of 3 raider Battlewagons in dock waiting for him. Now it is off to teach some intruders a lesson!*

**Terror of the Space Lanes:** Masters of the raider career are few and far between. Most are arrested, killed, backstabbed or retired long before this point. There are a few old legends though, and their very names bring fear and panic in the hearts of all those who hear them. When a raider reaches 20<sup>th</sup> level in this class, his name alone is enough to make traders faint and cargo runners abandon ship. Tall tales of staring down capitol class cruisers in single fighters, personally slitting the throats of entire crews and other fabled stories of these men make them the bogeymen of the trade industry. Only the truly forgetful or blatantly ignorant would stand against them. Whenever the raider decides to impress upon someone his name or nature through the use of this ability, the Games Master can call upon a Sense Motive skill check with a varying Difficulty Class depending on who he is speaking to. Refer to the table below.

### Recognition Difficulty

Type of Spacefarer	Sense Motive DC
Active trader, trade route legal official and so on.	5
Ex-trader, frequent space traveller	10
Governmental official	15
Common space station resident	20
Completely ignorant to the goings on in space	25

If this Sense Motive check is failed, the target(s) do not recognise the raider and will treat him accordingly (and most likely find out why he normally carries such clout!). If the check is passed, the target(s) immediately remember/believe the raider's reputation and will suffer -2 on all to-hit rolls, skill checks and saving throws while still in the raider's immediate presence. Also, all Intimidate skill checks made by the raider at any target who recognises him are assumed to succeed (barring special circumstances, the Games Master can decide if a target can ignore this).

### New Feats

#### Alternate Persona (General)

You have eliminated much of your need to hide in public through the cunning use of masks, voice-changers and false nomenclature. You are difficult to pin any crime to and most charges are circumstantial at best. Your alternate persona comes with a faked identicard (DC 30 to reveal) and a complete booklet of personal information.

**Prerequisite:** Disguise 6 ranks, Charisma 12+.

**Special Prerequisite:** Must be in some form of criminal or otherwise law-threatened or clandestine situation.

**Benefit:** You add +5 to any Disguise skill check to switch to a standard alternate persona, which grants you an alibi on most of your crimes. This is reflected by a +5 bonus to Bluff skill checks when being questioned about the persona's dealings or actions. It should be noted that each time this feat is chosen, a new alternate persona must be chosen.





## Improved Vehicle Dodge (General)

You can make a spacecraft dance like a Centauri exotic specialist. It will perform tasks in your hands that most other pilots would turn white over and you only laugh at their fear. Your odds to survive any starship battle are better than most, and your mechanics and docking workers always commend you in 'bringing her back in one piece'.

**Prerequisite:** Pilot 8 ranks, Vehicle Dodge

**Benefit:** You may add a +1 bonus to the Defence Value of any ship you pilot. Additionally you can add an additional +1 bonus to your Defence Value against a single vessel each round, chosen on your action from opponents you are aware of.

## Pour it On (General)

By keeping the trigger pulled and your sights, sensors or viewports on a single target, you can deliver streams of blows that continually pound into the same area. This can cause massive damage over time, if you are patient and skilled enough to do so. It is very taxing on the nerves, but the results are often worth a few beads of sweat and worry.

**Prerequisite:** Concentration 4 ranks, Weapon Proficiency (spacecraft weapons)

**Benefit:** Any round of combat that you attack the same target as you did the previous round with the same weapon system(s), you may add a cumulative +1 to damage dice rolled for the attack at the expense of a cumulative -1 penalty to hit. These bonuses/penalties have a maximum of +3/-3.

*R'karr, a Narn fighter pilot, fires with his Frazi's Twin-Linked Particle Guns that normally do 3d8 damage each on a massive Centauri Vorchan. Round 1 he rolls 3d8 twice for his initial hit. Round 2 he continues to 'Pour it On', taking a -1 penalty to hit but rolling 3d8+3 damage*

*twice. Round 3 he keeps it up and takes a -2 to hit, but misses. If he had hit again, it would have inflicted 3d8+6 twice! As it stands, R'karr will need to start the entire process over next round – if he survives of course!*

## Trusted Informant (General)

One of your informants is a trusted ally that always seems to have the right information about the galactic market whenever you need it. Whether you are an underhanded trader looking for an extra edge in the marketplace or a fire-riding raider ready to take out that next fat shipment he tells you about, your informant loves working with you. For the right price, your informant can tell you a bit about everything.

**Prerequisite:** Charisma 13+, Diplomacy or Intimidation 4 ranks

**Benefit:** Paying your informant for information grants you a circumstance bonus depending on the amount paid to any one of a number of skills. For every 100 credits you give to your informant, you may add a +1 modifier (maximum of +5) to any one of the following skills: Appraise, Gather Information, Knowledge (commerce), Knowledge (trade routes), and Profession (any). This bonus applies for one day plus one per 100 additional credits spent.





## A Raiding Life

Becoming a raider is easy, surviving as one is not. Granting a combination of trust and distrust from your cellmates, a will to succeed over sometimes overwhelming odds and a gritty sense of self worth that should outweigh nearly all else; raiding can be harder than it looks. Those who fail are rarely heard from again; locked away in some prison or brig, floating in the void of space or atomised by heavy weapons fire. It is no cakewalk and veteran raiders are examples of why.

Raiders who survive to become 'retired' have no doubt seen their share of friends and enemies blossom away in fiery explosions a few miles away or the cold knife of betrayal lay low a comrade more than once. They may have very well been holding the bloody blade or pulling the killing trigger. It is a life that hardens most people to callousness, with trust and loyalty suffocating under the thickening skin of the raider. Most find some joy in 'burning out' in a blaze of glory against the law instead of withering away under the sweltering guilt of years of raiding.

For some, guilt is never an issue. They strike at will, finding and taking whatever they want or need as fate sees fit to hand it to them. They are the true criminal element on the space lanes, eager to fire upon any ship unlucky enough to get caught by them alone or unawares. Sending ships of hundreds of crew erupting into infernos of burning atmosphere can take a certain kind of person, especially if it is not a rare sight to them.

Raiders cannot simply be labelled as thieves. Many have kill records longer than a seasoned GROPOS, and some make slaves of anyone they find aboard crippled ships. While they do indeed make their living on the fruitful gains of others, they are seldom subtle and rarely careful of who gets hurt in a fire fight.

Raiders live in large cells for the most part. This not only gives them the ability to report in large numbers but also a nigh-inexhaustible supply of fresh recruits. Attracting miscreants, criminals and would-be spacers daily, most raider cells operate out of 'secret' bases or abandoned stations. It does not take much to uncover a raider hangout (DC 15 Gather Information check) if someone knows where to ask and does not mind being scrutinised by dangerous scoundrels in the process.

Life within a cell is not unlike being part of an independent worker's union. There are bosses and workers, middle management and their lackeys and always jobs to be filled. Less savoury roles are delegated to the newer raiders or those with lost standing amongst their peers, while easier or more fruitful assignments are saved for the upper echelon of raiders. Either way, those lower on the hierarchy are always waiting for their opportunity to climb ahead. Through someone else's *termination*, carefully laid plots or even direct conflict; raider cell members are ever wary of power vacancies higher in the cell.

In a way cells are also like military units as well. With a definite ranking system that mocks military nomenclature (complete with captains, squad leaders, commanders and more) raiders automatically assume a certain pecking order within their own cells. Unlike most traditional ranks that are obeyed on threat of court martial or worse, raider ranking is generally obeyed on account of common sense. It is a rare thing that a raider live and succeed long enough to earn such a title and most have made quite a name for themselves. Only the truly ambitious or foolish try to usurp a raider officer who has earned his name and those that do find fame or an early demise waiting for them.

Most raiders have only incarceration or obliteration to look forward to, even though each and every one hopes to survive to become a legend. The odds are always against them, most governments have taken a 'no prisoners' outlook on raiding activity and even their so-called peers will probably stab them in the back. Some may choose to retire peacefully, leaving their criminal lives behind, even though it will inevitably come back to haunt them when they least expect it.

Raiding the space lanes is a choice sometimes made hastily and without forethought. 'Green' rookie raiders take up the practice every week, no matter how dangerous it might be. For whatever reasoning, the rush appeals to many, and no amount of anti-raider propaganda or measures will be able to stem that flow. Their crimes cannot be extinguished, merely protected against. There will always be trade and commerce in the galaxy and because of that there will always be raiders.



## The Five 'Laws' of Raiding

The many varied raider cells throughout the galaxy all have very different views on how exactly to undertake their vocation. Some kill indiscriminately, others go out of their way to stay as thieves and not become murderers. Different races view different practices in strikingly contrasting light and few can argue their worth beyond 'just because'. Over the centuries raiders have learned a few basic facts about their industry that have almost become laws over their lawless practice. While there are literally hundreds of codes, laws, directives and principles that raider cells might utilise, a few have risen to the top to become common across all cells. Here are the top five examples, how they are generally viewed, and a few quotes from those influenced by their use.

### 1. Always Use Superior Numbers

Raiders rarely have a technological or training advantage over their targets. Poorly armed ships that have been repaired too many times often face off against brand new or recently refitted vessels with the newest anti-fighter defence turrets, hardened hulls and electronic countermeasures against jamming. The best way for a raider cell to overcome such odds is through sheer numbers. Throwing five or six times as many vessels at an enemy can make up for a lot of their deficiencies and makes room for a culling of the weak links that a raider cell might have lurking in its ranks.

*'A single rolling stone means nothing, but ten thousand and you have an avalanche. Such is the way with the Delta-V.'*

*Rutger Grenich, raider repair engineer*



### 2. Never Turn Against Your Cell

Every time a raider engagement occurs there is the possibility of capture. There is not a raider alive who believes himself truly untouchable, although many protest otherwise on the outside. When a raider is eventually apprehended he may find tough choices ahead. Legal forces will promise leniency or even clemency to gain information that might help shut down an entire cell and many raiders could be tempted to sell out their allies for a lesser punishment. A good raider knows not to do so that whatever he has coming to him is well deserved and even more so expected. By turning over information to the authorities the raider may have condemned dozens or hundreds of his former partners. Not only will this sort of activity burst into a flash fire of gossip and rumour, but the raider-turned-informant will have to worry about what the cell will do to him when they find out. Sometimes, incarceration is the better option.

*'Those who fall traitor to the Choshaka will never sleep soundly again. We will find them and we will pluck each of their scales off before salting their skin. Should they have no scales, it will be worse.'*

*Drakya Zhal, Drazi enforcer of the Choshaka raider cell*

### 3. Never Endanger a Jump Gate

Jump gates are the doorways to raider prosperity. They are too expensive for even governments to fix routinely and they rarely replace those that are irreversibly damaged. If a carrier ship or Battlewagon are damaged or injured during an engagement, raiders have precious little time to get away to refuel, rearm and refill atmospheres. Jump gates are the only way this can take place if the raid's flagship is damaged or destroyed. Without a functional gate nearby, dozens of pilots could freeze or asphyxiate in the deep of space trying to get to the next one.

When raiders attack there tends to be high amounts of wayward fire and a probability of collateral damage. They must be extra careful not to allow a jump gate to be harmed. It is best to plan attacks near, but not too close to, a jump gate in case it is needed but hopefully to keep it away from unintentionally damaging strikes.

*'I once spent a half hour in my Delta waiting for our guys to get the gate back to working after some*



*debris gave it a little bump. Every time my life-support light blinked, it was the scariest moment of my life. If I ever see someone risking hitting a gate – friend or foe – I'll shoot them myself.'*

*Ju'Rid K'gorit, Narn raider*

#### 4. Do Not Let It Get Personal

Raiding the commercial traffic of the galaxy is a hard enough job without bringing in personal politics or agendas into it. By choosing targets on their proximity, risk or worth the raider cell can gauge approximate losses and pass on those that might be too costly or may result in higher casualties. Cells that allow their views to be tainted or skewed by vendettas or prejudices often ignore such safety precautions if it means striking out against their 'chosen foes'. When executing these personally targeted missions emotions can run very high, sometimes dangerously so, and mistakes can occur. Anger and hatred can easily keep a raiding fleet too long involved in an engagement and vengeance often blinds self-preservation. It is always best to distance themselves from such emotions in the business and resolve personal issues on their own time.

*'If any of my men sound like they are too willing to put the hurt on our target, they get left at dock. I don't need them endangering my haul over an old score they want to settle.'*

*Raider Commander Brent Forrest*

#### 5. Never Make Threats You Will Not Fulfil

Raiding is as much a test of will as it is one of piloting or gunnery skills. Many raids are successful without a single shot ever fired, due to the nature of the request on behalf of the raiders. A believable threat, a show of force or even just a cold-hearted promise may be enough for some cargo runners to dump their wares and escape, maybe even hand over a ship to save their own lives! The reason why this works is due to the very real possibility that the raider will do whatever horrible thing he has promised and word spreads fast in commercial transit circles about those who do.

Word also travels quickly about those who do not. Raiders that make empty threats soon find themselves fighting for a scrap of dignity amongst their peers, and chasing down cargo haulers that just know they are not in any real danger. While raiding is not exactly an honest business, those who make promises, especially dark and threatening ones, should do well to follow through with them.

*'After word spread of what I did in the Praxis system to those stubborn Moradi, I only have to ask for a cargo and it is readily given. They know better. It makes for much easier pickings, even if I can't get that horrible stink out of my coolant storage.'*

*Sly'hussar Yeradin, notorious Hurr raider*

#### Choosing the Right Target

Raiders have a veritable trade buffet to choose from when it comes to setting out onto the trade routes and attacking profitable targets. If a raider is skilled, brave or stupid enough, he could ambush anyone anywhere to make a quick haul. It is not very likely that such random and happenstance choices will result in anything other than the expedient incarceration or death of the raider.

Successful and long-lived raiders take their time and set up their targets according to their own terms. Just running out into the routes and hitting the first convoy he sees could go poorly to say the least, and most raider





cells have expansive networks of intelligence gathering allies to make sure they know all they can before putting even a single freighter in their sights. Spies, bribes, threats and more can help a raider get his job done.

Through their 'trusted' sources' information the raiders can try and decipher which routes would be good places to hunt down certain convoys or lone ships, depending on the size of the raider cell's attack fleet or just how desperate they might be. It is suggested raiders make several Intimidate, Sense Motive and Knowledge (trade routes) skill checks against their informants to make sure they actually *believe* the information they are handing over, which does not necessarily make it fact but cuts down on having to punish the raider's own informants!

Any type of target that will be alone on the route or with minimal escort is preferable, even for the larger cells that have massive fleets at their disposal. Small vessels put up less of a fight and normally have small crews that are easily intimidated into surrender without too much hassle. Even military transports are prone to dump their cargo if it means living through the engagement, that is if the raider sounds convincing enough. The easier an engagement is, the more similar scenarios the raider can undertake without calling in extra manpower.

Devoting too large a force to take down a target could cause more problems than the raider might think however. Huge fleets coming in and out of Hyperspace will often trigger long-range sensor beacons, bringing too much attention to what should have been a quick 'in and out' raid on a few ships. Small raider fleets are greatly overlooked by military scanners as unlikely threats, who have bigger issues to watch out for. One or two carrier fleets filled with darting fighters can slip into a system, knock out a few trading vessels, scoop up what they can salvage and get back out again before a governmental agency will have reason to send their first scouts that way.

Just as traders choose their routes based on the possibility of raider attack, raiders choose their hunting grounds based on the possibility of intercepting a commerce convoy without running into any legal authority ships. Taking into consideration that the raider received at least adequate information from his informants, or through research of his own, the raider should be able to put together a decent plan that will

result in a decent ambush. Any raider wanting to gauge the overall chances his plan has of running into military or authority vessels can make a Knowledge (trade routes) check (DC15). If he succeeds, the Games Master should give the raider a general feeling as to whether or not his plan will result in a profitable engagement *based on the information he has*. If his information is faulty, then we encourage the Games Master to accordingly misinform the raider!

Once the plan has been set, it is up to the raider to ensure its success by engaging the target at specific locations far enough away from regularly used jump gates or transfer points so as not to alarm authorities there. They must also consider the fact that if they engage too far away from a jump gate they could be stranded if their jump-capable ships are damaged. It is never an exact science and every raider knows that preparations are meaningless when the weapons begin to fire. Battle tactics prevail in the conflict itself, but getting there intact and without incident is a large part of a successful raid.

## Raider Tactics

Raider cells are all primarily active for one reason: to make a living from capturing the spoils of others. They swoop in, fight if they have to and take what they need. Some steal entire ships, others just cargo. Some cells care little for the lives they are endangering but many try to keep casualties at a minimum. Those who rampantly slaughter spacefarers quickly find themselves slipping away from being 'raiders' and are soon targeted instead as 'terrorists'.

For the many cells who operate with loot as their primary goal, there are a number of specialised tactics that most apply in one fashion or another. Each cell can be drastically different from each other, but a few patterned traditions seem to shine through in nearly every one.

The first and most important step in any successful raid is planning where and whom to attack. While any raider could simply lie in wait near a transit point or frequent resting point, they would have no control over who might be stopping by – like military vessels, large fleets or even empty cargo haulers. It could easily turn out to be an expensive blunder to engage such traffic and only through good planning can it be avoided.



Raiders should employ a number of spies and informants on several stations or transfer points near their territories and keep a secret communications channel open to their informants. For a few hundred credits a month, these 'intelligence agents' are the origin of most raider plans. They hear a good tip on where a sizeable shipment is headed, how many escorts they might be carrying and what manner of goods will be available, and then try and get that information to the raider cell. In turn, the raiders should mobilise an attack fleet in short order accordingly to the informant's information.

This occasionally results in mistaken coordinates or outmatched raiders on account of the informant's ineptitude or error, but most are trustworthy (as much as raider affiliates can be) and their information is vital to quick and profitable strikes. It does leave a cell open for purposeful misinformation due to bribes or worse, however this is a dangerous game to be playing when working for criminals.

Information leading to high-traffic trade routes or governmentally patrolled transit points could be a trap, or simply too costly to undertake with that cell's resources. Trade routes that are too far away are also a danger, as raider vessels have limited life-support systems and should not risk being too far from some base or rallying point. The right route must fall in with the right time and unless the cell is desperate enough to take on a heavily defended target the attack should be simple and only acceptable losses will be expected.

Supposing that the information is good and the target fleet is not too large or well-protected, the raiders will assemble a sizeable fleet to engage it. A good ratio many cells use is a fully loaded Battlewagon or carrier for every two civilian ships in the target fleet. The large vessels become mobile bases of operations, from which raider captains direct their swarms of fighters to strike at their targets. Each one also should carry a working jump engine for the ever-present possibility for the need of a fast escape into Hyperspace. Typically two raider ships work as partners, one opening the gate from Hyperspace to engage the target with the other ready to open an escape route if things go badly. Too many lone raider ships have been scuttled or captured due to slow recharge rates on cobbled-together jump engines.

Once the raider fleet explodes into realspace, it vomits a cloud of inexpensive fighters, primarily Delta-V, V2

or captured League models. The commercial fleet is bombarded with threatening communications and demands by the raiders, both frightening and partially jamming their own communications gear with too much traffic hopefully to get out a distress call. During this exchange of demands and pleas, the raider captains or flight commanders will scan the targets for particularly good hauls. They look for precious metals like platinum or Quantum-40 or drastically varied temperatures, possibly signifying produce or medical supplies.

If the target has not yet given up by fear alone, or if their escort ships have begun their violent responses, the raiders will begin to target the fleet with weapons fire. Who gets attacked first is up to the whim of the leading raiders, as one might want to make a bloody example of a flagship where another would like to disable the most loot-laden vessel. Neither side ever wants high casualties and depending on how the battle ensues the raiders may simply leave or the target fleet may hand over their goods quickly and relatively quietly.

If they must target ships specifically to disable, raiders prefer a few good techniques to keep cargo safe while removing its owners' ability to fight back, escape or call for help. By focusing attentions on certain ship components or system points, raiders do their best to leave it salvageable and intact.

Targeting communications systems is vital. If a targeted fleet can get a burst signal out before raiders can jam or destroy their capability to do so, aid could arrive in no time. Raiders need time not just to attack and disappear, but also to cable up and haul away their loot, which is the reason they attacked in the first place. If a military patrol or Trade Marshal picks up such a distress call, it might investigate long before the raiders are done actually picking up the pieces. It could be disastrous. Also, any ship whose communications have been destroyed is also cut off from their own fleet, making it likely they will miss the navigational information on new jump points or engagement tactics. A ship that is deaf to the plans of its peers is all but lost to them.

Engines (primarily steerage and aft thrusters) are another fine target for raider pilots to damage or destroy. Take away a ship's ability to manoeuvre and it can be assaulted without fear of escape, even through jump points (which would require the ship to have some degree of



control to use them). It puts the manoeuvrability solely in the hands of the raiders, and gives them an edge even if they are piloting old or repaired vessels. Targeting engines can be tricky however, as any shot that goes too deep or backwashes against the fusion reactor ports could cause massive damage to the ship, possibly even destroy it altogether.

One of the best 'negotiating' targeting points on any ship is its life-support systems. Another candidate for mishap, knocking out atmospheric supplies or artificial gravity units can not only throw a ship's crew into total disarray, but can make for a bargaining chip like no other. When a target's air is running low, water supplies floating out into the void as ice crystals and hypoxia has begun to set in, hanging onto a load of cargo seems the least of their worries. Complex scanners can determine how long a ship has before its crew will be dead (barring use of EVA suits), information that can be very influential when demanding surrender. Any crew member that has *reason to believe* the life-support systems are failing will have a circumstantial penalty to all skill checks and saving throws of -2. There is significant risk in targeting life-support, as weapon exhaust or liquefied structure vapours could instead leak into the venting and poison the remaining crew! It can be a gamble, but one well worth the trouble.

Strangely enough, targeting ship weapon systems is often frowned upon. Raiders can scrap, repair and reuse nearly any part of a ship they take... whole or in pieces. Weapon systems are decidedly difficult to repair, especially laser-based ones, so raider pilots are generally requested not to target them to save a better salvage. This sometimes cannot be avoided, as certain 'anti-fighter' systems have become widely used on cargo escorts and must be dealt with before further disabling can occur.

Once a ship is disabled through firepower or surrender, two things can happen: boarding or towing. Depending on the circumstances of the target and the engagement, the raiders may simply request all crew abandon the target ship before they attach powerful towing cables to the Battlewagon or carrier vessel. The captured ship will then be towed back to the raider cell's docks to be stripped, refitted, rearmed and reused later. Many are cannibalised quickly to defer any evidence into a hundred other vessels to eliminate any trace to the original ship. If a larger ship is not available, if escort patrols may loom nearby or even if the raider cell

simply does not wish to keep the target whole, assault craft with raider gunmen and salvage experts are sent to the disabled target.

Teams of breaching experts empty from the assault craft into the cargo holds and safety caches of their target, grabbing whatever they can or want before returning to the craft. In some cases the assault teams actually capture the ship entirely, to send counter-communications toward any would-be rescuers and to take over the ship completely. If it is worthy of the return trip, the target could be flown back. This is rare, and most raider boarding teams are on the look out for valuables or cargo samples to scan, report and steal. If a haul is just too big or a boarding party too small, the ship will likely be towed after all.

If the crew of a targeted ship will not or cannot leave, perhaps due to overzealous raider fighters eliminating escape pod hatches, they are typically treated well. Reputation means a great deal in raider circles, and unless a raider is looking to earn one for bloody slaughter and madness, crews are rarely harmed unless necessary. Morph Gas canisters are frequently used to pacify a crew before boarding, prisoners being dropped off sleeping soundly at transit points. If unable to pacify a particularly hostile crew, like the savage warrior breeds found on Gaim transports, the ship may be vented of all atmosphere before towing or boarding to ensure the safety of the raiders.

No matter how it is dealt with, the target(s) must be handled in a timely fashion. If a signal was sent, or if an escort vessel or two arrive late due to hyperspace complications - or even by happenstance - intruding company could show up at any time and ruin the salvaging portion of the raid. Raider captains will almost always have a decent idea as to how long a rescuing vessel could arrive in comparison to the nearest outposts and transit points (with a DC15 Knowledge (trade routes) skill check), and will hopefully be long gone before their window closes on the raid. It might seem chaotic and ramshackle to the untrained eye, but most raider attacks are actually well-planned and structured in their execution - even if its members may not realise it.



## Critical Hits versus Spacecraft (Revised)

The tables for critical hits against vehicles from the main rulebook are good for general vehicular combat but are not wholly complete when taking the type of 'precision' targeting raiders and raider aces are capable of. The following rules can be used in their stead if the Games Master wishes.

### Spacecraft Critical Hits

1d8	Location <sup>1</sup>
1	Superstructure
2	Engine/Power Plant
3	Control Systems
4	Weapons
5	Sensors/Communications
6	Life-Support
7	Jump Engines
8	Cargo

<sup>1</sup> If ship does not qualify for a location, count as hit on Superstructure

The exact nature of the critical hit sustained will depend on the location struck and the severity of the damage. The severity of a critical hit is measured in increments of the spacecraft's Damage Reduction, before the Damage Reduction is subtracted from the damage (or ignored, if applicable).

**Light Damage:** Damage exceed but is less than twice the spacecraft's Damage Reduction.

**Moderate Damage:** Damage is at least twice but less than three times the spacecraft's Damage Reduction.

**Heavy Damage:** Damage is at least three times but less than four times the spacecraft's Damage Reduction.

**Severe Damage:** Damage is at least four times but less than five times the spacecraft's Damage Reduction.

**Catastrophic Damage:** Damage is at least five times the spacecraft's Damage Reduction.

Once the location and level of damage of the critical hit has been determined, consult the location entries below to find out exactly what has happened to the spacecraft. In each entry there is a percentage chance of 'hostile effects' that occur in addition to the listed penalties. This should be rolled by the Games Master and applied discreetly, as these results are rarely immediately evident.

### Superstructure

The spacecraft's hull has taken damage directly, greatly weakening it. The spacecraft will have its Damage Reduction permanently reduced by an amount depending on the severity of the damage, as shown on the table below.

### Hostile Effect – Hull

**Buckling:** If a ship takes too much damage to one section of superstructure, the hull will begin to buckle into the void. Once rolled, the vessel will continue to take damage (ignoring Damage Reduction). Starting at 2







points, but doubling every round until the vessel has been destroyed. When these numbers are effectively high enough, further critical hits will need to be generated.

Damage Severity	Damage Reduction Lost	% Chance of Hostile Effect
Light	1	0%
Moderate	1d6	0%
Heavy	2d6	10%
Severe	3d6	25%
Catastrophic	4d6	50%

### Engine/Power Plant

The spacecraft's engine, thrusters or power plant is damaged. Reduce the spacecraft's top speed by the amount indicated on the table below. Heavy, severe and catastrophic damage will also reduce a spacecraft's acceleration as well.

**Hostile Effect – Reactor Damage:** If a ship's propulsion systems take too much damage or intake a sudden flash of excess energy from weapons fire, the powering reactor could begin to leak and eventually meltdown. Once rolled, the vessel has a cumulative 5% chance of going critical, detonating in 2d10 rounds

thereafter. It is good to note that nearly every ship common to the Babylon 5 universe has several alarms and warning messages as a fusion reactor starts to meltdown, hopefully giving its crew time to escape or somehow miraculously avert the meltdown.

Damage Severity	Speed/Acc Lost	% Chance of Hostile Effect
Light	1d4	0%
Moderate	2d4	10%
Heavy	3d4/1d2	15%
Severe	4d4/1d4	20%
Catastrophic	5d4/2d4	35%

### Control Systems

The spacecraft's control systems are permanently damaged, resulting in its operator constantly having to fight to keep it under control. All Pilot checks made by the operator of the spacecraft will now suffer a circumstance penalty shown on the table below.

**Hostile Effect – Controls Severed:** If a ship's control systems are damaged badly enough, the power routing and computers allowing control may be severed completely. This effectively causes the vessel to drift randomly, at the whim of gravitational forces, until the damage can be repaired or the vessel brought under alternate control (secondary controls in engineering, Minbari tractor beams, raider grapnels, and so on).

Damage Severity	Pilot Penalty	% Chance of Hostile Effect
Light	-2	5%
Moderate	-4	10%
Heavy	-6	20%
Severe	-8	40%
Catastrophic	-10	80%

### Weapons

One randomly determined weapons system is damaged by the attack. Any attack rolls made by the weapon system will suffer a circumstance penalty indicated by the table below. It should be noted that this will apply to all weapons that are linked together.





**Hostile Effect – Ammunition Explosion:** Any weapon system has some form of ammunition (missiles, plasma storage batteries and even power amplifiers for lasers) that can be ruptured or damaged. Should this occur the weapon system will immediately and automatically inflict damage upon the spacecraft as though it hit itself and ignores Damage Reduction. As this Hostile Effect is instantaneous to the attack, it may *not* be repaired or stopped as per the rules below. The damage it inflicts, however, can be.

Damage Severity	Attack Penalty	% Chance of Hostile Effect
Light	–2	10%
Moderate	–4	20%
Heavy	–6	30%
Severe	–8	40%
Catastrophic	Weapon Disabled <sup>1</sup>	50%

<sup>1</sup>After any Hostile Effect of this critical hit takes place

### Sensors/Communications

The spacecraft's sensor arrays and communications equipment are damaged, making it far more difficult to track and lock on to targets, or transmit information through primary communication methods. All Technical (electronics) checks made in relation to sensor or communications operations will now suffer a circumstance penalty shown on the table below.

**Hostile Effect – Data Broadcast:** A ship that suffers massive damage to its sensor and communications equipment can possibly begin to steadily broadcast sensitive information about the vessel; internal damage reports, computer data or any number of other bits usable by those nearby. Beside the possibility of broadcasting classified files (at the Games Master's discretion), any ship trying to acquire a lock-on to this vessel is at a +3 circumstance bonus.

Damage Severity	Technical check penalty	% Chance of Hostile Effect
Light	–2	0%
Moderate	–4	15%
Heavy	–6	30%
Severe	–8	15%
Catastrophic	–10	0%

### Life-Support

The spacecraft has suffered major venting of atmosphere and water reserves, and has a limited amount of time to get to safety before its crew will begin to suffer from hypoxia. The amount of time is variable depending on the amount of damage the system suffers, shown on the table below.

**Hostile Effect – Poisonous Residue:** A ship's life-support system that suffers massive weapon trauma



might accidentally vent some of the poisonous vapours and toxins leftover afterwards into the crew areas of the ship. If this happens, exposed crew will suffer 1 temporary Constitution damage per hour until their death at zero.

Damage Severity	Life-Support Remaining <sup>1</sup>	% Chance of Hostile Effect
Light	90%	5%
Moderate	80%	10%
Heavy	60%	15%
Severe	30%	20%
Catastrophic	10%	25%

<sup>1</sup>Common life-support times vary, but averages are shown below

## Average Life-Support Stores

Spacecraft Size Category	Maximum Life-Support Storage between Refreshing
Medium	1 hour
Large	3 hours
Huge	10 hours
Gargantuan	1 day
Colossal	3 days
Colossal II	5 days
Colossal III	15 days
Colossal IV	1 month
Colossal V	3 months or more

## Jump Engines

The spacecraft has suffered damage directed at its jump engines, making it hard or even dangerous to try and open a jump point to Hyperspace. Depending on the damage it has suffered, the jump engines have a percentage chance of failing when next used, shown on the table below.

**Hostile Effect – Energy Implosion:** A ship's jump engine is a sensitive piece of equipment that opens rifts between two dimensions, if it is damaged this process can go horribly wrong. Shown in the table below, there

is a chance the jump engine will open its jump point inward upon itself when next fired, tearing the ship to pieces in the gravitational wake. If this occurs, the Games Master should roll one critical hit result on *all* spacecraft locations except this one.

Damage Severity	Chance of Jump Engine Failure	% Chance of Hostile Effect
Light	10%	0%
Moderate	20%	5%
Heavy	40%	10%
Severe	80%	20%
Catastrophic	Jump Engine Destroyed	N/A

## Cargo

Any cargo carried by the spacecraft is damaged, destroyed or otherwise lost. The percentage of the cargo destroyed by the attack is based on the severity of the damage, as shown on the table below. If no cargo is carried by the spacecraft, no additional effects are applied. It should also be noted that no Hostile Effects can occur from hitting cargo, unless that cargo is particularly explosive, toxic or similar, and the effects of such should be up to the Games Master.

Damage Severity	% Cargo Destroyed
Light	20%
Moderate	40%
Heavy	60%
Severe	80%
Catastrophic	100%

## Repairing Hostile Effects from Critical Hits

The massively damaging Hostile Effects that can be caused by some critical hits are normally the breaking point for most spacecraft that are damaged so badly but some can be repaired by quick and skilled technicians. Any skilled character may attempt to repair a Hostile Effect, causing it to stop harming the vessel further. The DC of Technical (engineering) check required is listed on the table below. It does not repair any damage caused, but success does end the effects of the Hostile Effect immediately.



Hostile Effect Type	Technical check DC
Hull Buckling	15
Reactor Damage	20
Controls Severed	15
Data Broadcast	15
Poisonous Residue	20
Energy Implosion	25

## Selling Stolen Goods

No matter where a raider is based or where he may be headed, he will eventually need to find a way to unload his stolen goods. The very nature of selling stolen goods makes this a very dangerous part of the raider's life, one wrong move could mean imprisonment or death. Raiders need to either be very selective and private, allowing buyers to come to them knowing what they are getting or they can try and find a decent fence to take care of such things.

Simply offering the goods at a severe discount can be attractive enough to make a sale. Few traders can pass up a 'dream deal' and raiders who do not know or care how much something is truly worth may ask far less than it is worth, just to be rid of it. Since buying stolen property is a crime in *most* galactic governments, this style of goods transfer is best handled in neutral territory or in extremely private surroundings.

Better prepared raiders will have a handful of traders they commonly deal with in order to eliminate the possibility of legal entrapment, with both sides knowing the risk the other is taking. This leads to fast and profitable business that gets resolved as quickly as possible, so they may go their separate ways until the next time. Relationships like these can be traced and tracked, so both sides must be careful not to alert the authorities in any way, else they bring the other down.

The safest and most prized path stolen goods tend to take is through a good fence. Specialising in purchasing stolen or ill-gotten commodities, fences often keep stables of raiders and merchants they deal with in order to stay stocked with

both goods and cash to pay for them. A reliable and knowledgeable fence can become very wealthy and well-known in criminal circles (only a DC 10 Gather Information check to hear of one) and stay generally busy. Some even run illegal market kiosks out of their transports or on raider installations. They pay well but can be rather demanding of their business partners. If prices are not what a fence wants to pay, they may choose not to. No haggling or threats, just a simple no. It is the risk a raider takes in dealing with other criminals. The average loss taken by any raider dealing with a regular fence is modified by their raider class (or raider ace) levels and their Charisma modifier, shown on the table below.

### Average Fence Losses

Raider <sup>1</sup> Class Level + Cha Modifier	Worth of Goods Lost
1-4	50%
5-9	40%
10-14	30%
15-19	20%
20-24	10%
25+	5%

<sup>1</sup>Levels in the raider ace prestige class also count toward this number, in addition to any other classes the Games Master chooses to include





Since the amount of credits that might change hands can be very large, typically in the tens of thousands, but sometimes larger, cash transactions are rarely available on short notice. However these transactions cannot be traceable due to their illicit nature, making electronic transfers difficult to accomplish. Many raiders arrange for fake accounts which are quickly closed and cashed to stop any paper trail. To set up these accounts it either takes a dedicated application of the Contact feat, or two consecutive Forgery checks (DC15), one to set up the account and the other to close it. The money is the goal, but most raiders know it is lost if left in a fake account for longer than a week it is good to assume that it has been traced, frozen and is being monitored by the authorities. Raiders need to move quickly to get their spoils sold and liquidated, or else their mission may have all been for nothing.

Credits, once cashed, are nearly untraceable and should be any raider's primary method of payment for anything. It might raise eyebrows when a new fighter contract is paid in crates of cash or if a bribe must be shipped in a freighter, but it is better than having electronic assets seized or used to capture the raider trying to use them.

## Raider Bases

Once the cargo or target vessel has been taken, the raiders cannot simply float around with it. They will need to get a captured ship to a dock, cargo to a fence and raider cells will keep several small waypoint bases throughout their territories for just this purpose. 'Raider base' is the most common name for these waypoints, but they are rarely more than cargo docks filled with fast-handed salvagers and scrappers.

Raider bases are far more common than one would think in the galactic void. Created from abandoned civilian outposts or exploration flotillas, raiders find ways to make use of nearly any floating piece of space 'junk' that clutters the space lanes. If it can support a few dozen technicians, a few hundred thousand pounds of scrap or cargo and an escape vessel it can be used by a raider cell for offloading and emergency repairs. It really only takes a raider cell a few days to seal up any atmosphere leaks, power shorts and other safety issues, up to the acceptable standard anyway, and put a base into action for their members.

Most of these bases go unnoticed by the authorities and would not warrant the time and cost to investigate, let

alone deal with, without proof of a raider cell existing there. Even then, they are well aware that these tiny bases are replaced almost as fast as the authorities can eliminate them.

Larger bases – cell headquarters – are far rarer. Created in old military outposts or secreted in the bowels of trade centres, raider cells make sure their bases are either well-hidden, well-protected or both. They house the wealth of the raider cell and its most powerful members. These bases cannot be far from a sizeable dockyard where raider ships can be stashed, if not attached to them directly. Their fleets comprise their primary source of income, and should be nearby when the need arises to vacate the premises or target a priority opportunity at a moment's notice.

There are dozens of large raider base headquarters to be found in the galaxy but there are a few that are more prominent and active than others. In the following pages, we have compiled a listing of some of the most infamous or renowned raider bases that a Games Master might wish to use in one way or another in their campaigns.

### Beta Durani Black Market

**Location:** Beta Durani I

**Size:** 2 mile square outpost 'market'

**Population:** 1,000 to 2,000 residents

**Distance to Jump Gate:** 24 miles (from planetary orbit)

**Controlling Cell:** None (The Nightwatch Resistance from 2263 on)

**Preferred Target(s):** Commercial goods, slaves, drugs (non-human goods, non-human shipments from 2263 on)

On the Earth Alliance colony of Beta Durani I, there thrives a criminal element as solid as its atmosphere and twice as deadly as the radiation that continually bombards it. Shielded by standardised domes and gravitational fields, the colonists of the planet tend to shy away from one particular dome-city. That 'city' has become well known as the Black Market of Beta Durani.

A home for all breeds of criminal, the Market is home to more than a dozen small raider cells laying low between missions. Using the 'inexpensive' shuttles nearby, the raiders can get back to their ships lying in wait on the docking ring in orbit around the planet.



It is a breeding ground for crime and malice and is a perfect place to sell *anything* – drugs, slaves, salvaged parts and any type of stolen goods imaginable. In the Durani Market, everything has a price – even life itself. This sort of darker side of the galactic market calls raiders from all over the sector to gather, plan and deal as if their trade was legitimate. There have been actual conventions between larger cells in the Market and traders do their best to stay as far from Beta Durani I as they can – even if the Earth Alliance pays handsomely to those willing to brave the risks.

After President Clark's removal from office in 2262, the human-centric secret police force he created, known as Nightwatch, was disbanded. Rather than simply giving up the fight, many of their senior members took to the skies rather than be charged with war crimes. They became a focused form of raider cell called the 'Nightwatch Resistance' and all but took over the human sections of the Beta Durani Black Market. From this, their new secret headquarters, they plan elaborate anti-ISA attacks and do their best to harass or harm any alien-based shipments or travellers they can with a mixture of older Earthforce and cobbled raider technologies.

The Beta Durani Black Market, no matter the primary controllers or types of general dealings going on, is home to several growing raider cells and is a prime place to join one. It is a dangerous place that has devoured more lives than an event horizon, but can serve as the springboard into a criminal future for a would-be raider.

*Important Note to Visitors:* Everything in the Black Market is more expensive than it should be on purpose. Hagglng is encouraged, as most people who pay full price are immediately marked for muggers, thieves and pickpockets.

## Beta 4 Docking and Trade ring

**Location:** Beta 4/III

**Size:** 1,250 foot circumference ring, 20,000 square foot docking arm (Orion-class starbase)

**Population:** 250 residents

**Distance to Jump Gate:** 2 miles

**Controlling Cell:** Supernova Transit Team

**Preferred Target(s):** Commercial supplies, Centauri luxury cargo

Looming in orbit above the third planet of the Beta 4 system is a spinning trade ring equipped with a massive docking arm. This trade ring supports over a dozen small company stores and twice that number of free-standing trade kiosks for lease by the owning shareholders. Of the major space leasers, one is the offices of the 'Supernova Transit Team.'

Supernova is an official cargo transporting agency that has not actually undertaken a contracted shipment in the ten years it has been in existence. A cover for a large raiding cell of nearly fifty active pilots and ship crewmen, Supernova pays its taxes and fees with the profits from re-trading the stolen goods at the ring. This money keeps their ships in decent condition and docked legally in this section of space. While





Supernova also owns a fleet of unmarked raider vessels to keep suspicions from the company, they are rather infamous in trading circles nonetheless.

The ring itself is owned by a conglomerate entity based out of Centauri space and all fees and taxes go directly into an electronic account accessible in the Republic. They care very little for the goings on in the Beta 4 ring and only occasionally send officers to investigate the facilities, and even then in secret. The ring is nearly always open for business, only closing its doors for a few hours a week for routine maintenance, during which Supernova extorts 'trade insurance' from the store and kiosk merchants.

There is room on the docking arm for a dozen larger ships (sized Colossal I or smaller) to be attached by umbilical and contains room for thirty shuttlecraft in its artificially contained bays. There are landing strips and holding zones for the twenty-four Delta-V2 (for more information on the V2, see page 139) fighters that Supernova uses to 'escort' shipments to and from the jump gate, which is technically monitored by Centauri forces but rarely sees any actual military presence.

The Beta 4 ring (orbiting around the planet opposite an Earthforce military outpost) is careful not to necessarily announce its presence as a raider base. Most of the stolen goods and captured vessels brought here have been sorted and scrapped elsewhere, coming to the ring as parts or components to be fenced through the shops and traders trying to make enough money to pay off the Supernova. It is a good racket for the 'Transit Company' and with their no-violence policy while outside the Beta 4 system, there is little anyone can do to them in this neutral territory until they make a mistake and attack a military transport openly. If that were to occur, and Supernova would be caught, the trade ring would be rocked with changes and possibly a new element rising to control it.

*Important Note to Visitors:* Traders, merchants or visitors that do not pay a share of their dealings to the Supernova will be harassed while in port. Ship sabotage, vandalism and even outright attacks have been known to occur depending on the amount withheld.

## Freedom Station

**Location:** Tirrith IV

**Size:** 1.5 miles long, 500 feet in diameter

**Population:** 5,000 residents

**Distance to Jump Gate:** 700 miles

**Controlling Cell:** Tirrith Free State Elects

**Preferred Target(s):** Medicinal and scientific supplies, military goods, starship components

In the slowly evolving Tirrith Free State there orbits a former Earth Alliance orbital platform, once used as a way station for their dealings with the League of Non-Aligned Worlds. Abandoned at the end of the Earth/Minbari War in favour of the Babylon Project, the orbital attracted spacefaring salvagers from several systems away. An empty outpost does not remain so for long and the Tirrith station was no exception.

Inhabited by dozens of raider cells, the station became a main base of operations for raider activity. Its massive docking capabilities could hold nearly a hundred fighters and shuttles, and had powerful atmospheric processors that could refill nearby capitol ships effortlessly. It was a raider paradise. They renamed it 'Freedom' and they prospered in its use, until the local Tirrith government spoke up against them.

Careless of their activities as raiders, the Tirrith simply did not want *any* violence in their system. Not truly powerful enough to necessarily stop the raider cells from doing business, but annoyingly capable of harassing them should they disobey the edict, the cells agreed to use Freedom Station as a base of operations but to try and keep violent dealings outside of Tirrith space.

So near to an open-coded jump gate and so many League territories, the raiders had no problem plying their trade elsewhere. Freedom Station became a hub, where raider cells could bring their spoils to be processed, divided or even traded amongst each other. It supports thousands of varying cell pilots, crew and visitors. The Tirrith only demand that all visitors pay heavy taxes on any purchases made and that the Free State is aware of any military presence passing through the local gate. It is nearly a perfect relationship.

To 'police' the dealings on Freedom Station, the Free State chooses a council of thirteen (a sacred number to the Tirrith) Elects to watch over the many activities that need to be monitored. As all Elects are chosen through an electronic application process, the Free State itself has no idea who may or may not be Elects and frankly does not care. So long as the taxes are paid and the system stays free of their violence, they stay happy.



The Elects have since formed into a sort of 'raider council' that treats the entire population of Freedom Station as a single raider cell, and share in the profits such cooperation results in. They have become a powerful entity in raiding circles, and they have been compared to a pirate armada in the past. Freedom Station is their main headquarters and few could ever argue with their strength of arms and manpower.

*Important Note to Visitors:* The artificial gravity on Freedom Station is actually two-thirds normal Earth gravity to aid in cargo and component transfers, but can be disorienting (see low-G penalties in *The Babylon 5 Roleplaying and Fact Book*)



## Praxis Colony

**Location:** Praxis IX

**Size:** 30 square miles of linked domes

**Population:** 25,000

**Distance to Jump Gate:** 12,500 miles

**Controlling Cell:** Varies from dome to dome

**Preferred Target(s):** Varies from cell to cell

Considered one of the highest concentrations of criminal and underworld life in the galaxy, the Praxis Colony on Praxis IX is a city populated, run and plagued by the worst scum of the universe. It was once said that if the universe had a drain to siphon away the trash and filth of its many societies, it would pour into the Praxis system. The analogy is not far from the truth.

A neutral system on the very edge of the galaxy, Praxis IX is what was left behind when the horn-nosed Praxisians were culled by outsiders in the age of the first Shadow War. A vacant mining facility discovered by exiled Centauri, Praxis Colony was founded as a home for unwanted elements. The colony grew in reputation as more and more criminals and outcasts moved to the out of the way planet, bringing all of their vices with them. In the next three centuries, Praxis Colony has become legendary to criminal cells and semi-ignored by outsiders.

Actually a chain of connected domes, the Praxis Colony is technically shut to outsiders. All airlocks leading

from the toxic atmosphere into the domes are shielded by thick electronically locked doors (DC 30 Technical (electronics) check to bypass) that only answer to a number of old smuggler codes. These codes can fetch up to 10,000 credits and can never be tested elsewhere – a gamble to be sure. Most people who would buy these codes carry with them a certain reputation for dealing with those who cheat them, so the codes tend to be legitimate.

Once inside the domes, Praxis Colony is a veritable shopping plaza of the illegal. If it is illegal elsewhere, it can be found there. It is the perfect atmosphere to conduct cell business within, so a number of raiders call Praxis Colony home. Each dome carries several different cells jockeying for superiority, and underhanded back-alley negotiations and assassinations are commonplace. Each raider cell has its own ships docked all over the launch pads outside the domes, which require transit tubes and EVA suits to reach. It is not uncommon to have flights of raider fighters dog-fighting in the skies above the domes - spawning thousands of wagers amongst the many onlookers below.

Praxis Colony is also the best place for any galactic government to hire on 'unofficial help' in matters that may not be favourable in their own territories. Hitmen, smugglers, spies and, of course, raiders can be hired for any number of illegal activities for the right price. It is because of this usefulness, and its ability to keep



so many criminals so far away from civilisation, that keeps Praxis Colony from being assaulted by the authorities.

*Important Note to Visitors:* Many of the external airlocks have had their warnings removed to be used as disposal devices by residents. Some are even marked 'restrooms' or 'private' to attract the foolish.

## Raider Cells

With few exceptions, raiders group into cells in order to work efficiently. While anyone can start blasting away at cargo transports, a good raider crew will make the most out of it. Gathering out of necessity and tradition, raider cells are the gangs of the galaxy; pirate assemblies ready to steer their collective attention toward the trade routes of the galactic market.

Divided and segmented by race, experience, needs and wants these cells are scattered across the galaxy. Like the cockroaches of Earth their 'nests' seem omnipresent and are defiantly hard to extinguish completely. One raider will inevitably escape to start up a cell elsewhere; learning from the mistakes of the earlier version to evolve into a new, stronger cell.

Ranging from tiny groups of like-minded thieves that share a few cobbled ships to the multi-vessel raider fleets that take on military targets frequently to rearm their own ships, cells can survive in any number if its collective raiders are wilful enough. Weaker cells are sometimes devoured by stronger ones, frequently ending in a larger mass of raiders under a single set of commanders. Even with the occasional cell lost (due to capture or assimilation into a larger cell) they still number in the thousands and will likely never drop below half their population.

There are militant cells that treat their members as soldiers in an army, loosely watched groups of thieves living like a free society and infighting-prone raider families backstabbing their way into a captain's chair. Each cell has its own personality and its own directives, many of which will never be known by more than a few outside their own cell.

Some become so large, infamous and imposing that the galaxy as a whole pays notice to them. They are the cells that all raiders are compared to and they sometimes number in the thousands of scattered members over dozens of systems on dozens of bases. They are

powerful enough to use military-grade supplies, own platoons of boarding 'marines' specifically trained to assault enemy ships and can influence local politics with bribes, terrorism and subtle blackmail better than some legal corporations.

The following are examples of common raider cells. One is among the most powerful, the other is just beginning to become a nuisance in their corner of space. Their descriptions will detail where they originate, where they are primarily active, their overall numbers and what one of their average attack fleets consists of. These are merely guidelines that can be readily used. As always, Games Masters are encouraged to create their own raider cells to fit into their own campaigns or allow their players to form their own over time.

## Choshaka

**Territory of Origin:** Zagros, Drazi Freehold

**Base of Operations:** Sector 83

**Active Members:** 1,500 pilots, 10,000 support crew

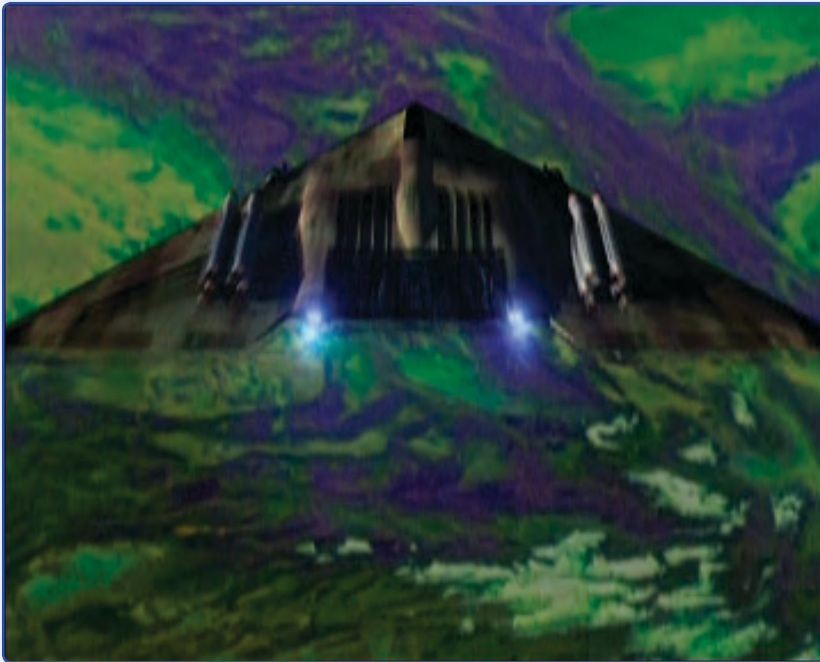
**Average Attack Fleet:** 1d2+1 Battlewagons, 1d2 Strike Carriers, 1d2 Sunhawk Battlecruisers, full accompanying fighter squadrons

Meaning 'prey stalker' in the Drazi language, the Choshaka is among the largest of the raider cells to exist in the League of Non-Aligned Worlds. Personifying its namesake since the days immediately after the Dilgar Invasion it has plagued trade routes around, but not within, the Drazi Freehold. A number of Choshaka bases have been discovered and rooted out but they continually appear and begin their attacks again and again. It seems that their powerful attack fleets are incessant in League space.

Primarily targeting Brakiri and Hyach trade routes while continually extorting goods and funds from less privileged planets (such as Imphil) or cultures like the Balosians, Choshaka pilots are devastatingly efficient. They have access to military-grade weapons and spacecraft supposedly 'lost' by the Freehold navy and are thoroughly trained in their use. It is suspected that many Choshaka raiders are indeed ex-military pilots.

Well-armed and well-trained, the Choshaka seem undaunted when attacking any fleet – commercial, personal or military –when it is upon their own terms. This is quite common, as they seem to have spies very high in governmental circles and trade outposts that feed them a constant flow of intelligence. This leads





to precision strikes that leave witnesses stunned and targets floating adrift in space. Lethally effective, the Choshaka has been credited with somewhere near 10,000 successful raids and twice that number in fatalities.

Choshaka raiders hit very hard and very fast, normally choosing the toughest escort vessel and pounding it with staggering amounts of firepower while fighter support harasses and detains cargo freighters. Having very little need for captives or the targets' ships, they frequently use assaulting boarding parties of heavily armed shock troopers to take the types of cargo they want. Once satisfied, the Choshaka will vanish into their jump points once more, leaving behind crippled and dying vessels sometimes filled with wounded. They are not exactly careful who gets hurt in the process and few who have felt their sting come away unscathed.

Targeting supply vessels and scientific fleets primarily, the Choshaka seem disinterested in military vessels for study or parts, yet consistently have upgraded and repaired military-grade vessels of their own. There is a great deal of talk in the League that the Choshaka is actually a secret division of the Freehold's armada working outside League (and eventually ISA) regulations but no proof can be found to say so.

A small contingent of Choshaka raiders were discovered working for corrupt Freehold officials 'abusing the powers of their office' while attacking a

small agricultural world called Imphil in 2262. Causing an uproar in the newly formed Alliance, the Freehold shortly removed all naval officers involved for court martial, although the whereabouts of these officers is now unknown. Ever since the near discovery of ties between their government and the Choshaka, fewer Alliance shipments were ever targeted by Choshaka for anything other than total destruction; with no witnesses, there can be no blame.

The Choshaka, based in a series of small outposts and flotillas between Sector 83 and Zagros, have become a League trader's nightmare story to tell their employees. They are a powerful reminder that not all raiders are completely interested in taking cargo over lives and that a trader can never be too sure who is truly targeting his

vessels; the man in the cockpit or the one that signs his paycheck. It is amazing how much of an impact this cell has had on commerce in their section of space. Even in areas where they have not been active for decades the words still buzz across freelancer lips, 'Beware the Choshaka'.

### **Red Credit 'Salvage' Company**

**Territory of Origin:** Praxis IX, neutral space

**Base of Operations:** Devado Station, Sin'talith System

**Active Members:** 100 assorted pilots and support crew

**Average Attack Fleet:** 1d2 Battlewagons, 1d2 Strike Carriers, half of the accompanying fighter squadrons

Formed around a poker table in one of the seedy bars on Praxis Colony by a group of out-of-luck raiders with only a few credits to their names, the Red Credit Salvage Company was established to give these louts a legitimate business to exploit once they got back onto their feet. Winning an office space on the accredited Devado Commerce Station from a half-mad Brakiri, they stole a few transports and a fighter or three and headed to their new 'company headquarters'.

In three short years they turned their fly-by-night dream into a reality and by 2257 they had a fully functional Battlewagon cruiser at their disposal. New recruits appeared here and there and it was not long before they



had their fingers in many things around the Devado. By 2259 they had a good control over several of the jump routes linking to the Sin'talith system, and their name actually carried a bit of clout behind it in raider circles once more.

Recognisable by the enamel-painted credit (red of course) they wear around their necks like dog tags, the Red Credit crew are one step shy of being Mafia on the Devado. They control much of the actual crime and some say they are on very good terms with one of the station's owners, doing unsavoury jobs for him on the side.

With the rate they seem to be growing, the Red Credit Salvage Company should branch out into other systems and outposts in no time and it seems they are always on the lookout for good pilots and information. They are known to pay well and dozens of the Devado's staff and patrons go to the Red Credit loan sharks frequently to finance a myriad of bad habits found wherever raiders are found. With so many people in their pockets, they are destined to go places.

## Unique Raider Cells

While raider cells are indeed numerous, there are maybe a dozen powerful enough to sway the galaxy with their actions (or inaction). The following pages will show a few of the more *unique* active raider cells, both of the lesser and major varieties. These are merely examples of how raider cells can be used outside of simply attacking commercial fleets for profit. Games Masters can feel free to use them in their campaigns, if they so choose, or let their players create their own examples over the course of a campaign!

### Buiyovli Order - 'The Controlled Flow'

**Territory of Origin:** Abba, Abbai Matriarchate

**Base of Operations:** Tirolus III

**Active Members:** 400 pilots, 3,500 support crew

**Average Attack Fleet:** 1d3 Battlewagons, 1d3 Strike Carriers, 1d3 decommissioned Abbai frigates, full accompanying fighter squadrons

The Abbai are arguably the most defensive species in the galaxy and it is in their nature to despise raiders and their activities. It might seem strange for them then to support, albeit confidentially, such a large fleet of offensive ships found in the Buiyovli Order. Translated

in abbath to mean *the controlled flow*, the Matriarchate created the Order to protect the numerous League trade routes they have created or supported over the years. Essentially a subsidised raider cell designed to solely cannibalise other raider fleets, the Order still hunts on the space lanes. The only difference is that their prey is actually the predators.

Operating just as secretive and underhanded as any other raider cell, the Buiyovli Order use all of the same tactics and scheming that conventional raiders do. They gather information on prime commercial targets and target-rich trade routes, and then lie in wait for the raiders to come. Unlike their heavily defensive military, the Abbai in the Order support fast and decisive actions that disable raider vessels quickly.

Granted access to older decommissioned Abbai frigates and cruisers, the Order combines the rough raider edge of a normal cell with the careful precision of Abbai tacticians for impressive results. While they are performing as raiders, they remain Abbai and try their best to disable rather than destroy their targets. This not only allows them to keep their moral high ground on their activities but it gives them prisoners to deliver to the Trade Marshals and salvageable ships to add to their own fleets.

Based from their 'secret' moon base orbiting Tirolus III, the Order recruit from nearly any League race save the Drazi, who are often far too violent for Abbai tastes. They train in flight simulators for a period of six months, weeding out those who are actually raiders bent on profit. When ready and satisfied, they join a hunting fleet and go out with their peers. This selection process works most of the time, but has yielded the occasional raider looking for a free ride.

Due to the 'unofficial' nature of the Buiyovli, the Abbai cannot protect the Order outside of Matriarchate space. The League bylaws state very clearly that any military forces must be reported for records, which the Abbai have not done with the cell. They are well aware of the corruption in many of the other League governments, and fear for the Order's ability to perform unhindered if they were to announce its presence officially. Due to this secrecy, the Buiyovli Order is self-policing and vigilante-like when dealing with internal problems.

Rumoured to have splinter bases sprouting up all over the League, the Buiyovli Order does its best to leave its mark on the raiding cells that plague commerce there.



They are still quite small and with their strict moral codes and instinctive restraint they battle an ever-growing foe with one hand tied behind their backs at all times. Even so, they are a welcome sight to commercial traffic when being attacked by true raiders, and seem to be making at least a little headway in their corner of space.

## The Fyr'gossan - 'Star Dragons'

**Territory of Origin:** Akdor, Sh'lassan Empire

**Base of Operations:** Akdor IV

**Active Members:** 250 pilots, 1,500 support crew

**Average Attack Fleet:** 1 Battlewagon, 1d2 Strike Carriers, half-capacity of accompanying fighter squadrons

Once called Sh'lassan rebels, these raiders' political message was all but snuffed out by the Earth Alliance in 2259 during the infamous Matok Massacre. Even so, the lust for freedom continued. The Sh'lassan Empire only agreed to rejoin the Earth Alliance in name alone, remaining as the sovereign government they created in the days of the Belt Alliance. One of their less known tools of this independence was the Fyr'gossan raiders.

A cell of former rebels who escaped the massacre to get back to Sh'lassa, the 'Star Dragons' (translated from so-called *native* Sh'lassan) are a growing force in the Empire. They are focused on raiding and taking Earth Alliance (particularly EarthForce) vessels to be refitted with Narn-purchased weaponry and used in the eventual war of freedom that will take place in 2272. By that time they will have a sizeable fleet of EA vessels and a few of their own but until that point they are treated mainly as lesser raiders. They take a bite here, a bite there, but are more or less ignored by EarthGov.

Having to relocate to Sh'lassa for a short period of time until 2261, when all of Earthforce was rocked with Sheridan's civil war, the Star Dragons came back to their former rebel base on Akdor IV and began to rebuild the raider cell. Every year more Sh'lassans would come and devote their lives to the cell and the search for independence.



The Star Dragons are typical raiders interested only slightly in the cargo of their targets. They primarily want the actual ships themselves and, more importantly, their escorts. Surviving crews from their targets are rounded up and placed in the most survivable vessel and are very seldom taken prisoner or executed. No matter the vessel, three items are taken if at all possible: the jump engine, weapon systems and communications equipment. These systems are expensive and hard to manufacture in the Empire, and are far easier to retrofit or reverse-engineer from parts.

Small by raider cell standards in 2260, the Star Dragons are in a steady incline toward a powerful 'criminal' contingent until their eventual battle for freedom in 2272, at which point the Star Dragons are no longer raiders at all but an elite sect of fighter and cruiser pilots serving the Sovereign Sh'lassan Empire. Until those events take place, they are a constant threat to freelance and Earth Alliance trade vessels and escorts travelling within two transit points of Sh'lassan space, including shipments to and from Babylon 5.

## The Ghosts of Omelos

**Territory of Origin:** Omelos System

**Base of Operations:** Wahant I

**Active Members:** 100 assorted pilots and support crew (pre-2265), 1,000 assorted pilots and support crew (post-2265)

**Average Attack Fleet:** 1d2 Battlewagons, 1d3 Jashakar Frigates, full accompanying fighter squadrons, 10% chance of *Rah'Kahn* Ochlavita Destroyer flagship after 2265



In 2232, when the burgeoning Earth Alliance pushed the Dilgar Invasion back to its source in the Omelos system, then holding them there until its star collapsed and killed the race nearly entirely, the Dilgar were thought to be extinct. Throughout the years there have been dozens of 'Dilgar sightings' and many believe that the biological sciences of their kind may have allowed a small number of them to survive. It has never been much of a worry for anyone, as the Dilgar could never be the power they once were now that so many other governments have risen to their technological level or beyond.

On a small, out of the way planet on the rim called Wahant I, there exists a cell of raiders bent on the reclamation of scientific and medical technologies capable of doing the impossible; reviving the Dilgar. Wahant served as a subterranean research base for the Dilgar, and many of the cryogenically frozen bio-samples and research subjects remained in stasis long after the shelling ceased.

Discovered in the early 2240s by a group of anarchistic terrorists who revived a small number of the research subjects, who in turn slaughtered their discoverers, the Ghosts of Omelos were born. Using the old Wahant research facilities as a base of operations, the Ghosts pay extremely well any raiders willing to take scientific and medical supplies from the nearby Abbai, Balosians and Hyach. Their mission was simple, to use this collection of supplies to eventually clone a new breed of Dilgar.



Using rebuilt or uncovered Dilgar war surplus and 'donated' raider vessels, the Ghosts of Omelos attack mercilessly on any target that could further the goals of their secret agenda. Most of the raiders involved have no idea what is the final goal of the Ghosts, merely that the pay is very high and the ships they are allowed to pilot are powerful when compared to the 'tugboats' they are used to.

One of the founders and benefactors of the Ghosts of Omelos broke free of her role in the cell to take her 'immortality serum' to other governments – against the wishes of her peers in the Ghosts (see the episode reference of *Deathwalker* in the main rulebook). The folly of Jha'Dur caused the Ghosts of Omelos to become fully focused on their cloning research.

By the year 2265 their research yielded an entire batch of Dilgar clones, both male and female, to crew the enormous flagship of the Ghosts, the *Rah'Kahrn* (meaning 'Fallen One' in Dilgar) for its debut into the Ghost's attack fleets. The clones are not perfect genetic matches to the original Dilgar, but are close enough to be considered a good start for the Ghosts, who immediately began research into a second, *better*, batch.

The Ghosts of Omelos are purely hit and run raiders in search of technological components before 2265, at which point they become a far deadlier foe to the outskirts planets and routes of the Interstellar Alliance, who have their own worries focused elsewhere with the Drakh.

## Raider Fleets

To perform their duties effectively, raiders require sizeable fleets to patrol or hunt upon the space lanes. Unlike military fleets that generally get grouped depending on the priority of the mission, raider fleets are really only defined by the target, or whether or not the cell is defending against attackers, be it legal authorities, military forces or rival raiders.

There are a number of attack fleets listed below, each one classified by the type of target or reason for attack. These attack fleets are variable even within their own rankings and may have percentages listed for 'racial vessels'. These vessels are often refitted, repaired or captured ships from the raider cell's nearest galactic government. Some governments' vessels are exempt from this 'borrowing' factor, such as the Minbari, but



## Fighter Compliments and Racial Vessels

In the fleet listings there are mention of Racial Vessels and two different types of Delta fighter. There is some degree of variation in their uses. When assembling a raider fleet from the listings, there are a few notes to remember. It is not crucial that these be followed, but it makes more sense in the Babylon 5 universe if the Games Master at least recognises why the variations are in place.

Any Racial Vessel chosen by a raider fleet that comes standard with any sort of fighter, assault craft or shuttles should have *half* normal compliment to show destroyed or damaged craft during the actual taking of the vessel. These Racial craft are assumed to have been refitted for the raider cell's use but unless the crew is of the proper species who originally designed the vessel, it will suffer a circumstance penalty of -2 to Pilot skill checks.

Any raider fleet created in the year 2260 or prior will only have access to the Delta-V fighter model (see page 139). If created after 2260, any raider vessel can replace any or all Delta-V fighters with the newer and more expensive Delta-V2 models. They may still choose to use the older and cheaper Delta-Vs, but can choose to use the newer models if the funds permit it.

crafty raiders can find ways of using nearly anything effectively when called upon to do so.

These fleets are not immutable, nor are their number enforced by any code or law. The following numbers are simply a good average and could easily be adjusted up or down at the Games Master's wishes. These fleets should be manipulated to best suit his particular campaign's style or feel and are nothing but guidelines.

## Defence Fleets

While protecting the raiders' main base or outpost, the cell can scramble an impressive number of spacecraft to ensure its survival. Combining a frantic will to avoid capture or destruction with the sheer number of combatants, these defence fleets give better-than-average odds to each individual pilot to survive the attack, long enough to escape if need be.

In addition to the vessels of the fleet itself, it should be noted that many raider outposts and bases have additional starship-grade weapon systems jury-rigged to their superstructures. It may not make much of a difference as crew scramble for their various vessels, but some larger raider cell outposts pack enough firepower to cripple military attack ships in just a few rounds.

### Headquarters Defence Fleet

Launching all available vessels to protect the main base of the raider cell, this fleet can shunt off all but the most offensive attacks. With the aid of the base's own weaponry, the veritable cloud of fighters and bulk of capitol ships the raiders should be able to at least hold the attackers off long enough to open several jump points and escape, if not defeat the attackers completely.

#### 5 (1-2) Command and Control Ships

5 (12-24) Delta-Vs and Delta-V2s (full compliment)

#### 5 (3-4) Battlewagons

5 (72-96) Delta-Vs and Delta-V2s (full compliment)

#### 5 (3-4) Strike Carriers

5 (72-96) Delta-Vs and Delta-V2s (full compliment)

#### 5 (1-2) Racial Vessels (100% chance)

#### 5 (24-48) Delta-Vs, Delta-V2s and Racial Fighters

### Outpost Defence Fleet

Protecting an outlying raider outpost is important to any cell. When attacked, a raider outpost can put a surprising amount of fighter support into the fray as the outpost is evacuated. Nearly every raider crewmember is taught how to fly a simple fighter and with the outpost endangered all but secondary weapon crews and the infirm remain behind during the battle.



5 Command and Control Ship  
⚔ (0-12) Delta-Vs and Delta-V2s (full compliment)

5 (1-3) Battlewagons  
⚔ (24-72) Delta-Vs and Delta-V2s (full compliment)

5 (1-2) Strike Carriers  
⚔ (24-48) Delta-Vs and Delta-V2s (full compliment)

5 Racial Vessels (50% chance)

5 (12-36) Delta-Vs and Delta-V2s

**Picket Defence Fleet**

Staking out a claimed vessel that may be adrift while waiting for engineers or assault teams to arrive, these fleets are designed to simply be on the lookout for enemies until the claim can be hauled back to the outpost. They are not attack forces and should flee at first option if outnumbered or outgunned.

5 Battlewagon  
⚔ (0-12) Delta-Vs and Delta-V2s (half compliment)

5 Strike Carrier  
⚔ (0-24) Delta-Vs and Delta-V2s (full compliment)

**Reconnaissance Fleets**

Raiders rarely have good intelligence reports to base their schemes on, merely the drunken words of an informant or two to risk millions of credits worth of starships on attack runs. Even the most hasty of raider cells realise how foolish this can be and many put together small 'recon' fleets to check on an informant's information before committing an entire attack fleet.

**Hyperspace Scout Wing**

Leaving their carrier behind and nearby in realspace, these fighter flights scatter into Hyperspace nearby a possible target to investigate its ebbs and tides before trying to manoeuvre larger vessels into position.

5 (12-24) Delta-Vs and Delta-V2s

5 Racial Scouting Vessel (35% chance)

**Rapid Scout Wing**

Distress calls can be as blood in the water to sharks when picked up by raider cells. Not having the sort of time to put together a full fleet to respond, some raider cells will send a single vessel and its accompanying fighter support in order to make use of the possibly disabled craft.

5 Strike Carrier  
⚔ (24) Delta-Vs and Delta-V2s (full compliment)

**System Intel Fleet**

When moving into new systems raider cells must be careful not to get snuffed out before they can set up a new outpost or base of operations. They will need to be ready to set up an outpost the instant a suitable one becomes available, meaning that support crew and cell members must already be in tow. The fleet must be able to defend itself while the outpost is being arranged but without setting off any major alerts to local governments and rival cells.

5 (1-3) Supply Freighters

5 Battlewagon  
⚔ (0-24) Delta-Vs and Delta-V2s (full compliment)

5 (1-3) Strike Carriers  
⚔ (24-72) Delta-Vs and Delta-V2s (full compliment)

5 (0-2) Racial Vessel (75% chance for 1, 25% chance for 2)

**Attack Fleets**

The heart and soul of any raider cell, their attack fleets are often enormous swarms of fighters clouding around the few ships that brought them, overwhelming targets with sheer numbers rather than crack pilots or superior technology. They sweep in, knock as many target systems out pass after pass and wait for a target's surrender. They are expected to suffer a number of casualties amongst the rookies but each fleet is sized accordingly knowing this fact.

**Attack Fleet I**

Used to target larger convoys of commercial traffic who might have sufficient escorts or military aid,



this style of fleet is rather straightforward. It consists of a number of heavier vessels that release staggering amounts of fighters just before opening their ambush point, hopefully catching these more dangerous targets by surprise. Fleets of this calibre assemble to attack targets carrying 1,000,000 credits or more in cargo, but often make far more in the salvage of convoy ships disabled during the battle.



### 5 Command and Control Ship *(often waiting in Hyperspace)*

1 (12) Delta-Vs and Delta-V2s *(full compliment)*

### 5 (1-3) Battlewagons

1 (24-72) Delta-Vs and Delta-V2s *(full compliment)*

### 5 (1-3) Strike Carriers

1 (24-72) Delta-Vs and Delta-V2s *(full compliment)*

### 5 (1-3) Racial Vessels *(50% chance of 1, 25% chance of 2 and 25% chance of 3)*

## Attack Fleet II

Primarily used to target small freelance commercial groups or lone military transports, these groups rely on hit and run attacks to soften their targets before fully disabling the most capable ship in the target's fleet. They rarely can stand up to long or harrowing engagements and use the typical 'one jump in, one jump out' raider tactic. These fleets are the most common of the raider attack fleets and are used to attack targets carrying between 100,001 and 999,999 credits of cargo, but have the possibility of making more in salvage afterwards.

### 5 Command and Control Ship

1 (0-6) Delta-Vs and Delta-V2s *(half compliment)*

### 5 Battlewagon

1 (24) Delta-Vs and Delta-V2s *(full compliment)*

### 5 (1-2) Strike Carriers

1 (24-48) Delta-Vs and Delta-V2s *(full compliment)*

### 5 (1-2) Racial Vessels *(75% chance of 1, 25% chance of 2)*

## Attack Fleet III

The terrors of the space lanes, these raider fleets are small and dangerous to small ships and lone traffic trying to slip between the stars unnoticed. Rarely larger than just a single ship and its fighters these attack fleets target lone commercial ships with bloody ambushes to take cargo or salvage. This type of fleet often targets ships carrying up to 100,000 credits worth of cargo and will need to eliminate or capture the target's crew.

### 5 Strike Carrier

1 (24) Delta-Vs and Delta-V2s *(full compliment)*

### 5 Battlewagon

1 (0-24) Delta-Vs and Delta-V2s *(full compliment)*



## Assault Force

There does come the occasion when a raider cell must attack a larger target. From destroying a competing raider cell outpost to harassing trade platforms for extortion money, fleets such as these are rarely used. It puts far too much of a cell's resources into one engagement and should disaster strike it could be devastating. If all goes well when these fleets mobilise however, it will take military influence to stand in their path unharmed.

- ⑤ (1-2) Command and Control Ships  
Ⓜ (12-24) Delta-Vs and Delta-V2s (*full compliment*)
- ⑤ (3-5) Battlewagons  
Ⓜ (72-120) Delta-Vs and Delta-V2s (*full compliment*)
- ⑤ (3-4) Strike Carriers  
Ⓜ (72-96) Delta-Vs and Delta-V2s (*full compliment*)
- ⑤ (3-4) Racial Vessels (*100% chance*)

## Using Raiders in a Campaign

The threat of raiders is a motivation for most starships to get where they are going quickly and quietly, and traders keep their sensors honed in search of any unidentified crafts that might contain them. It makes perfect sense for *regular* spacefarers to be wary of raiders as they move from jump point to jump point. Nearly any space going campaign will occasionally need to deal with raiders, if not in their ships it will be on foot or over communications.

How then, do the raiders fit into *their own* campaigns? Games Masters can look to raider characters for many things: action, moral dilemmas, espionage and even regret in some cases. They can bring a certain excitement to the game that normal criminal characters do not.

Games Masters might be reluctant to allow a single raider to join with a mixed group of other professions, seeing as raiders tend to work in packs or join cells. While this can lead to inter-player conflict as the raider wants to go trader-hunting while all his allies want to do something a little more suited to their strengths, it can also make for some very good roleplay as the

raider tries to persuade his comrades into join him or even his cell.

There is always a risk involved when taking a group of players into a starship battle, as one bad critical hit could spell doom for the entire group. Having a raider flying wingman to the group can make a huge difference, as many of the raider's abilities do not just make him a terror against trade vessels but any that might be threatening his allies! The first time the raider uses his signature ability to knock out life-support or weapons systems against an attacking enemy, his allies will be grateful to have him around after all.

Another option for Games Masters to consider is the very real possibility that their players might have their characters turn to a life of trade-route crime, multiclassing into raider as they become more and more attuned with the lifestyle. A successful raider might just impress his allies enough to join him wholeheartedly, not just as supporting friends but 'riding fire' right next to him.

Campaigns involving higher numbers of raider or raider-related characters will tend to focus on space travel and space combat, both of which may not be very exciting for some characters. We encourage Games Masters to find ways of giving every player a duty to perform in a space combat, even if it is just monitoring sensor sweeps or helping with damage control. After a few battles though, most players will find something for their characters to help with during these combats.

Raiders also work well at the beginning of any campaign when designed in numbers. Groups of players who all start as rookie raiders, growing at different paces in different paths to create numerous supporting crew and cell members as they multiclass into various other options can steer the plots of an entire storyline. Campaigns based around a growing raider cell, where the players are trying to be successful in their chosen profession, can be a fresh break from common goals as well.

Regardless how raiders find their way into a Games Master's campaign, they can be just as exciting on the ground as they can be in the cockpit. Gathering information for the cell, planning raids and ambushes, sabotaging trade or rival vessels and making deals with dirty politicians; there is a great deal that a raider can accomplish without even touching the control stick of his fighter.



# Commerce, Taxes and Profit

*'The credit takes many shapes and sizes these days. It is just too bad none of them are easy to hold on to.'*

*Filo Recario Hase, Zocalo supply trader*

The galactic market supports millions of investors, traders, merchants, suppliers and con men. All of them come to the trade routes in search of one primary goal: money. It is through the search for wealth and monetary gain that the market thrives through even the hardest of times. No matter how dry sales on one side of the galaxy might get, somewhere else there are those who cannot hold back the tide of buyers. It is a swirl of chaotic supply-and-demand choices unfathomable to the untrained eye.

Those who know how it works would say differently.

The market itself has four main points to take into consideration each time an individual tries to use it; cost, cargo, destination and taxes. These four points, when combined with the market knowledge of the individual applying them, make up the equation. That equation denotes the profit or loss that a transaction will result in. Sounds simple, but it has taken some traders *decades* to rise above the debts they accrued along the way.

Cost is the primary starting point for all transactions, as any trader can verify. If a transport is charging too much, a union wants a bigger share or if the commodity is far more expensive than planned - the deal might never produce a gain. Successful traders know when to walk away from a deal before it begins, as there is no sense in throwing credit after credit into a trade just to *maybe* break even. That is not worth the effort or the risk.

The choice and amount of cargo is paramount to a good trade. Even if a trader gets a great deal on a quantity of an item but can only manage to move half of it, losses will make the 'great deal' seem foolish. It is up to the trader to decide what to fill his holds with and how much. While this does go hand in hand with the costs of the trade, there is far more to the cargo a trader carries than simply a tag on a crate.



Setting a specific destination for the trade can mask over bad decisions of how much and what to sell. War-torn systems will pay extra for weapons and medical supplies. Planets suffering droughts will turn any food trade into pure profit. Even the systems that seem to have everything will go out of their way to pick up that special something.

Taxes. The great equaliser of the galactic market. No matter where a trader will take his deals, the taxman will demand tribute. Governments, outpost management, patrol commissions and others will all hear the sounds of a trader's wealth growing... and want their share. Taxation is a necessary evil in the market, as without it many of the services that make galactic trade feasible would cease to flourish and smugglers would rule the space lanes. After a few trades that get cut short due to heavy taxes, traders learn quickly where not to step unintentionally and who takes the most when they do.

Once all fees have been paid and the deal is done, the trader is hopefully left with enough profit to make it worthwhile. Tiny profits will eventually add up. Every loss will feel like the pull of a black hole and every gain a victory. The market may not be kind to everyone involved with it but it does reward all those who make the right choices (or have the right stroke of luck at the right time).



## Cost

The primary choices for any trader always involve cost. Cost of supplies. Cost of commodities. Cost of wages. Cost to insure the costs the trader has already incurred. It is what sets the tone for the rest of the trade. Spend too much initially, the trader may never make back his funds. Spend too little and he might risk sitting on a commodity long past its usefulness. Depending on a trader's initial costs, the whole deal might simply end up being a credit-recycling process where nothing is gained except market experience. For some that might be enough, but most traders are in the market to make a profit.

The term 'cost' is simply a defining moniker for the number of credits (or the credit worth of items) used in the trade. Throughout this chapter there will be references to cost. This number could be anything, which is why the system works for all classes of trader. Cost might refer to 300 credits worth of engineer wiring or a billion credits in an electronic Ak-Habil investment account. The cost is merely a figure that is applied to the greater market equations to figure out loss or gain. It really does not matter if the cost is a week's salary or a family's life savings, the rules remain the same.

Costs can be simple and direct, like the purchasing of commodities for the trade, or they can be ongoing and ever-present, like the repairs of a trader's freight vessels. Although there could be any number of unique and interesting reasons cost can be higher than initially expected, the following is a list of several commonplace sources of cost.

### Starship Cost and Registry

Trading along the space lanes requires starships and starships require funding. It often falls upon the trader to pay for these costs in one way or another. No matter if a trader is paying a single wage to a freelance captain (who may use the money to pay for his own costs) or if a trade company is preparing their own vessels for market use, it will get paid. If it does not, the trader is no longer playing by the rules and risks being labelled as a smuggler.

No matter the source, a commercial starship looking to travel through anything but neutral space will need to pay annual fees to their government for registration codes. These codes automatically transfer to any and all

cargo pods or towed freight and carry authorisations to use hundreds of jump gates across the galaxy. Without the codes, a transport would likely have to bribe jump gate operators or pay hefty fines every time they jump to or from Hyperspace. Depending on the trip, it can be far less expensive just to pay for a ship's registry and begin trading.

Depending on the size, armament and government registering the vessel, it could cost anywhere from 1,000 to a quarter of a million credits to register a commercial ship, not including annual fees or armament licensing! These fees are variable from race to race but they are necessary to run any sort of legitimate trade in the galactic territories. For more on registering commercial starships, see *The Babylon 5 Galactic Guide*, which goes into greater length on how much and why these fees are to be paid.

### Cargo Insurance

Established or worrisome traders who know what a single cargo loss could mean to their extended success do not simply watch their cargo float away with a gentle 'goodbye'. Most professional transport companies or freelance pilots will offer specialised insurance packages to traders looking to protect their cargo. By simply adding a portion of the haul's worth to the cost of hiring the transport, the courier agrees to pay the full worth of the cargo if it is lost or taken.

Unlike the specialised rates offered to ships on retainer, most insurance rates are sold per individual loads. Freelance cargo runners who feel they could 'never be raided' or 'know a faster way' will sometimes offer insurance rates specifically to make some extra credits on each run (unless the cargo is lost, at which point they may lose everything). It can be a fantastic way for cargo runners to pad their wages but even a single mishap could cost literally millions. More than a few cargo runners have disappeared when a cargo haul did the same; to avoid their expecting employers or on account of them.

The standard cargo insurance rates listed in the table below are a guideline for what *most* cargo runners would ask for. If the cargo run is especially dangerous or high-profile, like shipments of Quantum-40 moving through raider-heavy territories, the rates could be doubled or even tripled.



## Standard Insurance Rates

Worth of Cargo Being Insured	Minimum Payment to Insure Cargo <sup>1</sup>
1-10,000 cr.	10%
10,001-50,000 cr.	8%
50,001-100,000 cr.	6%
100,001-250,000 cr.	4%
250,001-1,000,000 cr.	2%
1,000,001 cr. +	1%

<sup>1</sup>To have a return payment equal to cargo's worth

## Cargo Costs

The majority of a trade's cost will obviously be in the purchase of the cargo as without it there would be no trade! Whether it is thousands of credits in foodstuffs headed to the Narn Homeworld or millions of credits in repair components on its way to Babylon 5, the cargo must first be bought before it can be sold.

The cost of the traded commodity is generally based on how far from its source or origin it is being purchased. Buying directly from the producers will save credits when compared to buying from a secondary distributor but this can raise transit costs in getting to and from the producers. A good rule traders will go by is the '10% rule'. It states that from producer to distributor, to trader to merchant there will be roughly a 10% rise in the commodities' worth every time they change hands prior to the final buyer (who typically pays 30% to 50% more than what the merchant purchased them for).

Traders will also want to make sure all cargo transport containers (magnetic crates, secure-cases or even commercial stasis bubbles) are all in working order and will suitably protect the cargo during transit. Very few cargo freighters have artificial gravity and a single loose lid or faulty strap could mean a fortune floating around in a very cold and cluttered cargo hold. Every trader can imagine how just a few bottles of chemical solvent bouncing around in a packed cargo hold can become a far more expensive blunder than just the cost of the bottles. When coming to securing cargo, no expense should be spared.

Cargo cannot be taken lightly and a bad purchase at too high a price could set an ugly precedent for the remainder of the trade. Similarly, a cargo sale at a greatly reduced rate should give pause to any trader as

well; there may be something wrong with the cargo or it may be of a lesser grade than first thought. Selling bad cargo can stain a trader's reputation for a long time so they should always be ready to pay a good price – not too much but not too little – for the right type of deal.

## Cargo

The real focus of any trade is the cargo being traded. Without it there would be no galactic market, no runners, no traders and no profit. It is the reason the market exists and thrives. The commodities that fill transport holds and cargo pods at the thousands of stations, outposts and transit points in the galaxy are as varied as the people trafficking them.

Each trader must choose what sort of cargo he will be involved with, where he plans to take it and how much he will settle for to be rid of it. It is not a simple matter of money, as some cargoes are actually more dangerous to deal in than others, attracting raiders like moths to a flame. The most dangerous types of cargo are nearly always the most profitable, so it is up to the willingness of the each trader to decide what is worth the risk.

Here are the nine main general archetypes of cargo a trader can traffic in. Each archetype covers a rather broad section of goods or services that could be traded on the galactic market. Their descriptions will explain what sort of item can be classified into these categories and what sort of major system events might alter their worth. There may be items or services that do not easily fit into one archetype or another, of which the Games Master has the final say as to where they apply.

## Arms and Military Goods

Considered some of the most dangerous cargo to deal in, military goods can also be the most lucrative. It is true that guns, armour, explosives and munitions fall into this group, but several other items do as well. High-end scanning and jamming equipment, denser-grade hull plating and even shielded communications arrays can be considered military goods if they are strictly controlled by one government's armed forces. While not essentially 'military' goods, many controlled substances that are being legally transferred from one place to another receive similar protocols and treatment, and are often riding the fine line between trade and smuggling.



### Established Insurance Agencies

Some traders may wish not to insure their cargo through the cargo runners as it carries with it some inherent risk of loss. These traders may seek out their government's insurance agencies to go after their cargo losses for them. Instead of the 'per trip' rates above, insurance agencies cost a set amount annually (although monthly payments are accepted) and will work out a return on *any* lost cargo of their clientele.

Here are a few examples of established insurance agencies, how they conduct business and how much they cost for what sort of compensation.

#### EarthPro Inc.

The leading insurance agency on all of Earth, EarthPro was the final victor of the takeover-ridden corporate era of the 22<sup>nd</sup> Century. Gobbling up hundreds of smaller insurance agencies, EarthPro became the primary name in insurance for the Earth Alliance and now has near-monopolised control over the industry. For an annual cost of 12,000 credits EarthPro will cover up to 500,000 credits worth of losses each year. Higher rates can be negotiated for higher-traffic traders or higher-price companies but the standard remains the same.

#### Ekaltan Cargo Marshalling Guild

Unsurprisingly based out of offices on Ekalta II, the Marshalling Guild is a well-known insurance agency working solely for trade in the League of Non-Aligned Worlds. For a steep 50,000 credits a year in addition to a 10,000 credit claim fee, this collection of Brakiri Trade Marshals will return a vessel and its cargo to the insured party within 30 days of the claim. So confident is the Guild, that they guarantee a claim to be returned or the Guild will arrange for a ship and cargo of equal value to replace it on the 31<sup>st</sup> day, often taken from the Trade Marshals' many repossessions!

#### Antarean Royal Insurance

The only outside insurance agency used by the Centauri Republic's Merchant Fleet, the Antareans have become very close allies with House Callo and their employees. Basically a money-laundering company used to aid Centauri smugglers in recycling cargo and credits for a small fee, Royal Insurance still offers legitimate services to those who can pay them. For 16,000 credits a year the Antareans will pay 75% of the worth of *any* shipment, which can be a great windfall for the trader who loses a huge shipment. Luckily for the Antareans, they have access to many House Sorрати assassins (see page 33) who eliminate those traders the Antareans believe are 'milking the system'.

Military goods of any variety are of some of the highest attractors of raiders, as nearly anything that qualifies can be put to considerable use by their cells. Competition is rarely a factor as most military goods and cargo are only ever sold to reputable traders with stiff and secure governmental contracts; not the kind of business that requires much haggling. Prices are set ahead of time

and few traders can argue with weapons manufacturers and targeting computer designers over a few thousand credits per quantity when 'negotiations' begin.

It should be noted that arms and other military cargos receive a +5 bonus on the Profit/Loss Modifier table when trading to any buyer currently involved in a war



or extended conflict but conversely suffer a -5 penalty on the Profit/Loss Modifier table (see page 112) when trading with a pacifistic or peaceful buyer.

## Finished Goods

This cargo archetype is commonly the trader's best friend. These are the actual products (from electronics and furniture to pre-fabricated housing and training manuals) merchants peddle in their marketplaces. Raw materials and resources that were once traded to production facilities have spewed forth an unbelievable number of finished products and now are to be transported once more to their sellers around the galaxy.

Any trader can solicit the ability to trade in finished goods. They may not have much of a profit margin as all of the commodity prices have already taken their toll but they are a good and solid constant source of minimal gains. Beginning traders should always realise they can fall back on finished goods when they are in need of a few hundred credits here and there, unless the trader manages to get an exclusivity clause with the producers of the cargo.

Finished goods are rarely very difficult to move from one place to another, as they are almost always legal in any galactic territory the trader would be asked to deliver them to. Nearly all traders who traffic finished goods have teams of merchants or partners who take them directly off their hands. Often pre-packaged and secure in their transit bins, finished goods are always a safe way for traders to make a small profit with little risk.

It should be noted that any cargo shipment registered and manifested to be carrying the majority of its hold in finished goods has a significantly reduced possibility of being attacked by raiders. Raiders rarely go out of their way to attack vessels carrying these sorts of cargoes, if only for the sheer fact that the possible expense of the raid could outweigh the normal retail profit of the items!

## Food and Perishables

Some would call this type of cargo a trader's nightmare, as more problems occur with foodstuff trading and transporting than arguably any other facet of the trade industry. It requires specially crafted preservation measures be taken through individually structured containers, commercial stasis packaging or even

regulated atmospheric conditions in the vessel's hold. A lot can go wrong with cargo that can technically 'go bad' or spoil.

Any type of cargo that can devalue so considerably is a great risk. If a shipment is quarantined or delayed for some reason or if the transports are harassed and detained by raiders, the cargo could become worthless, making the trade itself a major loss. Where there are those like the Pak'ma'ra who will still take spoiled shipments off a trader's hands for a portion of what it is worth, a bad food shipment can be devastating to a trader's financial stability.

Not all perishables are actually foodstuffs though. Any cargo that requires special temperature or atmospheric needs, like livestock or pets, but does not fall into a different category (such as how plasma batteries require pressure fields but are considered 'industrial' in nature of cargo) should be considered to be in this archetype.

Those who can manage to trade food and perishables well can become well used and well protected by their buyers. Colonies or outposts on arid or inhospitable worlds will particularly treasure their food traders and prices can skyrocket in areas such as those. Food and other nutrients that make up these cargo shipments are one of the basic needs of any life form, which means that any trader willing to deal in them can make as high a profit as the buyers' needs allow.

As a note, any food and perishable cargo shipment traded to a culture or area that cannot feed its own population has no limit as to the possible gain rolled on the Profit/Loss Modifier table. Also, any food-based cargo shipment that has taken long enough to spoil (which is up to the say of the Games Master) is worthless as a food product (except to the Pak'ma'ra, who will buy it at 60% original worth nearly every time).

## Industrial Supplies

There are countless varieties of hard industry that can be found throughout the galaxy and this archetype of cargo consists of all the items used to keep them functioning. Mining supplies, production components and more specialised tools of the trades are good examples of what 'industrial cargos' tend to be. The individual parts of an industrial shipment typically are either a quantity of smaller tools or objects or just a few large ones. A load of a thousand vibro-picks headed



toward the Quantum-40 mines on Latig I or a pair of smelting furnaces on its way to Ragesh System are therefore industrial cargo, while the steel plating that Duraplate Inc. manufactures would not be.

Industrial goods are a decent and safe cargo archetype for nearly any trader. Raiders rarely have the resources to make use of large components and would be probably caught trying to trade or fence them further. There is a good margin for re-trade on industrial goods, as the galaxy's industries are constantly evolving and expanding. Even if a trade does not occur quickly, these types of cargo rarely fall into disrepair over time. Almost any trader could find a lower-technology home for them should an original buyer surpass the components' use, making them obsolete on *that* planet but still a commodity elsewhere.

The only drawback to carrying industrial goods in a trader's cargo hold is the lack of space to carry anything else. Industrial supplies can be packaged well or prepared for mass transit, but bring about their own complications when preparing for a shipment. Some goods cannot be stored near magnetics, others might give off benign radiation that could still harm chemical or foodstuff containers nearby. Many multi-part industrial components will also need their own lubricants or anti-oxidisers for the trip, which in and of themselves may be toxic or hazardous to place near other objects. A single planning mishap could cause a bad reaction - possibly even a damaging one.

Due to the nature of moving industrial cargo, any other types of cargo a vessel is carrying suffer a -2 penalty to the Profit/Loss Modifier table. This is due to either the limited space allowed for other types of cargo after taking into consideration extra precautions and safety measures, or due to the threat of possible damage or harm done to these additional cargo types. This penalty would increase to -5 if the trader does not take any extra safety precautions and simply sticks them in the same hold.

## Luxury Goods

When a trader gets to the level of success that allows for trade in this cargo archetype he is more than likely already living quite comfortable. Luxury goods are a broad category that contains art, literature, decoration and collectibles. Sought mainly by selective buyers (collectors, galleries and the like) they can fetch massive prices in one sector or a pittance in another.

Raiders tend to want to pick on luxury trade vessels. The hauls found inside their holds can mean the difference between a bleak and grey cell outpost and a fanciful cell headquarters filled with hundreds of thousands of credits of 'trophy loot'. Luxury items are also extremely easy to find black market buyers or capable fences to take the item off the raiders' hands, and rarely ask any questions as to where such items come from, although many may already know all too well.

Becoming a luxury dealer may be a risk but those who know where to take which types of goods can easily take advantage of the wealthy buyers waiting for them. Art dealers will want to know what is 'in' that time of year and literature tradesmen will need to understand what will interest libraries or collectors. There are a number of luxury goods and no trader can specialise in them all but can focus his attentions on one type or another. Those who can will find great profits in their field.

To perform as a trade connoisseur concerning one type of luxury good, the trader must pass a Knowledge check (DC 20) taken in that field of luxury (art, literature or antiques for example) before choosing the trade's destination. If successful, the trader may add half his ranks in that skill to his Knowledge (commerce) check on the Profit/Loss Modifier table for that trade. If failed, that same modifier is used in a negative fashion instead.

## Medical Supplies

This type of cargo is a must for nearly any multi-system trader due to the sheer number of galactic races that are in constant conflict. These supplies consist of any hardware from the medical and surgical fields (research software and training vids are often classified as scientific in nature) and contains both the implements and instruments of medical science. Even though many pharmaceuticals and medicines are definitely perishable, they are understandably grouped here instead of with foods and such.

Medical traders often get labelled with either one of two types of reputations depending on their trade methods and destinations. Those who traffic specifically to war or disease ravaged sites in order to sell their goods to a people who are in need are often looked upon like humanitarians or caring souls. Traders who would rather sell at outrageous prices to those who



are desperately in need of the supplies, or who sell to tyrannical controllers who will horde the medical supplies for their own needs instead of those of the populace get branded with mercenary titles and much ill will from some species, most notably the Abbai.

Transporting just the supply portion of this cargo archetype, like surgical gear and emergency equipment, is simple and no more difficult than carrying any other pre-packaged commodity. Filling a trader's hold with pharmaceuticals is a drastically different story.

Many medical chemicals and prescription drugs have 'alternate' and illegal uses, and this can cause problems to the common trader wishing to move them from system to system. There are also many allergic and downright lethal effects some medicines may have on varied users. Unless a medical trader is careful, he could quite easily poison an entire population with his wares, or worse, get them addicted to an otherwise mundane substance! This requires a trader (or at least, a responsible one) to have his ship's manifest and trade route checked over by a licensed physician or qualified expert. This could cost upwards of 1,000 credits, sometimes more for extraordinarily large or diverse shipments or routes.

Also, with medicinal supplies having such a myriad of alternate uses in addition to the sheer usefulness of their primary ones, raiders are always on the lookout for medical supply ships. A single pharmaceutical haul taken by a cell of raiders could be worth ten or even fifty times its regular worth to drug dealers and black marketers. Having large amounts of medical goods on hand is also never a foolish thing for raider cells, as they quite literally seek out trouble that could get them injured on a daily basis. Traders who deal in large quantities or convoys of medical supplies should always hire extra anti-raider escorts, as secrecy will rarely be an option.

Medical supply carriers should be noted not only to have an increased risk of raider attack, but also receive a +3 bonus on the Profit/Loss Modifier table when trading to any buyer currently involved in violent conflicts, any fashion of epidemic or other high-injury/illness situation. It should also be noted by Games Masters that traders that adjust their prices arbitrarily on account of the desperation of their buyers will soon find themselves harassed or even attacked by groups 'defending' the rights of the downtrodden buyers.

## Rare Resources

The least extensive, yet most profitable of the cargo archetypes, these bulk freight items are expensive, hard to find and the cause of more trade-wars and system conflicts than almost any other cargo archetype in the galactic market. Substances that are worth far more than they should be, only due to their rarity or monopolised uses, fall into this archetype. The best known material and most-traded commodity in this archetype is Quantum-40, the primary resource needed to build jump gates and jump engines. Many precious metals fall into this category not for their rarity but their worth-to-amount ratio.

These substances are expensive at every point in their existence. It costs a great deal to make the substance trade worthy, more to refine it to trade quality, even more to buy it from the production facilities and vastly more to sell it to the final buyers. Something like Quantum-40 can sell for upwards of 1,000 credits an ounce in some markets and requires several hundred pound quantities to be utilised by jump engine manufacturers! Mercurium, a rare metallic compound that jellifies at room temperature and is very useful in denser starship hulls, can only be created in extreme temperatures and can fetch staggering prices with shipbuilders everywhere. While it may seem like a trading goldmine, rare substance trafficking is dangerous and risky.

Knowing the outward worth of such cargo, raiders will almost never pass up an opportunity to take a rare haul like these. Many shipments of these types are backed by the producing or purchasing governments and rarely go unescorted. Most raiders may still think twice about hitting a militarily protected convoy, possibly risking it all for just a portion of what the ships' carry within.

It must be noted that rare resource cargo shipments have a much higher gain to loss rate on the Profit/Loss Modifier table, and whose movements should never be taken lightly by Games Masters. Traders that frequently buy or sell this type of cargo can become very wealthy; if they can survive the tides of raiders and competitors willing to kill for it.

## Raw Materials

Probably the most common of the cargo archetypes, raw materials are what most sentient beings think of when they see cargo freighters floating into space dock. This archetype covers the huge freight cargo pods filled



with tons of a pre-production substances. This could include ore to make certain metals, enriched soil for agriculture and even vegetation or pulp for recycling. Any sort of material used to further create a commodity (or another raw material, such as refined iron for use in making steel) can be placed into this category.

Raw material traders are commonplace, as anyone with a few thousand credits and an empty cargo hold could buy loads of these substances if only to sell them elsewhere. There are many corporate traders that use specialised fleets of cargo pod-laden transports to go from their production facilities to their manufacturing facilities, paying a great deal less to the transporting traders due to frequency of shipments or even keeping them fully on retainer for a mediocre wage.

There is very little variation or price differential when it comes to these raw material shipments. They rarely have a great gain potential and most require very little negotiation at all. So common are these shipments that market price is set almost daily and cannot be altered much. This does not leave room for massive gains or losses and traders dealing in raw materials frequently know this as fact.

Raw materials are also among the safest cargo archetypes to trade with. Not only do the substances themselves rarely offer any risk to the vessel or the traders, but few raiders are ever equipped to take or make use of bulk loads of ore or mineral shipments. While competitors might wish to harass or delay a raw material shipment, raiders would be hard-pressed to make any attack on these loads and regain the cost in fuel and ammunition.

While most cargo ships take their maximum capacity into consideration for speed purposes, non-commercially designed craft that carry large quantities of raw material cargo will have their acceleration rates cut by 1d2. Top speeds are never affected, as inertia will make up for additional mass once moving.

## Scientific Goods

This archetype is the strangest and possibly broadest of its kind, compiled of any number of scientific instruments, resources, components or data. There is not a binding definition to the types of items that fall into this archetype other than the goods' impact, influence or role in a scientific process. They are the cogs in a machine often far more advanced than the

### Slaves?

There are several mentions of slaving and slaves in this book, yet they do not have their own archetype of cargo, even though they obviously are treated as such. Although it may seem cruel or immoral, slaves must be categorised into one of the above groups by the intent of their use. Concubines headed to a Centauri colony would be placed with Luxury Goods. Mining staff (willing or not) would be placed with Industrial Supplies. Cryogenically stored patients or test subjects would probably be considered Medical Supplies, unless they were to be sold to a carnivorous species which would make them Food and Perishables.



Slaving is illegal in most systems and governments, which actually places cargo of this type into the hands of smuggling rather than trading and may be better suited as such. There are many who do not look poorly on the 'industry' and there can be a great deal of money made for those willing to do so.



traders dealing in them but nonetheless important to the galaxy as a whole.

Just as the nature of these goods are so varied, as are their worth. One shipment of scanner circuit boards might cost twice as much at one outpost than at the next and might be as commonplace as communications links at yet another. It takes a very skilled or informed trader to know where to take scientific goods for a profit, unless directed to do so by the producer or buyer. In fact, most scientific goods are transported specifically at the request of the buyer, who obviously know where the profits will be made.

The risk in trafficking for scientific goods is as complicated as defining them. It greatly depends on what manner of device, component or chemical that might be in transit as to whether or not raiders may be interested. Mundane scientific items like focusing lenses or microscopic scanners may not even raise a raider's eyebrow but prototype cybernetics or nanotech research could bring them from several systems away. Some scientific components may be dangerous to carry, like chemicals or biological agents, and most raiders do not enjoy taking on loot that could kill them.

For those traders who simply pick up any cargo in an effort to make a few fast credits, scientific goods may not be the best target of their attentions. It takes foreknowledge of the commodity, a decent buyer set up ahead of time and possible precautions before simply hitting a trade route and trying to sell this cargo archetype. In game terms, any trader that does not set

up all parts of a deal before beginning the trade will suffer a -5 penalty on the Profit/Loss Modifier table. Conversely, every extra day spent solely in research on the cargo being traded grants a +1 cumulative (maximum +5) bonus instead.

## Destination

Where a shipment is going is just as important as what it consists of. Taking highly-advanced materials to a lower-technology society can mean lower profits, as the buyers try to figure out why they would want such things. Oppressed peoples rarely want to buy cutting edge art. Domed cities without room for hydroponics will have no need for seeds and fertilizers. Stopping by at a site with nothing they want or need could be a disastrous waste of time and manpower, so successful traders choose their destinations wisely.

Traders must look at two main factors when setting their sale points along their given trade route: the population's size and affiliation. Major colonies and homeworlds have better finances and options for trade than minor ones but do not always have the need for everything a trader may offer. Those planets that belong to the galactic governments will have particular wants and needs which steer their purchases, while neutral planets want as much business as they can get but can seldom afford.

There are five main types of planets that can affect a trade's initial profit margin: major and minor race homeworlds, major and minor colonies and neutral systems. As shown on the Base Gain table (see below)

**Base Gain for Galactic Trading**

Type of Cargo	Major Homeworld	Minor Homeworld	Major Colony	Minor Colony	Neutral System
Arms & Military Goods	10%	10%	5%	0%	10%
Finished Goods	5%	5%	10%	5%	10%
Food & Perishables	10%	10%	15%	15%	10%
Industrial Supplies	15%	10%	10%	5%	10%
Luxury Goods	10%	5%	10%	5%	10%
Medical Supplies	5%	10%	15%	10%	10%
Rare Resources	20%	15%	10%	5%	5%
Raw Materials	10%	10%	10%	5%	10%
Scientific Goods	15%	10%	10%	5%	5%



### Racial Modifiers to Base Gain

The eleven main governmental dividers shown in the Mercantile Careers chapter of this book have simple adjustments to the Base Gain of any trade stops located in their territories. This represents the overall change to the population's needs depending on who it consists of at any given point.

Here are some examples of racial modifiers Games Masters and players may wish to use on their trade profit calculations. Unless noted, these numbers are both purchases from and sales to the listed government.

**Abbai Matriarchate:** +10% Medical Supplies, -20% Arms and Military Goods

**Brakiri Syndicracy:** +5% to all purchases, -5% to all sales

**Centaury Republic:** +10% Luxury Goods, -15% Arms and Military Goods (sales only)

**Drazi Freehold:** +15% Arms and Military Goods, -10% Luxury Goods and Medical Supplies

**Earth Alliance:** +10% Scientific Goods and Rare Resources, -5% Industrial Supplies

**Gaim Intelligence:** +10% Raw Materials, -10% on all purchases

**Interstellar Alliance:** +5% to all sales and purchases

**Minbari Federation:** +5% Luxury Goods, -5% Scientific Goods (purchases only)

**Narn Regime (pre-2259):** +10% Arms and Military Goods (purchases only), -20% Luxury Items

**Narn Regime (post-2260):** -10% to all sales and purchases

**Vree Conglomerate:** +20% Scientific Goods (purchases from), -30% Luxury Items

*Note:* There is no racial modifiers listed here for the Minor races of the League of Non-Aligned Worlds, they use the random modifier table listed on page 40, in the Mercantile Careers chapter of this book.

These modifiers are taking into consideration from the point of the trader working within the listed territory, not from the perspective of the native population.

*Example:* Drashah the Drazi trader is trying to buy a load of particle beam arrays while trying to sell off a few dozen concussion missiles to the outpost flotilla above Immolan, a Centauri Major Colony. For his purchase, the Base Gain is 20% (Arms & Military Goods in a Major Colony = 5% + Drazi dealing in Arms & Military = 15%) but his sale of the missiles will have a final Base Gain of 5% (20% base - 15% from Centauri selling Arms & Military Goods). He will need to do some major convincing to his buyer as to why these missiles are worth the price he wants!

these worlds set the base number in which the profit modifiers found throughout this text are applied.

Any trade platform or space station located in or around a planet or system falling into one of these categories

will be rated as per that planet or system. This is for simplification and Games Masters can decide to use the controlling race's column instead of the system's in any situation.



*Example: Babylon 5 is located in the Epsilon Eridani system, a Neutral World System. All Base Gains will be set as per the Neutral System rate (depending on cargo type) on the Base Gain for Galactic Trade table below.*

To calculate the initial Base Gain for any particular stop on a trade route, the player or Games Master merely has to look at any of the several galactic maps printed in a number of Mongoose Publishing *Babylon 5 Roleplaying Game* products. After finding the would-be stop on the map, check on the table below for the *suggested* Base Gain for any trades in that system. The table is designed for quick calculation, and can be altered if need be. The Games Master should feel free to adjust these numbers to fit his campaign, or the particulars of a system he feels is necessary.

## Taxes

The eternal enemy of profits, but a necessary evil in the galactic market for it to run smoothly and with as little bureaucratic involvement as possible, taxation keeps monetary flow in all systems in motion. Taxation levels keep outside traders from crippling a local economy and permits individual companies to work in dozens or hundreds of systems without creating a fiscal vacuum that might draw too much wealth into a single governmental territory or at least tries.

Taxes for megacorporations are calculated, divided into individual costs and paid annually to the many governments they may work with. They have the luxury of multi-million credit accounts of liquid assets and know they will make such sums back in just a few major trades or weeks of business. It is part of why these companies are as powerful as they are. Some of these tax fees are well into six figures and are paid without any hesitation by the company. It grants them

### Trade Taxes & Penalties

Galactic Government	Average Trade Tax	Possible Penalties for Late or Lack of Payment
Abbai Matriarchate	10%	20% interest penalty compounded annually
Brakiri Syndicracy	15%	30% interest penalty compounded monthly, impound vessel and cargo after 90 days
Centauri Republic	10%	Impound vessel and cargo after 60 days
Drazi Freehold	20%	Impound vessel and cargo, incarcerate debtors; both after 60 days
Earth Alliance	8%	15% interest penalty compounded semi-annually, ban trader/company after 2 years of accruing debts
Gaim Intelligence	20%	Impound of vessel and cargo after 30 days
Interstellar Alliance	10%	Penalties applied as per Member Government
League of Non-Aligned Worlds; Minor Members	10+2d6%	Varies (determined by Games Master)
Minbari Federation	N/A <sup>1</sup>	N/A <sup>1</sup>
Narn Regime (pre-2259)	15%	20% interest penalty compounded monthly, ban trader until debt is paid off
Narn Regime (post-2260)	N/A <sup>2</sup>	N/A <sup>2</sup>
Vree Conglomerate	20.624%	33% interest penalty compounded weekly – applied directly to every Spacer's Guild transaction by debtor's government

<sup>1</sup> The Minbari Federation do not tax any trade they have deemed welcome in Federation space.

<sup>2</sup> The Narn Regime in its state of disrepair after 2260 does not have the manpower to levy taxes or enforce any penalties on old debts



ease of business, better military treatment and heavy political influence.

Commonplace freelance traders rarely have that ability and instead must try and keep their taxes paid as much and as often as possible. The best way to keep up on taxation is to simply pay them directly from any profits made each trade. It is common knowledge as to how much any given system or territory will levy upon the trader, so taking that into account when negotiating can help a trader keep out of debt to governmental agencies. Such debts can bar access to owed systems, impound cargo or vessels or even risk incarceration and fines for the indebted trader.

While taxation on a galactic level does not necessarily keep a specific standard to governmental or station-related taxes, the market tries to reflect a certain constant level. The average tax levied against any sale or trade is around 10%, although some systems may add or subtract certain fees or charges depending on the situation. These taxes are best paid by the trader immediately, as interest rates and debt fees can bankrupt a rising trade company faster than anything. Completely avoiding paying taxes on sales is unwise and could brand the trader as a smuggler. A few hundred credits here and there to avoid a massive problem later can prove to be the best choice a trader can make.

The above table shows common tax levels for the galactic governments and the penalties for not paying such taxes promptly to the levying government.



## Making a Profit

There is not a single trader in the entire market that is in search of a loss. The business is all about trying to make more money on what they have spent, preferably more than the last trader did and as often as they can. Profit is the goal in any trade, and no matter how elusive it may seem at times it does appear for the right trader - if they have the right skills for the job.

Profit is defined as 'the excess of the selling price of goods over their cost.' Making a profit for a merchant or a peddler is drastically different than it is for say a trader, or even a smuggler or raider. A merchant simply must make sure he does not spend more selling an item than what it fetches in his shop or kiosk. Every single credit earned in this fashion is his personal profit, which may need to go to an employer or station fees but is still classed as profit nonetheless. It is for this reason that most merchants receive a side wage or salary, as they rarely make a great deal of profit on their sales. Although they do tend to make many more than an average trader would.

Yet the traders can make hundreds of thousands on their trades. They will work on a single trade for days or even weeks to make sure it sells at the right time to the right person, just to save one or two more percentage points off that top price. Where merchants may haggle a bit here and there for a few credits more, traders know that their very success hangs sometimes on a decimal point or fractional number. Figuring out the profit of any individual trade transaction is a simple equation that may seem rather complex at first glance.

$$\text{Initial Worth} \times (\text{Base Gain} + \text{Racial Modifier} + \text{Profit/Loss Modifier}) - \text{Cost} - \text{Taxes} = \text{Profit}$$

Figuring the worth is easy. Whatever the trader's goods should actually be worth in a common market, adjusted for the circumstances surrounding their purchase. The Game Master should freely give the trader this information. There are thousands of market research data projections and media formats that anyone can pick up off Stellar Com, so a few minutes at a terminal can produce what the commodity *should* be worth. Barring any massive commercial conspiracies this amount can be used by traders for their calculations.

Base gain and racial modifiers (figured from the tables earlier in this chapter) are relatively constant from day to day and can be relied on for the most part. These



numbers form the basis of a trader's negotiation and needs to be their primary focus when entering any deal. It is their only real tool to tip the scales in the favour of their profits and the true test of their mettle as a galactic free trader.

Unlike merchant haggling, which tends to be a back and forth style of price and discount, commodity trading is generally one-sided. There is an offer, then a counteroffer. Most trades rarely get past the counteroffer, as any good trader that second guesses his price quotes knows he will be mauled in the market every time.

To signify this offer/counteroffer process, the offering trader makes a single Knowledge (commerce) skill check for his offer. The buyer must then immediately do the same (if the buyer does not have the proper skill, substitute his base Charisma modifier). Compare the two results and consult the Profit/Loss Modifiers table below to find the appropriate percentage to either add or subtract from the modified Base Gain.

### Profit/Loss Modifiers

Difference of Results	Profit (+) or Loss (-) Modifier
Buyer 10 higher <sup>1</sup>	-30% <sup>1</sup>
Buyer 8-9 higher	-25%
Buyer 6-7 higher	-20%
Buyer 4-5 higher	-15%
Buyer 2-3 higher	-10%
Buyer 1 higher	-5%
Scores are equal	0%
Seller 1 higher	+5%
Seller 2-3 higher	+10%
Seller 4-5 higher	+15%
Seller 6-7 higher	+20%
Seller 8-9 higher	+25%
Seller 10 higher <sup>1</sup>	+30% <sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Maximum Gain/Loss is 25% unless the trader involved has the Risk-Taking trade attitude (see page 44), which means there can be no maximum and every two points difference beyond 10 continues to add or subtract 5% to the Profit/Loss Modifier as if the table continued infinitely.



*Example: Trachin is selling a shipment to Malino, another trader. After figuring his modified Base Gain, Trachin then rolls his Knowledge (commerce) skill and scores a marvellous 19. Malino, after hearing the 'offer' makes his roll (and his 'counteroffer'), scoring a mediocre 8. The difference is 11 in favour of the seller; figured to be a windfall Profit Modifier of +35%! Unfortunately, Trachin does not have the Risk-Taking trade attitude so is limited to an impressive +25% modifier.*

Once all modifiers have been figured and the negotiations are over, the initial worth will be adjusted to finalise the number of credits the trader has amassed before taking into account his costs and transaction taxes. The final amount figured is the profit (or loss) the trade accrued.

This profit can of course be cut into by employee wages, corporate sharing and a variety of other fees that may or may not be mandatory for each individual trader, it all depends on their own obligations or which ones they choose to keep up with.

Trade profits and pay offs are not always in the form of credits or bank transfers. Sometimes one trader will agree to simply exchange one net worth of a commodity for a worth of another trader's commodity. In these cases the profit calculations are all the same, but the worth in credits is never translated into *actual* credits. For instance, if the traders agree on a commodities-only trade – raw ore for finished metal as an example – the process runs as normal. If the final profit of the trade would be figured to 10,000 credits, it would be paid in 10,000 credits worth of the finished metal in trade for the entire worth of raw ore. These exchanges



are commonplace and take place between industrial companies daily. The only drawback to dealings such as this is that any losses generated simply result in a failed trade; the buyer refuses to take less of the offered commodity than what he actually needs.

Unless a loss is fiscally crippling, a trader should go on with business as usual even after a bad deal. No trader is perfect and losses will occur. The market is generally bent in favour of sellers, but negotiations can go horribly wrong or choices of buyers could be poor. It may be disheartening and discouraging for a beginning trader to suffer failed deals. The best advice is simply to persevere and wait for the next opportunity as it may be the biggest profit the trader ever makes.

### An Example Trade Process

Just for any and all clarification's sake we have generated a narrated example of a trade from start to finish, listed here for players and Games Masters alike to see these rules as they would be applied in a game situation.

*Trade Captain Harolde Brotherton III is a trader looking to sell off 250,000 worth of salvaged Dilgar 'bolter' cannons to an arms dealer on a trade flotilla orbiting Shambah II. He initially paid a meagre 200,000 credits for the haul from his friend in the historic community, and uses his own vessel to transport it from the Proxima to Shambah systems.*

*Captain Brotherton is part of a trade syndicate that has the Risk-Taking and Secure trade attitudes, a Knowledge (commerce) skill roll of +13 and a shipmate who takes 10% off the top before taxes. His syndicate paid for the cargo initially and wants only to be paid back in full plus 10% once the deal is done.*

*Trading the 'Arms & Military Goods' archetypal cargo (Dilgar cannons) on a Drazi Minor Colony (Shambah II), Captain Brotherton's player references the appropriate tables and notices that his initial worth modifiers are an unimpressive 15% (0% for Minor Colony, +15% for selling Arms to the Drazi). When he gets to the flotilla he and his arms dealer sit down for a little negotiation.*

*Brotherton rolls a rather low 7 for a total of 20 on his Knowledge (commerce) roll for use with the Profit/Loss Modifiers table, of which his buyer rolls a total of 14,*

*6 less than the good captain's. Looking at the table, his player adds in the +20% to his running total so far, making it +35%.*

*Captain Brotherton is feeling like this could be the big deal of his year, so he produces a list of authentications as long as his arm and calls upon the ability of his syndicate's Secure trade attitude. He rolls another Knowledge (commerce) skill check at DC 25 (10 + his Base Gain of 0% + Racial Modifier percentage of +15%, as per the trade attitude benefit) and passes quite easily with a 29. He therefore adjusts his total Gain thus far to 45%, which he is only allowed to do on account of his Risk-Taking trade attitude.*

*The total worth (250,000 cr.) modified by his amazing +45% gain comes to 362,500 credits. The load cost him initially 200,000 credits (which he must immediately pay back plus 20,000 credits to his trade syndicate), his transit fees were around 7,500 and he paid 10,000 credits in cargo insurance (4% of 250,000 cr.) in case of a technical or raider complication. This left him with 125,000 for himself, of which his shipmate takes his 10% cut of 36,250 cr. The Drazi tax collectors are quick and heavily armed, taking 20% of the sale, which amounts to 31,000 credits!*

*At the end of his trade, when all shares have gone out and he is left to read the final tally on this deal he is ahead by a staggering 94,000 credit profit! Captain Brotherton begins to think of his next big deal and his trip begins to look all the more worthwhile.*

### Walking Away From a Deal

It may seem strange, but most traders are very reluctant to ever turn their back on a negotiation table or walk away from a trade they started. It is more than just bad form and only a trader willing to drag his own name through the mud may do so. Word spreads very fast about traders that will not commit to their deals and could end their career faster than a PPG may end their lives. It is extremely detrimental to reputation to walk away from a fair deal.

Not all deals are fair however. Dirty traders and underhanded buyers may use physical coercion and intimidation to get the most out of a trade, relying on gangland tactics and base thievery to make their fortunes. No one would ever blame a trader who ducked out on an illegally enforced trade, so long as



they could prove this was the case. Unless the loss involved would be shattering, most traders continue with dirty trades anyway, if only to save themselves the trouble. Not to mention the simple danger to life and limb from walking away from the sort of criminal it takes to organise such a deal in the first place.

In game terms, any trader who does not finish a trade once negotiations have begun (they are freely able to cancel any trade before that moment) will be branded with a stigma for a number of trades equal to his character level (new traders are more easily forgiven than experienced ones). This stigma is reflected in the Base Gain of these trades being set at 0% before racial or Profit/Loss modifiers.

It takes a skilled and tenacious trader to recover from such a market faux pas without major extenuating circumstances. Even overcoming the odds and surviving the stretch of wary deals and jilted buyers may never fully repair the damage done by even a single mistake like this.

Traders must realise that they cannot run away from a bad deal unscathed and their peers understand and respect that losses happen. Fleeing from a deal that looks sour is the galactic market equivalent of a soldier running from a fight and carries with it just as much personal and social scarring. Some might feel that saving the credits from a possible loss is worth it, others know better.

### Profits Gained or Losses Paid

A trader who finds himself rising like a star ascendant in the galactic market will find it difficult to not simply pour his profits immediately back into the next deal. Many traders go on these 'deal binges' for as long as the bank account continues to swell or until they hit a massive loss that takes away some of their ambitions.

Most traders claim that 'the bigger the deal, the higher the rush'. Compared to a drug by some, the feeling a trader gets when his profit numbers start to grow before his very eyes can be euphoric at first. A beginning trader might become giddy after his first thousand credit gain but soon grow complacent. When his first 10,000 credit profit crosses his desk the rush returns. In some ways like an addiction, very few traders can ignore the call of higher profits and bigger gains for long. This is why so many traders and trade companies

never seem to rest; there is more profit waiting for them elsewhere.

Any trader can simply take his gains and sink them all right back into the next deal, possibly risking all of what he has made. To keep from spending all of their wealth foolishly, some traders keep unyielding accountants or money managers; employees who are paid to make sure the trader does not spend beyond his means. Generally paid a set wage every month, these 'credit nannies' are a good way of stemming profit-spending habits and reining in a trader that always wants another score. So long as the trader does not terminate the money manager after being refused access to his account, they can help regulate growth of a trader's profits.

Taking a loss can seem devastating at first but good traders learn to roll with a bad deal and recover. Like a metaphysical riptide, those who cannot recover from a single tug will soon drown in the merciless tide of the galactic market.

Profits or losses alike, a trader must keep his eyes focused forward to the next deal. Whether he needs to begin research on market patterns or setting appointments at an outpost eight jumps away, being devoured by pride or self-pity is rarely conducive to a successful career. While there is nothing wrong with celebration or solemnity over the outcome of a deal, it is best not to let either consume a trader's attentions.



# Famous Trade and Transfer Points

*'There is nothing finer than setting eyes on so many tons of spinning metal, thousands of people and miles of electronics held together by millions of credits. It is beautiful.'*

*Urless Jybol, Chief Account Manager of Ak-Habil Industries*

The galactic market runs smoothly due to the persistence of its traders, the willingness of governmental agencies and the needs of the galaxy's fractious populations. A large part of why these factors work so well together is on account of the hundreds of trade outposts, transfer points and commercial platforms found throughout the galaxy. They were once scarce along major trade routes or orbiting heavily defended colonies but now they can be found within a few jumps of any corner of known space, and they form the very superstructure of the market itself.

This chapter will discuss nine of them in detail, giving Games Masters a variety of choices to set before their players. A close-up look at three of each of the main styles of market hub: trade outpost, station orbital and transfer points. Before each set of descriptions will be a short defining paragraph explaining why each type of hub is different than the others.

Finding any of the following examples should be routine for most traders or their pilots but should a stranger seek one out a simple Gather Information or appropriate Knowledge check at DC 10 should easily point out the tracking signals or hyperspace route to the nearest example.

They are frequent and expected on most major jump routes and their reputations are well-known in trading (and raider) circles.

## Trade Outposts

Similar in design to military outposts on faraway planets, trade outposts are enclosed sections of a colony or populated area dedicated solely to commerce. Those who frequent the outpost, locals and visitors alike, can use it for any number of commerce-related business. Large marketplaces are often the norm, with private negotiation buildings looming nearby. They are

beacons of financial strength sometimes on otherwise bleak planets or moons.

A trade outpost is rarely owned by a single corporation or trader but rather by the local government or a union of investors. They can sometimes exist as a city itself, with communities of commercially-inclined inhabitants filling all the roles of a normal population. Outposts such as that are far more likely to have higher concentrations of criminal elements but tend to also carry far more options in comparison to their smaller, more devoted cousins.

Reaching a trade outpost from spacecraft requires some form of landing dock or shuttle system, which can be an additional source of income for the outpost or one of its entrepreneur inhabitants. This can be a source of much distrust or favour, as a delayed shuttle could mean a lost deal. Or worse, a trader's enemies could lie in waiting for his arrival at the space dock or landing bay.

Trade outposts are the only type of commercial hub located on a planet or moon's surface. They are like the bazaars of ancient Earth or the shout auctions of early Golia; busy, centralised and good places for any trader or merchant to work their skills.

## Latig System Commercial Domes

**Location:** Latig I

**Size:** 5 square miles of linked atmospheric domes

**Population:** 1,500 residents, 8,000 mining staff

**Distance to Jump Gate:** 400 miles

**Primary Export(s):** Quantum-40, Raw Materials

**Primary Import (s):** Food and Perishables

On the half-frozen/half-broiling planet of Latig I at the edge of the Drazi Freehold lay a web of thickly plated atmospheric domes in the twilight edge between the two hemispheres. It serves as one of only three hospitable





landing points anywhere on the deadly planet, the others being a military post and a communications monitor station.

Latig I is the source of most of the Drazis' Quantum-40, which is the primary reason they care to even keep sending workers and other staff to the governmentally controlled outposts. The precious substance is mined from dozens of dark side mining colonies whose workers return to the commercial dome weekly to drop off loads of Quantum-40 before heading back out into the wastes for more. On the sunlit side the temperature and radiation can even smoulder and scar a Drazis' dense scale hide without an EVA suit, with the dark side freezing limbs in minutes when exposed to the sub-zero winds.

Although the planet is deadly and the work seemingly endless, the miners keep up the Q-40 surplus for the military base and give the rest to the tradesmen of the Commercial Domes. There it is priced and allotted to the top 15% of the Freehold-licensed Trade Marshals for export to other parties. The remaining 85% of the mercantile staff focus on small deals and gaining prestige amongst their Freehold peers in order to hopefully get invited one day to try their hand in the Q-40 trades.

The Commercial Domes can be reached through one of the two landing pads, where a 100 credit landing fee can allow any spacecraft of Gargantuan size or smaller to be docked for no longer than a week (longer term visitors must pay extra for docking space). If a would-be visitor does not have a qualifying vessel, 500 credits can acquire a two-way ticket on a number of shuttle pilot businesses lurking constantly near the landing areas.

The outpost itself is a series of eleven large domes connected by heavily reinforced transport tubes. Each dome (other than the landing bays) is basically the same in design. Support columns hold up the processing engines of the atmosphere domes, buildings are stacked one atop the next and 'streets' are thin and crowded. Food producing hydroponics farms exist under several domes but hundreds of street vendors sell a variety of imported dishes. Freshwater is brought in by bulk freight from elsewhere to supply the many tanks and building reservoirs, since Latig I cannot keep a normal reservoir in fear of irradiated waters. Purified water flows in many of the buildings but reclamation points clean and redistribute much of it back to the public as best they can.

Several companies that have existed long enough on Latig I have office buildings of their own under one dome or another. IPX, Fairspace Jump Resources and several others are always on the lookout for good deals on Q-40 supplies. Their agents and researchers are omnipresent and no trade seems to slip by their attentions. Any trader that makes a serious mark on the Commercial Domes' business can expect several visits from the local trade moguls, either with job offers or unsubtle threats against being *too* successful.

The chief management officer of the Commercial Domes is a Drazis' Trade Marshal named Chukal Dharszol, an ex-military fleet commander who 'retired' after accusations of attacking civilians from neighbouring League races. He was given a sizeable raise, comfortable quarters and command over a dozen Trade Marshals. He ensures the safety of his colony, and spends almost half of his yearly budget on up keeping or upgrading the protective domes against the ever-assaulting planet. He lives far more comfortably than a person in his position should be able to and some involvement in the black market seems likely.

There have been several rumours abound that connect Chief Chukal to the infamous Drazis' raiders called the



Choshaka. It is known they have many informants and spies in every level of business in the Domes and that the managing staff seem to have little or no effect on their comings and goings. This, of course, is blamed on the skill of the Choshaka and not the incompetence or ignorance of the staff who never seem very worried about such a bloodthirsty raider cell bring set up so near to them.

To protect the outpost itself Chukal has managed to acquire a half dozen Drazi war cruisers and several gun platforms aimed toward the sky. Where this has not stopped conflicts in orbit, there has yet to be a successful attacking landing at either landing bay. Chukal claims it is due to the impressiveness of his defences, but many inhabitant traders say it is more likely the pacts he has made with the Choshaka who openly and actively prey on other raiders in the area.

The primary 'hot spot' in the Commercial Domes is a ring of eateries called the 'Droshalla's Smile Café'. It is owned strangely enough by a sect of martial artist monks in the Church of Droshalla who use the profits from their eatery to fund the temples back on Zhabar. They hire and train restaurant-grade chefs from as many different species as they can, using the frequency of outsiders to expand their establishment's menu. From the ever-famous Centauri fried spoo to the ancient Earther's pizza, the Smile can offer a 'taste of home' to nearly every major race and several of the minor ones as well!

There are a massive number of freelance traders trying to grow in influence or attract rare retainer contracts with the megacorporations lurking in the kiosks, discussion cantinas and meeting places throughout the Domes, each one hoping to be the next lucky one to get snagged up by one of the high-paying giants. Even those without such dreams of grandeur can make a decent living here, as long as dome-life agrees with them.

## Orion IPX Islands

**Location:** Orion III

**Size:** 100 miles of neighbouring island communities

**Population:** 8,000 residents, 75,000 employees

**Distance to Jump Gate:** 1900 miles

**Primary Export(s):** Food and Perishables

**Primary Import (s):** Industrial Supplies

The paradise planet of Orion III, filled with oceans of life and vegetation that is older than some spacefaring races, was uninhabited by sentient beings when the Earth Alliance discovered and claimed it as their own. It took the Earthier a very long time to come up with any major uses of such a beautiful and ancient planet for anything other than a military stopover. EarthGov had given open colonisation rights to several companies and firms in an effort to make use of the many flattened jungle islands. Interplanetary Expeditions first discovered (and placed patent control immediately upon) the best raw resource Orion III had to offer... its oceans.

Gigantic marine life dominates 90% of the planet's surface, primarily the thousand-ton leviathans that float through the waves in search of the smallest vegetable life floating in the water. When one of these beasts was 'accidentally' killed by an IPX escort craft, the company discovered the monstrosities to be riddled with thick walls of meaty muscles similar to Earth's bovine species and twice as nutritious. Immediately the IPX sponsored 'Orion filet' was born and the





whaling industry of Orion III sprang up around their commercial island colony.

As they purchased several neighbouring islands of their own and began to connect them with airbus bridges and transport tubes, IPX built several buildings on their expanding island chain with the idea of renting space to others who wished to come and deal with them. The first few growth spurts brought many new names and faces to the planet and IPX soon was able to fully endorse several whaling companies and sold shares of their rights to the meat processing plants they continually build on offshore platforms.

This left the island chains themselves to become a string of corporate trade facilities sponsored, watched and taxed by IPX power brokers. The Orion Islands attracted more company-based cargo runners and trade buyers than anywhere else in Earth Alliance space for well over a year. It remains a powerful hub of trade and commerce for those willing to pay the dissuasively high docking and transaction fees (10% of all business conducted or 2,000 credits, whichever is more) IPX demands of their guests.

Much of the islands' original lush vegetation has been clear cut and paved over in favour of the growing corporate facilities. Ignoring the ever-present eco-conservationists that picket and debate against IPX and their allies' treatment of Orion III, the whole area is now a sort of 'trader's vacation spot.' Very few permanent inhabitants live on the islands, preferring to be shuttled in from the many less industrial colonies elsewhere on the planet's other island communities.

There are hundreds of rentable rooms and suites in most of the accessible buildings and visiting traders or cargo runners can stay for as long as they can manage to pay the sometimes extravagant bills these buildings ask for their services. The most prestigious of all, the *Holiday Tide*, is actually an underwater hotel designed on the same anti-vacuum principles used in starship viewports. Its walls are transparent so visitors can literally watch swarms of ocean life pass silently by, possibly even getting a glimpse of the Orion Leviathan. A single bed, no frills portage for one week (the minimum window of stay at the hotel) is 25,000 credits. There are rumours of suites located near the lowest areas of the hotel that run to hundreds of thousands of credits per *day*. It is a delightful stay and worthy of much jealousy from a visitor's peers.

Charleston Duke II, the IPX CEO of the Orion Island Commercial Project, is a middle-aged man originally born to wealthy industrialist parents on Earth. He is effete, powerful and lives life like a wealthy bachelor should. This world is his oyster, and every visiting debutante or attractive lady proves to be his possible pearl but inevitably falls short of his 'standards'.

His execution of corporate policies is exacting and surgical. He is unafraid to make enemies and more than capable of removing them. The Duke family fortune fell into young Charleston's lap after his parents and only sister died in an unexpected shuttle crash while visiting him on Orion III and subsequently several *billion* credits worth of assets became his to employ. With so much money and power at his fingertips, it is small wonder he is so frivolous with the ladies.

The Orion IPX Islands are expensive, elite and well worth the effort for any trader looking to hobnob with the moguls of the industry. Anyone that can afford to come to this 'outpost' just once should do so. If not for the sights and the company, then for the opportunity lurking behind each boardroom door.

## The Thenothk Colony

**Location:** Thenothk IV

**Size:** 25 square miles of urban sprawl, 100 square mile suburban fringes

**Population:** 102,000 residents

**Distance to Jump Gate:** 1220 miles

**Primary Export(s):** None specific

**Primary Import (s):** Luxury Items, Food and Perishables, Finished Goods

The world that served as the gateway to Z'ha'dum for so long, Thenothk IV was (and some would say still is) the primary world owned and controlled by an assortment of the Shadow's servants. Primarily inhabited by Drakh and Streib manipulators and researchers, the planet is honeycombed with very dense foliage and cavernous mountain ranges. Seeded with specific minerals and ores, these areas are nigh impenetrable by conventional scanners, hiding several Shadowtech research centres from prying eyes.

In the 2230s the Drakh decided to begin to do explicit research on their master's next choice for servitude; the humans. Creating a small outpost on its surface ideal to attract them using the information gathered by the Streib and their 'collector ships', the Drakh unveiled





their colony to human servants of the Shadows. These servants *leaked* the information about this new opportunity and soon the buildings were lit and the streets were filled with people.

The Drakh designed the colony for easy transitions. They did their best to make sure that all beings had adequate housing and furnishings, and that every written or announced sign, advertisement or invitation was in Interlac - the only language the Drakh knew to be generally universal. It may have seemed a little disconcerting for the first Centauri to arrive to find perfectly chilled brevari, yet with Interlac labels and instructions!

Word of the Thenothk colony was heard in every corner of the galaxy. Centauri, Brakiri and even some Vree came to investigate the rumours of a new human territory given to them so freely. As it was never fully annexed into Earth Alliance space, every race brought with it their corporate mentalities and the colony swelled into a decadent paradise. Every vice or need could be sated or found no matter the source or the species.

Even though the Drakh were surprised that the colony had blossomed into such a haven for commerce (both legal and otherwise) they were pleased to have such a kaleidoscopic view of the races of the galaxy. From here they could easily research any number of different species and the effects their influence upon them could

be. It was like their masters had always said; the chaos they sowed bred a new and masterful plan.

The Thenothk Colony is not the most legitimate of places to conduct proper trade but it does not charge any excess taxes nor allow outside legal authorities to meddle in the affairs of those who go there. The Drakh secretly *want* violence and criminal behaviour to run rampant on their little experiment, so they are not afraid to use force to get it.

There are many raider cells that lurk nearby the system and occasionally stop by to check on any prime candidates for their attacks but they generally tend to prey more on each other than businessmen and smugglers. The cells duel and prey on one another like competing males trying to win over a waiting female. This does not mean that the space lanes are safe from them, merely that they are never organised enough to pose a unified threat to the trade possibilities from the Colony.

The 'governor' of Thenothk Colony is a gaunt-framed human that speaks with a very thick cockney accent. His name is Edward Hyde, and he was fitted with a Drakh Keeper (see *No Surrender, No Retreat* for more on Drakh Keepers) sometime in the late 1800s and cryogenically saved for just this occasion. He is mean, ruthless and enjoys nothing more than watching a street brawl unfold over a drug deal gone wrong or similar mishap. He keeps legal force at a minimum, just enough to make visitors believe they are safe but not enough to worry the criminals. A true puppet of the Drakh, Governor Hyde is sworn to aid them as best he can, even beyond their uprising in 2267.

The Colony itself is a playground for those with some moral deviancy, but still retains an upfront sort of business sense that keeps traders and merchants from all over coming back to this faraway place over and over again. Once the Drakh lose interest in it, if ever, the question arises: will it continue to stay as free-spirited and chaotic without their influence or will it be pulled into line? One way or the other, as it could become a new corporate-driven Proxima... or another scum-filled Praxis Colony.



## Station Orbitals

With the popularity and sometimes centralist views surrounding the Babylon 5 station, not many people remember there are other floating space stations in the galaxy... but there are. Trading hubs classified as station orbitals are simply any type of populated construct orbiting a section of space. Lived in by hundreds or even thousands of staff and residents, these stations are often enormous projects funded by governmental sources in order to have a say in the commercial goings on in their territory.

A station orbital will have significant life-support and defences, possibly military grade fighter or security support and close access to a major jump gate. It should

have common housing availability, entertainment and distractions for its visitors and inhabitants and several places to purchase food. It will have recycled water supplies, constant repairs being undertaken to keep it running smoothly and a well-known command staff calling all the shots. Like what many have seen in Babylon 5, there is much to be found in a hundred other orbitals like it.

Most orbital stations are specifically used for commerce, politics and occasionally to also house a military waypoint along long routes. Their atmospheric processors are always in use, cycling air for the station itself and pressurising it elsewhere for minor orbit-keeping thrusters or to refill the supplies of vessels that might dock with the station.

Primarily commercial stations will often have huge sections dedicated to private or public meetings, markets and business quarters that can be rented as offices for companies wanting a base of operations on the station. These stations sometimes require side taxes and fees for conducting business in their facilities but often hide such charges in the day-to-day rent and leasing agreements over offices and quarters. Stations that charge too much for such things will soon find themselves devoid of commercial traffic as there are countless other stops a trader can make that will not cut into their profits so much.

Station orbitals are the rarest of the commercial trading hubs, but probably get the most attention and see the most use. Stations like Babylon 5 see so much airtime on ISN or headlines in Universe Today because of their importance to the galactic market as a whole and their constant ability to be newsworthy. It is what happens when you keep thousands of sentient beings from dozens of species inside one floating station: it is never a dull place to be.

### The 'Abattoir'

**Location:** Melat II

**Size:** 1.5 miles long x 1 mile wide

**Population:** 54,000 residents

**Distance to Jump Gate:** 420 miles

**Primary Export(s):** Industrial Supplies, Luxury Items

**Primary Import (s):** Food and Perishables

**Primary Defence Weapon:** Twin-Linked Heavy Plasma Cannon; Turret; Attack +5 (targeting computer); Damage 75 +8d10; Critical 19-20; Range 3

### Station Orbital Defences

Station orbitals are extremely expensive pieces of equipment often floating alone in space with only a few ships to protect them. Even the most pacifistic and neutral site will want to have some form of protective measures in place against raiders or alien invaders. This normally comes in the form of massive defence grids and turreted weaponry like that found on many military craft.

While there are many common weapon types that find use on stations across the galaxy, most races and governments lean a certain way concerning technology and availability used. In addition to light plasma cannons, particle arrays and beams and the occasional twin-linked defence lasers there are many more specialised types of primary weapons these orbitals will often mount. On each entry there is a listing for 'Primary Defence Weapon' and the statistics for it. Games Masters should take note as to what sort of defence weaponry a station would have, which is generally the heaviest weapon that government has to offer with the best range offered (Abbai use combat lasers, Centauri have their battle lasers and so on).



### The Stench of the Abattoir

The smell of so many carrion eaters and eateries on the station is a powerful thing. It can easily overwhelm anyone not expecting or used to it when they come aboard the station. Unless protective measures are taken (encounter suit, nose plugs, chemical filters and so on.) it could make a non-Pak'ma'ra visitor sick or worse. For a number of hours equal to 10 minus the character's Constitution modifier the character will suffer a -2 penalty on all to hit rolls, skill checks and saving throws due to stomach cramps and nausea.

Even after this time, the penalty remains a -1 for to-hit rolls only until the character leaves the station.

Originally called 'Melat Station Prime' by the Pak'ma'ra, the Abattoir is the only contact many will ever have with the Pak'ma'ra homeworld. It was originally built to be the main defence platform for the growing Pak'ma'ra fleet, but as their mastery over plasma technology grew they moved on to a more efficient chain of powerful defence satellites instead (not that Melat has ever been targeted by any sentient race). Although beautiful to behold with the right instruments, Melat II is foul-smelling and slightly toxic to most other races.

This is why the Abattoir turned from being a weapon-laden starbase to being a weapon-laden commercial dock. It is also the only place the Pak'ma'ra have created to conduct business in their home system. They do not invite business planetside and instead take their business to the station to meet with clientele. Although they are virtually omnipresent in every other populated structure across the galaxy, the Pak'ma'ra cherish the privacy their homeworld offers them.

Visitors to the Abattoir will find a concentration of Pak'ma'ra like they will never see anywhere else in the galaxy. Where normally Pak'ma'ra are lost in crowds and fade into obscurity, at the Abattoir they are the dominant species. This makes personal translators a necessity for anyone visiting or doing business here,

of which several shops sell them around the station for half the price of elsewhere.

From the number of Pak'ma'ra on the station at any given time there is a certain *odour* that permeates the Abattoir. To sate the needs of the thousands of Pak'ma'ra residents and staff there are dozens of restaurants that specialise in the preparation of spoiled and rotting food alongside normal meals for visiting species. While a Pak'ma'ra will eat almost any sort of organic matter after it has expired, carrion cuisine is extremely hard to prepare to their ultra-sensitive palate. In fact, trying to use the Technical (cooking) skill with a Pak'ma'ra in mind raises the Difficulty by 3 to create the sorts of dishes they prefer, although they would undoubtedly eat even the worst failure as well. The pungent aroma of meat and rot drives many people away from the station, which is truly a shame.

The Abattoir offers dozens of specialised items made by the artistes of the Pak'ma'ra. Sculpture, paintings and especially music can be found within the tiny kiosks and tucked away shops throughout the station's main market; the Kall'ar'ot. A highly spiritual people such as the Pak'ma'ra feel their connection to the divine is direct but they do not have the words to describe how this feels, so they use their appreciation of art to do so in their stead. Once every Melatian year the Pak'ma'ra invite ambassadors, dignitaries and friends to a massive yet secretive opera-style concert on the station. It is said to be one of the most beautiful tales ever told in the most unbelievable sounds, so breathtaking that few can really describe what they saw. It is this incomprehensible wonder that the Pak'ma'ra say is the definition of their connection with the divine.

Aside from their willingness to take any organic shipment off anyone's hands for a sizeable saving, trade on the Abattoir is restricted to non-military goods. The Pak'ma'ra government does not like arms dealers but all other trade is welcome here, with seldom being taxed at all.

While rarely undertaken by non-Pak'ma'ra, there are very comfortable quarters for rent along the main corridors for as little as 200 credits a week (although suites can double or triple that number easily). Traders and merchants that actually choose to live here on a permanent basis receive major discounts on rent, taxation and even their meals, as a way to invite outsiders to commit to trade with their people!



Like most Pak'ma'ra crews, there are actually two fully empowered sets of command staff. Two captains, two commanders and two of everything else. Their people believe that everything done should be done for the greater good of the people, so putting decision-making power into one office would eliminate the time-tested debate required to find out what is best in each situation. The captains of the Abattoir, Tach'rann and Yut'hako, can be found debating over station decisions at all times, part of the reason why the station is never quick to react unless something endangers the populace. When instinct kicks in, the Pak'ma'ra defence teams spring to action and fill the space station's orbit with plasma-packing Por'fa'tis fighters and fast attack vessels. When the danger has passed, the long process of deciding who docks where and in what order must begin.

The Abattoir is a unique place that offers good deals and commodities unheard of elsewhere. It can be used as the dumping grounds for bad food runs, getting back at least some of the investment where it would be a total loss without it. If a visitor can manage to get beyond the stench and the revolting dietary establishments, a lot can be found within the greasy walls of the Abattoir.

## Brakos Ring

**Location:** Brakos II

**Size:** 3 mile circumference, 300 ft. wide

**Population:** 120,000 residents, 40,000 staff

**Distance to Jump Gate:** 280 miles

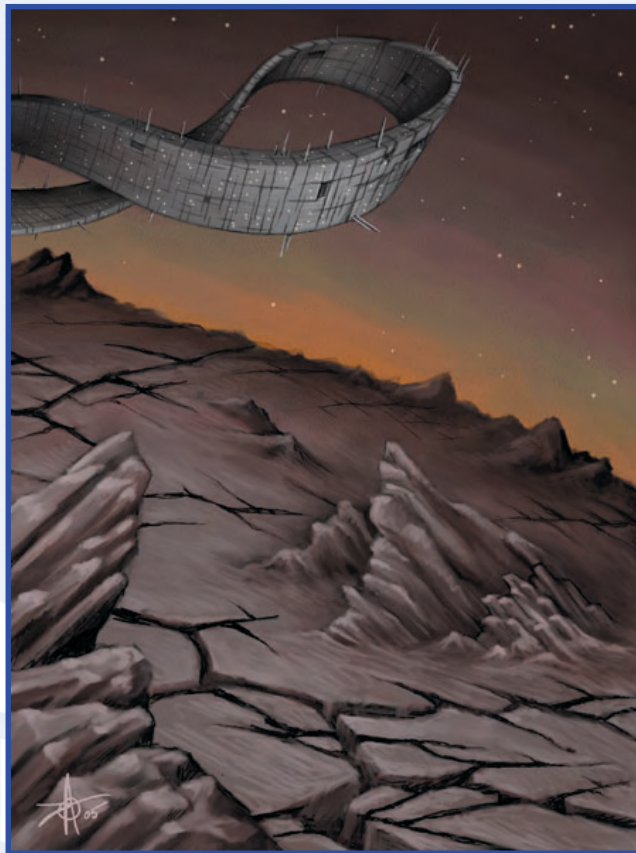
**Primary Export(s):** General Commerce

**Primary Import (s):** General Commerce

**Primary Defence Weapon:** Graviton Beam; Turret; Attack +5 (targeting computer); Base Damage 40+4d10 + charging if any; Critical 20; Range 4 + charging if any\*

\*See *The League of Non-Aligned Worlds Fact Book* for more details

Spinning like a hoop above the skies of the Brakiri homeworld of Brakos II, the appropriately named Brakos Ring is the headquarters of interstellar trade for the League of Non-Aligned Worlds, that is as far as the Brakiri power conglomerates are concerned. Every power family or corporate alliance has at least better-than-meagre facilities on the Ring, with several owning huge sections devoted to their industry's dealings.



Powered by a massive gravitic generator on the central hub of the Ring, the station spins just slightly slower than the planet below, allowing for longer market hours. It is equipped with a vast array of powerful Brakiri weaponry and several gravitic shield generators protect the areas of the station containing important systems and families (who can pay extra to have externally shielded quarters). During the Dilgar Invasion the Ring suffered massive damage to its core and would have been destroyed if it were not for nearby Drazil allies who drove off the attackers. The Ring was rebuilt stronger and even more defensive and could withstand a number of attacks like it.

There is always a heavy Syndicracy military element around the station, as each major power conglomerate keeps its own force lurking around to serve as escorts for prized traders or shipments at a moment's notice. At least two Avioki cruisers are actually owned by the Ring itself, and revolve around the station in shifts looking for unwanted guests or other dangers. Two full squadrons of the swarming Falkosi fighters stay docked at all times and rumour says they are solely for escape purposes by the family heads should they ever be aboard the Ring. This is doubtful, but it does seem



odd that the fighters are never even used for routine patrols.

The Brakos Ring is filled with thousands of native Brakiri and visiting traders. Most of its sizeable expanse is dedicated to instantly rentable discussion and negotiation rooms. These rooms can be unlocked and rented for a number of hours with the simple swipe of a Syndicracy Commerce Agency License (at the respectable rate of 25 credits an hour) and contain presentation boards, Stellar Com terminals, a Universe Today stand and several room service order microphones in case negotiations go longer than expected. For 'security reasons' each room is monitored by video only. Audio surveillance had been determined to be too close to corporate espionage, thus was removed station wide in 2252.

The Syndicracy appoints seven Prefects to form a governing council every two years. One from each of the four major conglomerate families, two from the military bases on Brakos II and a single outsider from a nearby League race to serve as the voice of their 'peers'. This council meets weekly to discuss station happenings and to argue and eventually vote upon station policies. They actually try to stay as anonymous as they can to the general station populace, as being known to have a say in the Ring's directives could sway negotiations against them in trade or political decisions.

General quarters can be rented in six month lots for 4,250 credits. Unlike even some of their business transactions, the Brakiri require this be paid up front and in full. Too often have traders come and stayed on the Ring only to be bankrupted by the thousands of savvy regulars before they could pay, so the pre-pay directive was put into place. These rooms are actually quite boring and small for the price paid, half the size of a common room on Babylon 5. This is to encourage visitors to spend less time in their quarters and more time renting services and rooms elsewhere; as long as they are spending credits, the Brakiri are happy.

There is only one time that the Brakos Ring closes its doors to commercial traffic. During their (in)famous Day of the Dead holiday, when those who passed before supposedly come to Brakiri space to bring their wisdom with them. The Ring closes all shops and negotiations cease for the entire night, while the thousands of Brakiri and (un)willing guests participate in the holy day. For more information on the Day of the Dead, see *The Wheel of Fire* sourcebook.

The Brakos Ring might very well be the home for the Syndicracy's League-based dealings on a governmental level. It is well protected, well stocked and filled with some of the craftiest and fiscally dangerous minds the galaxy has ever known. Traders would do well in remembering that fact before heading to the Ring for nonchalant commerce. It is a marvellous place to get what they need or want if they are willing to pay the extra credit here and there to do so. Especially if they know when to quit.

## Devado Civilian Starpost and Commerce Station

**Location:** Sin'talith V

**Size:** 5 linked 1 mile circumference rings

**Population:** 65,000 residents, 20,000 staff

**Distance to Jump Gate:** 20 miles

**Primary Export(s):** Finished Goods, Industrial Supplies

**Primary Import (s):** Food and Perishables, Luxury Items, Arms and Military Goods

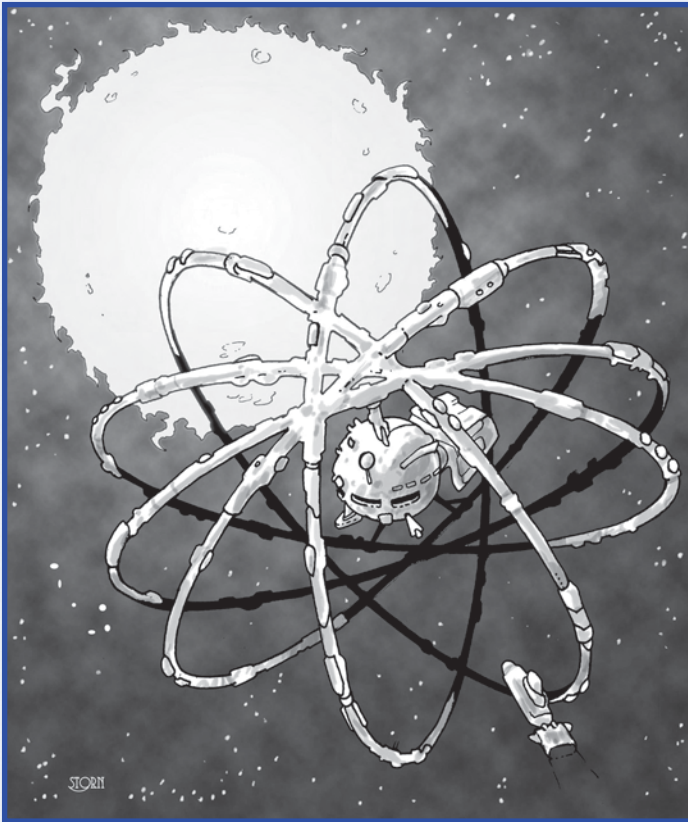
**Primary Defence Weapon:** Heavy Laser Cannon; Turret; Attack +5 (targeting computer); Damage 80+8d10; Critical 19-20; Range 6

Stationary above a massive red gas giant in the neutral Sin'talith system is the sometimes controversial Devado Civilian Starpost and Commerce Station or simply 'the Devado' to locals. Consisting of five tube-rings spinning around a central core of docking bays, engines and other necessary systems, the Devado is always buzzing with activity. It is the first thing anyone sees when exiting the Sin'talith jump gate, which sits just a few seconds away by spacecraft standards.

The Devado is a neutral station owned and operated by three wealthy individuals: two Pri-Wakat Brakiri power brokers and a retired EarthForce officer. It does not seem to follow the laws of either of these home governments and actually stays neutral in its dealings. It does not meddle in the affairs of its guests or inhabitants as far as trade or personal contracting goes, choosing instead to ask higher rates on renting quarters and slightly higher priced services to make up for any taxes lost or reduced profits.

Filled with entrepreneurs from all over the League, Earth Alliance and Centauri Republic, the Devado has accommodations for nearly all species in one way, shape or form. Atmospheric alterations can be made on a quarter-by-quarter basis for visiting aliens with





special needs like the Gaim. With the exception of the ever-secretive Vorlons, every race has been seen in the Devado's rings from one time or another. All are treated like treasured guests and offered every amenity. All, that is, except for the Minbari.

Corporal Gerald Furlowe, the human member of the management trio, served his last major tour of duty during the Earth/Minbari War as a GROPOS field officer and learned to hate the 'boneheaded menace' with a true passion. Making his fortune on captured Minbari relics and weapons he sold to IPX after the war, he is a powerful man with very powerful friends in the Earth Alliance. His hatred of Minbari has made them all but taboo on the Devado, as those who do accidentally arrive rarely stay long. Through intimidation, bigotry and general racist activity toward them, most Minbari recognise the dangers in staying. There are even rumours of a secret 'hit squad' of bloody handed assassins that Furlowe keeps on from his old GROPOS unit, the Fearsome Fiftieth, to 'take care of' any Minbari overstaying his welcome on their station.

Besides the negative views on Minbari, all other races are more than welcome here. There are several diners and eateries claiming to cater to any palate, especially the critically acclaimed King of Waters

restaurant. Universe Today called it 'an unbelievable experience... well worth the trip to the system' and it is renowned for its ability to recreate nearly any dish within a few hours notice before a reservation. These dishes may cost upwards of 1,000 credits a plate, but few who have the money would ever argue against the chef's expertise.

The station is split into separate levels by the rings, with each level identified with a certain business or use for the station as a whole. A Core level for station operations, a Bronze level filled with quarters and 'squatting' rooms for the homeless, Silver level contains business suites and office spaces and the massively swollen Gold level made up of markets, nightclubs, bars and other consumer services make up the first four rings of the Devado.

The fifth, Platinum level is dedicated to a single gigantic casino simply called 'the Plat'. Spanning the entire ring, the Plat is among the largest of its kind in the entire galaxy. It is rumoured to be run by the infamous members of the Red Credit raider cell and watched over by their hidden members at all times. The Plat is monitored by station security and customers are tracked through electronic betting cards given to all residents and visitors. These cards can only be purchased for up to 1,000 credits per week, in an effort to keep bankruptcy of crew and guests to a minimum, but can be cashed in for any amount won. There is little forgery of these cards due to their near-military encryption (DC 35 Forgery check to duplicate or alter) but many who wish to gamble with more than their limit per week can pay the squatters on Bronze level to get their own cards for a small additional fee. There was talk of making the betting cards DNA coded but the process would be far too expensive in practical terms.

There are several permanent residents in the offices of Silver level. Including a branch of Edgars Industries, ProZeta Corporation and unsurprisingly IPX Mercantile and the level is always bustling with business and would-be traders. The Devado, as a neutral station and does not require any sort of special licensing or permission to conduct business here, just the office space rented and a transcript of business undertaken. The management keeps a file of all transactions (at least the legal ones) in order to track any fraudulent or criminal deals that might stain their otherwise polished reputation. Some say that these files are also used by the Brakiri's Pri-Wakat managers to inform their



corporate ties on Brakos but such claims are generally unfounded.

The Devado is the regular home for traders of many varieties and styles, merchants selling any number of strange and alien goods and a growing mafia-esque raider cell called the Red Credit Salvage Company (see the Raiders chapter of this book for more details). Its docking bays see dozens of freighter and escort ships daily, with military vessels stopping by frequently for their weekend leave and some relaxation.

Described once as 'the predecessor to the Babylon Project but without all the pretension and self-importance', the Devado is a fantastic place to conduct business of all sorts. Gamble into a fortune, make the sale of a lifetime or find a ship worth crewing all aboard its spinning rings. Like rolling the Huaf'ka dice in the Plat, anything is possible if you take the chance and play the odds here.

## Transfer Points

Similar to station orbitals in the fact that they are in space rather than bound to a particular planet or moon, transfer points are much smaller in one sense and much larger in another. Quite simply put, they are a smaller construction with some basic amenities surrounded by miles of docking arms, umbilical ports and power stations. They are typically far easier to use for larger convoys or enormous freight vessels than trying to dock at a compact or bustling station and generally far less expensive as well.

A good transfer point will be at a sort of crossroads, a place where several jump routes come together. They are where large ships come to recharge engines, refill atmospheric stores, allow their crew to catch a shower and a hot meal - all of the things a long cargo run needs every once in a while. This does not mean that transfer points do not exist elsewhere, or that they are all used for simply recreational or commercial needs. There are so many transfer point flotillas out in the galaxy that no description could fit them all.

There is one ultimate truth of all of them however: all transfer points attract raiders. The main reason why a transfer point is built rather than a station orbital is often due to its distance from a colony or community, or for the lack of other worth in the area to warrant a fully functional station. That leaves hubs like these often alone in the void of space and without nearly enough

defensive capability to watch over *all* of the commercial vessels that come and go around them. Raiders know to lurk nearby to pounce on those straggling vessels either coming in tired and slow or leaving with holds filled with goods and resources.

Even with the added danger of raider attack, transfer points are worth every credit spent on them. Long shipments need these layovers and many long-distance cargo runners actually do some business in their cantinas while they wait. They are great places to grab a new load or a second contract for their same route and often much too far away from their original employers to give any say as to whether or not they can do so.

Transfer points are overlooked as simple stopping points, pauses in the galactic road. They can be so much more to the right trader or cargo runner and should not be ignored on account of larger establishments elsewhere. A person never knows what he may find if he looks between the bright lights and reads between the lines, there is so much more than just an empty void... if they know where to look.

## Centauri Royal Entat Transfer

**Location:** Entat IV

**Size:** 5,000 square foot hub, 3 miles of docking arms

**Population:** 5,000 staff

**Distance to Jump Gate:** 45 miles

**Primary Transferred Cargo(s):** Industrial Supplies, Raw Materials

Located along the long and hazardous jump route between Marigol and Morbis, the Entat system has always been a good stopping point for travellers. The first Centauri colonists that began to settle upon Entat IV and its three surrounding moons found them all to be rich in many minerals and precious materials. The mining colonies grew substantially and soon they were in need of faster ways to get their production efforts out of system. Thus the Royal Entat Transfer point was created.

Entat Transfer was built as a loading centre to put mined materials onto ships head deeper into Centauri space. Little more than a hotel attached to a bar, the Entat Cantina has a gregarious atmosphere filled with spacers and traders from all over the Republic. It claims to have a thousand different liquors on hand but rarely seems to sell more than five. There are always a few dancers on stage, gambling in many booths and a



halfway decent counter chef taking orders. For a few hundred credits a visiting crew member could have a very entertaining evening before setting out again in the 'morning'.

Overnight quarters on the Entat Transfer are rather inexpensive, only 75 credits for a sonic shower and a single bed. Since it is governmentally funded and operated, fleet officers of the Republic are allowed to stay for up to three nights free of all charges, any longer and they become regular customers like anyone else. Such treatment of military personnel helps the transfer point stay on the fleet's good side and keeps protective naval vessels nearby on a regular basis.

With so much military presence coming back and forth from the tiny waypoint combined with its remote location, few raiders risk attacking. Although there are hundreds of thousands of credits' worth of mined ores and metals lying in cargo freighters along the spanning docking arms, only a fool would attack. Only the near-suicidal Narn privateers who want to cause harm to the Republic at any cost seem to appear now and again.

The Republic-appointed manager of the Entat Transfer, Tifa Orestes of House Orestes, lives in the colony on Entat IV and visits it weekly. He is aloof and careless of what actually takes place aboard the tiny flotilla and only seems to take attention to any problems that might arise upon it when military personnel are involved. He was assigned to this faraway place on account of some major gambling debts and misappropriation of house funds to cover them, a fitting punishment for such a deed. He has not wasted the opportunity and has stockpiled a small fortune in extorted ducats and illegal 'holding taxes' and unlicensed tariffs that he occasionally levies against runners that cannot afford to fight against him due to controversial cargo or expired registries. By the year 2270 he should be able to pay off all his debts and still be able to afford a good House Sorrati assassin to handle the men who marooned him here!

From the years 2260 and 2261 the Entat Transfer was used by many Republic smugglers to gain access to Shadowtech components and parts from allies elsewhere in order to create the island Shadow base in which Londo Mollari later destroys (see *No Surrender*, *No Retreat* sourcebook). During this time the transfer point is almost always crawling with malicious agents of Lord Refa and Shadow allies from all over the galaxy. It was the most non-Centauri visitors it had ever seen in its existence. Would it not have been for the events that

took place at Coriana XI, Entat Transfer would have no doubt been obliterated by the Vorlons on their galaxy-scouring campaign to eradicate any presence of the Shadows. Since this did not occur, there is reason to believe that a few of the storage crates and boxes might still contain some old Shadowtech bits and pieces...

No matter the cause for linking up to its spindly docking arms, the Centauri Royal Entat Transfer is a much needed break from the swirls of hyperspace and the cold black of the void. A stiff drink and the company of fellow spacers can await anyone willing to drop a few hundred credits on a night's festivities. It is not the finest place a person can stay but that far out towards the rim it is one of the best there is.

## Pa'rl Point Jump Monitor

**Location:** Pa'rl II

**Size:** .5 mile long central core, 2000 feet of umbilical ports

**Population:** 3,000 staff, 700 squatters

**Distance to Jump Gate:** 12 miles

**Primary Transferred Cargo(s):** Food and Perishables, Finished Goods

Once a sight for carnage in Valen's War against the Shadows and then again during the Dilgar Invasion, Pa'rl system is known as the birthplace of the Yolu and their feared and respected Mutai martial philosophy. The Yolu did their best to stay out of galactic affairs and stay neutral in all things; balance and neutrality are core elements of the Mutai, after all. When thousands of their kind had been killed while defending their space from the Dilgar, the Yolu knew they could not simply ignore the rest of the galaxy. They stopped hiding and joined the League of Non-Aligned Worlds.

The Pa'rl system is one of the primary routing points the Yolu have to disperse shipments (of goods or travellers) through their corner of the galaxy. They could not afford a fully-fledged space station (not that placing one this far rimward would be beneficial anyway) and due to the massive amount of space debris and nebulous matter around Kitab left over from the Dilgar's passing, they could not manage to keep a working transfer point in orbit long enough to build it to working order. In a bold move for the Yolu, they chose instead to place a 'travel hub' in orbit around one of their moons, within scanning range of the Vree-built jump gate a dozen miles away.



Choosing to call it a 'Jump Monitor' instead of a transfer point, mostly due to the Yolu's inability to comprehend transition as anything but spiritual, they asked their League allies to lend a hand in the actual construction of the flotilla itself. Considering the general selfishness of the League during the early 2230s, few seemed interested in helping. The transfer point was eventually built to Vree specifications in 2238, who aided the Yolu greatly for mysterious and unknown reasons. Conventional docking arms were ignored completely, which are all but useless to the spinning saucers of the Vree, and instead only small shuttle bays and massive lengths of umbilical-style porting were built around a central cylindrical core. Piloting up and onto one of the spindles on a web of umbilical ports like this is actually a bit difficult (DC 18 Pilot check, only DC 15 if assisted by docking computers), with more than a few bumps and scrapes occurring if the transfer point is busy.



Each umbilical is around 100 feet of malleable tubing that leads to a reinforced airlock hallway, which lead to the central core. There is no gravity at all until the airlocks are reached to aid in cargo offloading, which also means that crew must traverse them to get on board as well, putting them in a zero-G environment for over a minute with just a thin sheet of duraplastic between them and the vacuum of space. Needless to say most crew choose the shuttle service at 20 credits a passenger.

Once on board the core of Jump Monitor visitors have few choices to entertain them while they offload or pick up new cargo or passengers. A small market with several Vree and Brakiri kiosks dominates the centremost portion of the core, with more than a few booths for rent in case a visiting merchant or trader wants to try and work for a few hours or days. Such booths are very inexpensive at 50 credits a day and suffer no additional taxation from the Yolu. Around the market there are several recreational stalls with state-of-the-art video entertainment and virtual sports. Unlike most other transfer point flotillas the Jump Monitor does not have any *legal* access to alcohol, drugs or other controlled substances. They are expressly forbidden anywhere on the Jump Monitor, with fines accompanying 'smuggling' such items on board of up to 10,000 credits per *ounce*! The Yolu are a very religious people and believe that mind-altering substances such as these separate them from the 'eternal consciousness' that they all believe they are a part of.

Placed in charge of the Jump Monitor was Eblat Mun'rga, a Mutai teacher who had travelled the galaxy twice over with the fighting circuit in his youth. Now an elder, he accepted the position with a great amount of pride. It has caused some problems with the Monitor's staffing however. As a Mutai master, he is required by Yolu scripture to allow any the chance to earn his acceptance, which brings hundreds of would-be martial artists to the Jump Monitor every year. Most of these neonates have little to no money to speak of, many having spent their life savings to come this far to learn from a master. They clutter the storage halls and common areas like homeless, constantly training and waiting for their chance to meet with Mun'rga for acceptance. He cannot turn them away until after they fail, so they remain and hundreds come to replace the ones who do leave. While it does nothing for the Monitor's appearance and clutter, having several hundred extra martial arts devotees on hand at all times keeps crime to a minimum.

Whether to hopefully learn at the feet of a master or to sell a hold full of interstellar trinkets to those who have never seen anything like them, the Jump Monitor is a unique view into the culture of the Yolu and a good place to find several of the lesser League races come together.



## Dross 'Commercial' Transit Hub (pre-2259)

**Location:** Dross V

**Size:** 8000 square feet docking flotilla

**Population:** 2,000 staff, 1200 military garrison

**Distance to Jump Gate:** 1400 miles

**Primary Transferred Cargo(s):** Arms & Military Goods, Industrial Supplies

A major stopping point in the Narn Regime, the Dross system is home to a valuable resource-providing planet and serves as a stopping point for most fleets (commercial, friendly or hostile alike) on their way from the Centauri's side of the galaxy to Homeworld. To ensure its safety the Dross system has always been heavily patrolled by military vessels that require a stopping point for their crews' rest, relaxation and refuelling. That is why they built the Dross Commercial Transit Hub.

Similar in design to one of the Narn's smallest listening posts, the Dross Transit Hub is strictly a transfer point on the surface. League of Non-Aligned Worlds and Earth Alliance cargo vessels come and go freely at the transit point, submitting to electronic scans as they deem it necessary. Any Centauri vessel, or ships that may have recently spent time in the Centauri Republic, are always detained and thoroughly searched for anything that might be used against the Regime. There is a very high impound and seizure rate on such ships and the Centauri rarely even risk sending anything in this direction.

The flotilla is rectangular and equipped with docking bays that can handle small shuttles and freight pods, but larger vessels must remain in orbit around the frozen planet below. It is relatively well-armed and keeps state-of-the-art communications equipment powered up with a ceaseless link to Homeworld in case of any attack. With heavy defence fleets always lurking behind nearby moons and planets in the sensitive system, these

communications can call in dozens of attack ships in less than an hour, which is hopefully time enough to interpose themselves upon the attackers.

There is always a full battalion of Narn soldiers on board the station, with many being trained as shipboard marines as well as ground infantry. They cycle in and out with those stationed in the military vessels throughout the system and serve as security on the Hub between starship duties. Unlike most stations or outposts the Transit Hub has no enforceable weapon regulations, preferring to police those who bring them to bear with heavy-handed justice.

Dross Hub is used by Narn civilians as a trading point and meeting place before they head further out into the galaxy, even knowing the sorts of guests it normally has to offer. They come and meet in the huge restaurant/bar area called the 'Last Stop', eat and drink adequate food and conduct minor business. Once each week there is a live band or dancer to entertain patrons, but they tend to be rather unskilled and unappealing most of the time. The Last Stop is equipped with a number of gambling tables and electronic entertainment for patrons and staff, who can expect to see at least one fist fight on any given evening.

Operated and managed by a friend of the Kha'Ri, Ek'Karn, the Transit Hub does its best to stay a legitimate source of commerce for ships passing through. Trying not to chase everyone away with the number of attack cruisers and armed soldiers, Ek'Karn stays fair and taxes appropriately, even ships containing Centauri-made goods or materials. He may hate them with every fibre of his body, but sacrificing profit in order to thumb his nose at the Republic punishes every Narn relying on the Hub.

The so-called Commercial Transit Hub in Dross system is a great line of defence against attackers. It is also a better place to locate that hard-to-find weapon

### Autumn of 2259

When the Centauri began their counterattack on the Narn and attacked many commercial targets, the Dross Transit Hub was amongst the last struck. Found to be in the path of conquest by the Centauri's Shadow allies, the Transit Hub was utterly destroyed by a pair of Shadow Cruisers in less than ten minutes. All docked and orbiting vessels were obliterated to keep the Centauri's secret, with only a single survivor escaping in a life pod that fell into a jump point during the attack.

The escape pod and its inhabitant were never recovered from hyperspace and could be anywhere.



component or jamming circuit for a ship's sensors. Raiders and traders alike come here to sate their arms needs. With military support and backing all around, it is no wonder the Dross system stays so safe, even if those inside might seem a bit reckless.

## Using Commercial Locations

Not every galaxy-spanning plot, assassination attempt or life-threatening encounter *has* to take place on the Babylon 5 station. In fact, a large number of important events that occur in the television series take place on planets and colonies far and wide. Games Masters should feel as though the entire galaxy is a spinning and churning mass of events and commercial hubs like the above examples are perfect for such needs.

Trade based characters, whether trader, merchant or raider, can obviously see the benefit to visiting trade outposts and the like. These are the backbones of the market and only the most foolish of tradesmen would limit his choices by ignoring them. Station orbitals and transfer points could be rife with internal drama and intrigue only accessible to those brave enough to visit them on their travels. An entire campaign could take place on the spinning rings of a large orbital and corners of the galaxy barely thought of by the residents of Babylon 5 could be just as life-threatening or important as any homeworld.

Even non-trade based characters can find a plethora of reasons to come to these locations, even if it just to buy that new tool or toy they had been yearning for. Companies are always looking for agents to help

them in eliminating the competition or researching unexpected happenings to their shipments. Heroic Rangers may serve to help make sure refugee supplies get through troubled trade routes or lie in waiting to deal with those who would steal them. Anything can happen in the great void between the stars, situations which may just require the attentions of people just like the Player Characters.

For Games Masters commercial hubs can be good ways to thrust events onto their players like an atomic bomb. Stopping off at the nearest transfer point for supplies could open doors to larger schemes. Ships can be crippled for repairs, marooning its crew on a tiny backwater flotilla with a crew filled with overworked and underpaid union workers. A routine cargo transfer could come up with scans of illegal substances, impounding the characters' vessel and pitting them against very determined investigators. The options are only limited by the Games Master's wishes. They may never be as politically important or destiny-altering as Babylon 5 or Z'ha'dum, but can support more than their share of close calls, narrow escapes and praiseworthy victories.

Commercial locations, like the Zocalo on Babylon 5 itself, form some of the best supporting scenes and contain countless possible enemies, allies and friends for a Games Master to use in their campaign. They could be simple stop offs or major segments of the story. Money always plays a large role in roleplaying games, even if just to stay well fed and entertained, and there is often a great deal of it to be had in these scattered locales.



No matter if it is simply a layover while refuelling, picking up a few needed things or dropping off a hundred thousand credits worth of fighter fuel characters will find themselves interacting with commercial locations like these at some point in most campaigns. We hope that the Games Master can use the above examples and the rest of the information in this book to make those visits, whether short, long, planned or spontaneous, as exciting and enjoyable for their players as possible.



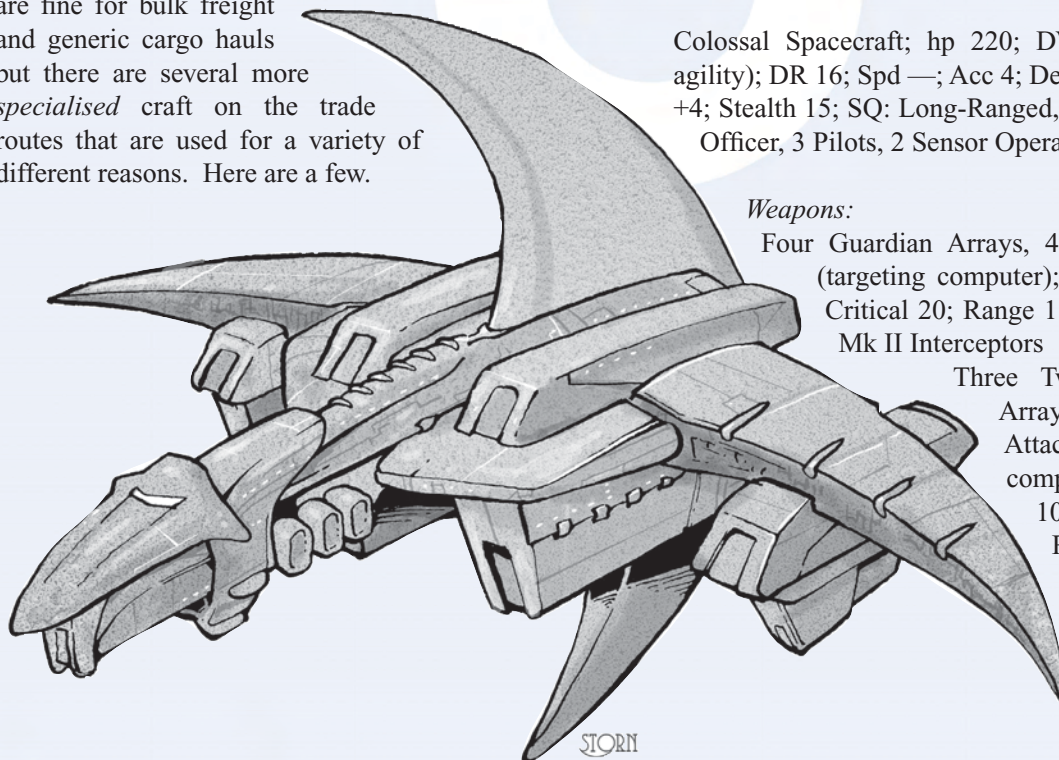
# New Spacecraft and Equipment

*'By the time she leaves the dock she's obsolete. There is always something bigger, better... more expensive.'*

This chapter presents several new pieces of equipment and spacecraft stemming from the many careers surrounding the galactic market. From new and improved raider vessels to merchant kiosk security scanners and traceable commercial stasis bubbles, it can be found here. These items are used commonly by several traders, merchants and other related roles throughout the galaxy and all prices listed are for brand new examples straight from the factory. It should be noted that many items in this chapter, especially the spacecraft varieties, can often be found second-hand for vastly less than listed factory pricing.

## Commercial Transport Craft

There are hundreds of different vessels in the galaxy that bring cargo from one place to another and most are similar in nature. They have large engines, long hulls for easier docking and deep holds for carrying massive loads of commodities very long distances. These ships are fine for bulk freight and generic cargo hauls but there are several more *specialised* craft on the trade routes that are used for a variety of different reasons. Here are a few.



### Chief Engineer Aimee Holgrant Callos Wartime Freighter, Centauri Republic

Named for the controlling house that designed it originally, the Callos was the response to so many Centauri mercantile vessels lost travelling through the many hostile systems they encountered. Billions of credits' worth of cargo has been assaulted and destroyed by enemy fleets, defence platforms and offensive mines while trying to traverse the galactic systems, in which the Centauri have few friends. Gutting much of the internal systems such as artificial gravity and the ammunition heavy armament of the Vorchan ship, House Callo created a smallish cargo-running vessel that was far more heavily protected and combat worthy for moving through the many conflicts their government seemed to be perpetually involved in. Replacing the bulky matter cannons with fast-firing guardian arrays and an additional particle array, the Callos holds its own quite well in a fire fight, hopefully long enough to activate a safe jump point and escape with their goods intact.

Colossal Spacecraft; hp 220; DV 10 (-8 size, +8 agility); DR 16; Spd —; Acc 4; Dec 2; Han +2; Sensor +4; Stealth 15; SQ: Long-Ranged, Cargo 60,000 lb.; 1 Officer, 3 Pilots, 2 Sensor Operators, 16 Crewmen

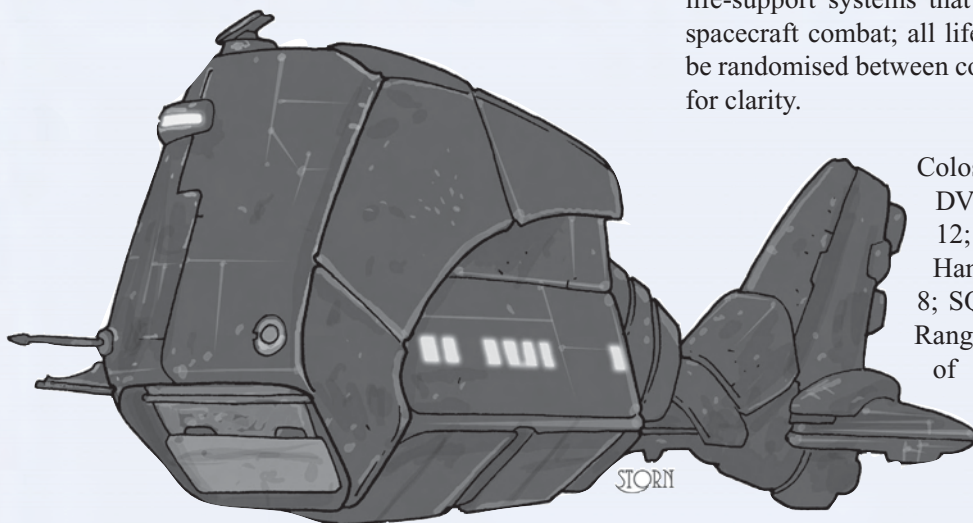
#### Weapons:

Four Guardian Arrays, 4 Turret; Attack +3 (targeting computer); Damage 20+2d10; Critical 20; Range 1; Rapid Fire; Act as Mk II Interceptors

Three Twin-linked Particle Arrays; 2 Front, 1 Turret; Attack +3 (targeting computer); Damage 10+3d10; Critical 20; Range 3

Craft (1):  
1 Light Shuttle





### Livestock/ Slaver Transport Barge

Whether dealing in huge quantities of cattle from Earth, flocks of tiorach from Zhabar or throngs of slaves bought on Praxis IX, these gigantic ships are perfect. It is basically a small crew compartment sitting directly behind a simple bridge and control centre, attached to a massive length of stocks or compartments for the living cargo itself, which is propelled by huge thrusters in the far aft of the vessel. Sometimes nicknamed 'meatwagons' by other traders, these bulky ships are much like colony ships for any sort of living commodity sold in large numbers. The entire 'cargo' section of this ship has completely separate life-support and waste filtration systems (many of which are vented into the ship's engine wash to be atomised). With the lack of artificial gravity, vessels such as these must use straps or restraints to keep the 'livestock' stationary during travel, which can be problematic when maintaining the cleanliness of the ship's hold. When carrying so many living creatures for sometimes weeks at a time, the crew may have to occasionally deal with the concentrated filth that the containment area becomes full of after just a few days of travel. Most use pressurised air hoses and EVA suits to clean as best they can, as the stench and toxicity of the room can be incapacitating at a single breath. It should be noted that a livestock barge has two separate

life-support systems that could be hit or targeted in spacecraft combat; all life-support critical hits should be randomised between containment and crew systems for clarity.

Colossal II Spacecraft; hp 420; DV 3 (-10 size, +3 agility); DR 12; Spd —; Acc 1/2; Dec 1/3; Han +1/3; Sensor +2; Stealth 8; SQ: Dual Life-Support, Long-Range, Cargo 300,000 lb. worth of livestock and supplies; 2 Officers, 2 Pilots, 1 Sensor Operators, 5 Crewmen

#### Weapons:

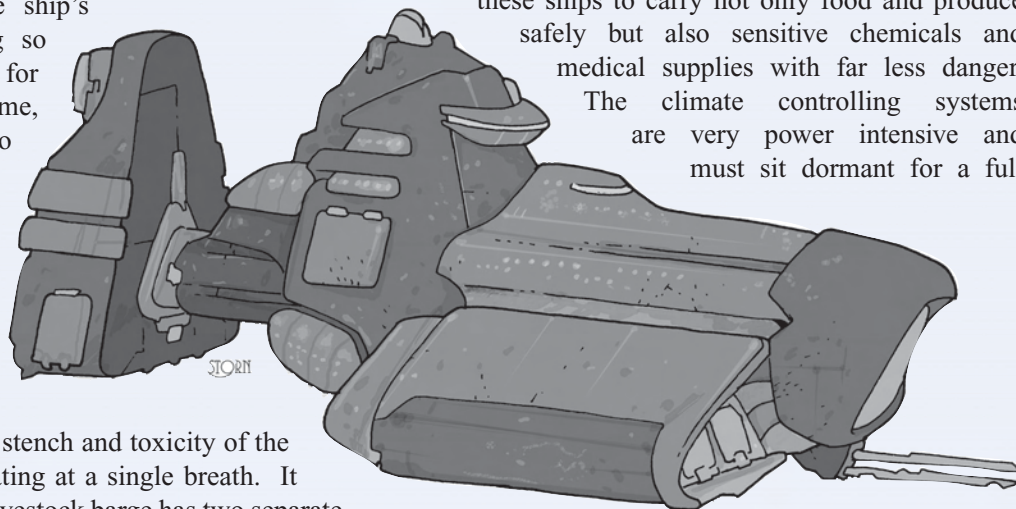
Particle Beam; Turret; Attack +1 (targeting computer); Damage 5+3d8; Critical 20; Range 1

#### Craft (1):

8 Light Shuttles

### Penguin-class Refrigerated Freighter, Earth Alliance

Based upon the primary designs of the Corporate Freighter used commonly across the galaxy, which was notoriously costly to transport perishable or temperature-sensitive goods long distances, the Earth Alliance dockyards created a fully enclosed non-pod based transit freighter with more advanced climate controlling abilities for its hold. The *Penguin*-class freighter has four pre-built and hardwired cargo pods attached to its lengthy hull and can accept up to two more (non-refrigerated) pods if necessary. This allows these ships to carry not only food and produce safely but also sensitive chemicals and medical supplies with far less danger. The climate controlling systems are very power intensive and must sit dormant for a full





thirty-six Earth Standard hours before turning on the refrigeration units, which can drop the temperature of the cargo pods up to 50° Celsius in less than an hour. Part of this process does include venting non-essential gases from the hold, thus also making it a life-support hazard for stowaways or boarding raiders. As a drawback, these power signatures are typically easy to track; a boon to targeting raiders.

Colossal Spacecraft; hp 180; DV 6 (-8 size, +4 agility); DR 6; Spd —; Acc 1/2; Dec 1/2; Han +1/2; Sensor +0; Stealth 10; SQ: Long-Ranged, Cargo 200,000 lb. + 2 optional cargo pods; 6 Officers/Pilots, 1 Sensor Operator, 5 Crewmen

*Weapons:*

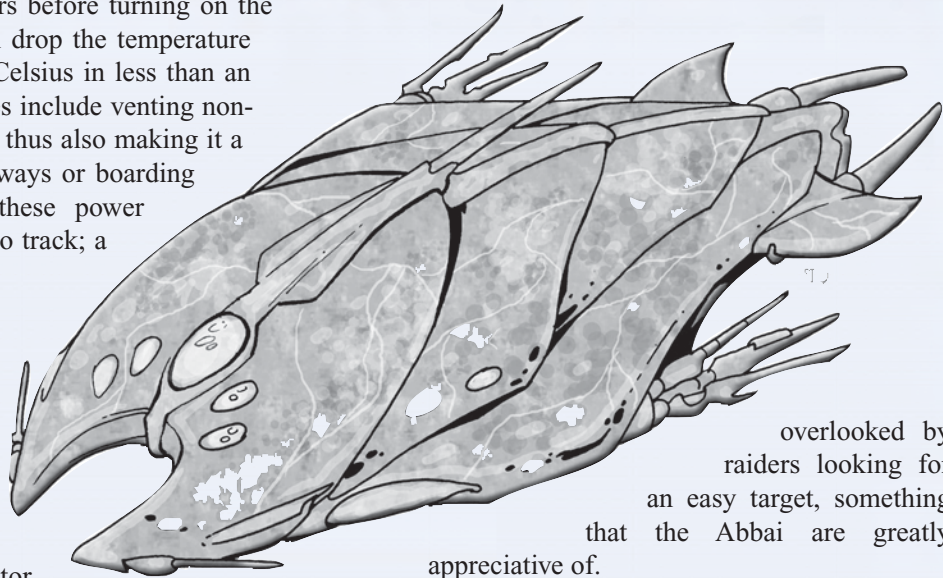
Particle Beam; Turret; Attack +1 (targeting computer); Damage 5+3d8; Critical 20; Range 1

*Craft (1):*

3 Light Shuttles

## Shyairrel Outpost Lander, Abbai Matriarchate

Most large cargo vessels use several smaller loader or shuttlecraft to bring their wares to trade outposts or planetside colonies. The Abbai deal so often in rescue, medical or relief supplies they always fear for their tiny shuttle crews as they rocket away from their larger and safer vessels. Many supply drops or trades have been interrupted by angered warmongers or tyrannical landowners, shot down for *interfering*. Angered by this, the Abbai created a fully atmospheric capable capitol vessel they could send into hostile landing areas to conduct their business. Based on the popular Tiraca frigate, the Shyairrel (meaning 'armoured saviour' in Abbath) is one half cargo hauler and one half weapons platform. The idea that one of these could set down a few miles outside the trade area and protect a few miles in all directions with their versatile and uncharacteristically lethal weapon arrays while sending several cargo hauling hovercraft out with the goods and traders. It cannot carry as much as some of its more conventional brethren but also has to rely far less on shuttle services and transfer points to deliver its goods. Easily mistaken for a warship, the Shyairrel can be



overlooked by raiders looking for an easy target, something that the Abbai are greatly appreciative of.

Colossal Spacecraft; hp 300; DV 9 (-8 size, +7 agility); DR 14; Spd —; Acc 4; Dec 3; Han +2; Sensor +8; Stealth 15; SQ: Amphibious, Atmospheric Capable, Long-Ranged, 2 Particle Impeders (Block 20%), Gravitic Shield (-1); Cargo 120,000 lb.; 1 Officers, 3 Pilots, 2 Sensor Operators, 9 Crewmen

*Weapons:*

Three Quad Arrays; 2 Front, 1 Turret; Attack +3 (targeting computer); Damage 20+2d10; Critical 20; Range 3; Rapid Fire

*Craft (1):*

2 Light Shuttles

10 Hovercraft Cargo Loaders (6,000 lb. capacity each)

## Escort and Authority Craft

Trade routes are seldom empty of military or governmental craft and thus are patrolled in their own fashion against threats to commerce in their areas. Neutral space or rarely-used routes however are very dangerous to expect these other craft to simply watch out over a trader's vessels. To fill the void where governments and militaries cannot watch, several shipbuilding companies and agencies have made generic-esque spacecraft designed for escort duty. They are typically fast and tough, able to wipe out pesky raider fighters quickly while protecting the trading vessels. They are a good resource for any trade company or cargo runner but can rarely stand up to larger raiding or attacking ships.

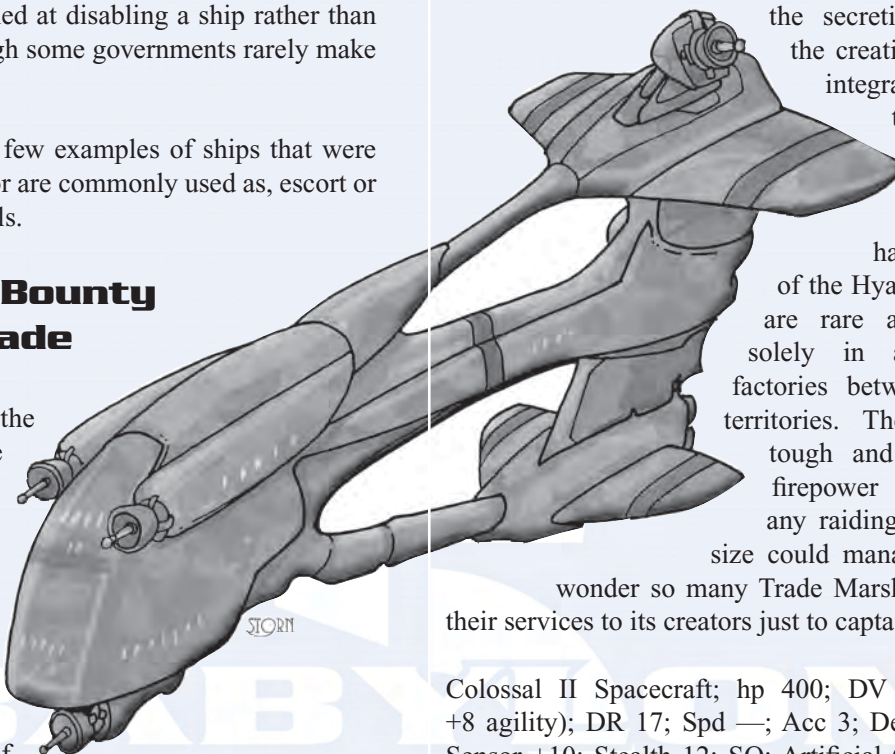


There are also other ways to protect the trade routes; by setting after those who would attack it. Trade authorities and system security forces will sometimes invest in specialised craft designed to go after smugglers, raiders and tax debtors with incapacitating force. Many have weapon systems aimed at disabling a ship rather than destroying it, although some governments rarely make the distinction.

The following are a few examples of ships that were either designed for, or are commonly used as, escort or trade authority vessels.

### Huntsman Bounty Frigate (Trade Marshal)

Designed by the progenitors of the Trade Marshal program, the Hyach and the Brakiri, the Huntsman is an unsubtle attack cruiser built to do one thing: bring down enemies of trade in the League of Non-Aligned World's space. Using what technologies each side was willing to share with the other, the two League members created a powerful ship which only licensed Trade Marshals



can acquire, if they are in good standing with either government. Many League races like the Drazi or Gaim prefer to use their own races' spacecraft to warden the lanes but the Huntsman is always an expensive, yet effective, option. Due to the secretive nature of the creation process to integrate the gravitic technologies of the Brakiri with the harmonic lasers of the Hyach the vessels are rare and produced solely in a half-dozen factories between the two territories. The ship is fast, tough and packs more firepower than almost any raiding vessel of its size could manage. It is no wonder so many Trade Marshals sign over their services to its creators just to captain one.

Colossal II Spacecraft; hp 400; DV 8 (-10 size, +8 agility); DR 17; Spd —; Acc 3; Dec 2; Han +2; Sensor +10; Stealth 12; SQ: Artificial Gravity, Jump Point, Long-Ranged, Grapple (2 Front, 1 Left, 1 Right, 2 Rear), Gravitic Shield (-2), Cargo 50,000 lb.; 1 Officers, 6 Pilots, 4 Sensor Operators, 20 Crewmen, room for 20 Passengers/Prisoners

#### Harmonic Laser Cannons

The Hyach are an old race with similar technologies to the Abbai, but are far less restricted in their applications of military science to just the 'defensive'. They have fought many wars, some internal in nature, which have allowed their weapon technologies to excel over time.

The 'harmonic laser' is something the Hyach evolved from the Abbai's own laser technologies. Using sound wavelengths in unison with precision laser emitters, the harmonic laser weakens the atomic bonds of anything the laser touches. This allows for much deeper strikes that seem to cut right through enemy hulls almost like an acid would, but without any physical ammunition expended.

Whenever a harmonic laser cannon fires, all communications nearby fill with ultrasonic static radiating from the condensed sound-beam. While this cannot be heard by most races (except the Pak'ma'ra, who are strangely mesmerised by its 'beauty') it does scramble sub-channels for a few moments until local wavelengths can rearrange again.



*Weapons:*

Two Medium Harmonic Laser Cannons; 1 Front/Left, 1 Front/Right; Attack +4 (targeting computer); Damage 30+3d8 (ignores 5 points of DR); Critical 19-20; Range 4

Three Graviton Pulsars; 1 Front/Left, 1 Front/Right, 1 Rear; Attack +3 (targeting computer); Damage 10+1d10; Critical 20; Range 3; Extreme Rapid Fire Gravitic Bolt; Turret; Attack +3 (targeting computer); Damage 40+4d10; Critical 20; Range 4

Four Harmonic Pulse Arrays; 1 Front, 1 Left, 1 Right, 1 Rear; Attack +2 (targeting computer); Damage 10+2d6 (ignore 3 points of DR); Critical 19-20; Range 1; Rapid Fire

*Craft (1):*

3 Armed Shuttles

5 Light Shuttles

## IPX5 Arbiter, Interplanetary Expeditions

Going completely contrary to a military format, every ship in this fleet was named 'Arbiter' instead of each ship receiving its own designation. Interplanetary Expeditions chose instead to only differentiate between the ships internally, using complex electronic signal codes and sub-channels to tell the reports from say the *Arbiter 161* from *Arbiter 7*. As far as the company is concerned the general public does not need any knowledge as to which *Arbiter* is visiting them at any given time; it helps keep grudges against a particularly effective or productive ship from occurring. Each *Arbiter* is a glorified heavy fighter equipped with expensive and powerful sensors, scanning and recording equipment and adequate firepower. The role of the *Arbiter* is not to necessarily protect a shipment

but instead to record the locations and identities of who may have attacked it and to keep track of the general occurrences surrounding it. Too small to generate their own jump points, every *Arbiter* assigned to a fleet is given remote access to any jump engines onboard any vessel in the supervised fleet, allowing the *Arbiter* to escape and 'get help' in a moment's notice.

Huge Spacecraft; hp 45; DV 14 (-2 size, +6 agility); DR 5; Spd —; Acc 9; Dec 5; Han +5; Sensor +8; Stealth 18; SQ: Afterburners, Atmospheric Capable, Ejector Seat, Remote Jump Point, Grapple, Advanced Computers (+2 Computer Use and Pilot check bonus); 1 Pilot, room for 1 Passenger

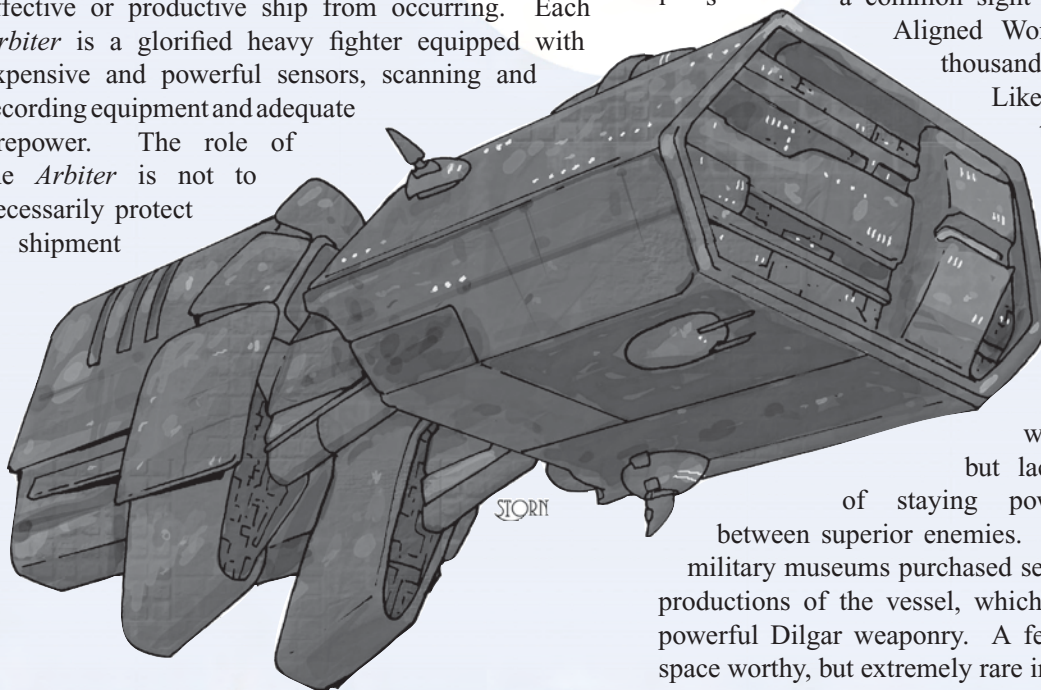
*Weapons:*

Tri-Linked Particle Emitters; Boresight; Attack +2 (targeting computer); Damage 8+3d6; Critical 19-20; Range 1

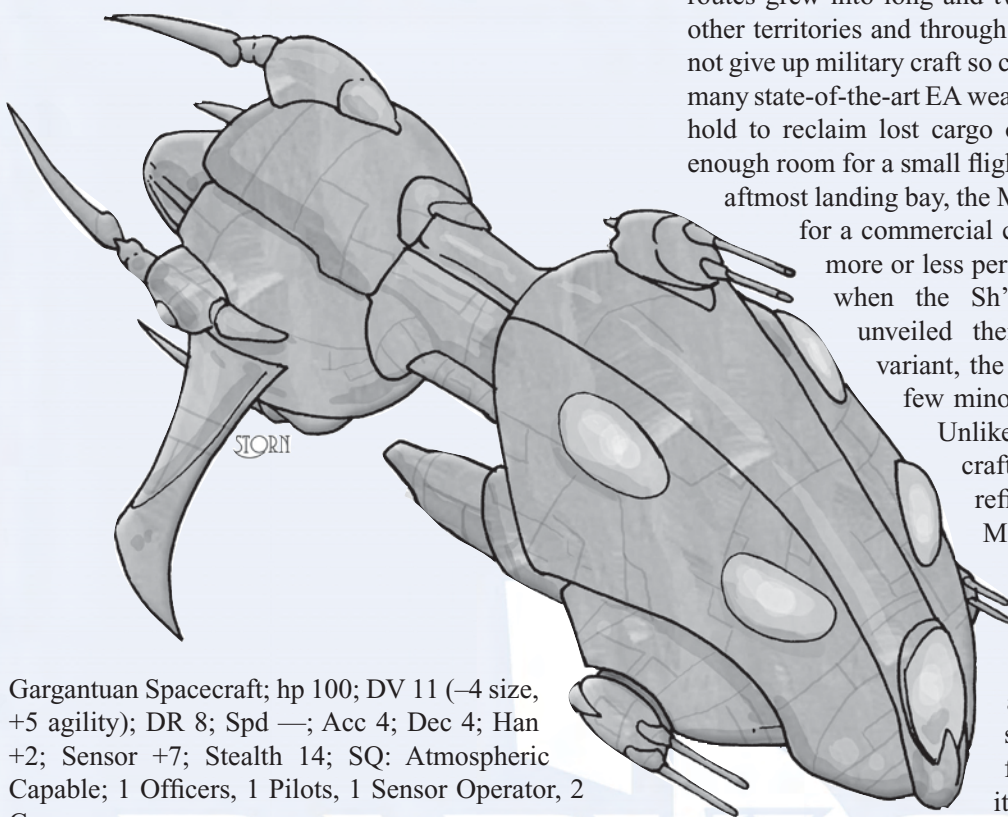
## Kestral Patrol Boat

An old decommissioned Drazi design created just after the Dilgar Invasion, the Kestral was replaced after several thousand were produced by the far more efficient Stareagle. The Drazi Freehold was unsure what to do with the new-yet-obsolete fast attack ship. Retiring it shortly after the first few flights were released, the rest of the first production run (and the design rights) were sold to the commercial moguls on Latig I, who in turn sold them to their freelance agencies and partnered companies. Now the Kestral is a common sight in League of Non-Aligned Worlds territories and thousands exist elsewhere.

Like most Drazi vessels the Kestral has all of its firepower, which is considerable for a ship its size, aimed to the front of the ship. It is manoeuvrable enough to bring its powerful weapons to bear, but lacks any semblance of staying power once caught between superior enemies. Rich collectors and military museums purchased several of the original productions of the vessel, which still bore rare and powerful Dilgar weaponry. A few of these are still space worthy, but extremely rare in current times.







Gargantuan Spacecraft; hp 100; DV 11 (–4 size, +5 agility); DR 8; Spd —; Acc 4; Dec 4; Han +2; Sensor +7; Stealth 14; SQ: Atmospheric Capable; 1 Officers, 1 Pilots, 1 Sensor Operator, 2 Crewmen

*Weapons:*

*First Production Armament*

Repeater Gun; Front/Left, Front/Right; Attack +1 (targeting computer); Damage 10+3d10; Critical 20; Range 1; Rapid Fire

Two Medium Bolters; 1 Front/Left, 1 Front/Right; Attack +2 (targeting computer); Damage 40+3d8; Critical 19-20; Range 4

*Current Production Armament*

Particle Repeater; Front/Left, Front/Right; Attack +2 (targeting computer); Damage 20+1d10; Critical 20; Range 2; Rapid Fire

Two Particle Blasters; 1 Front/Left, 1 Front/Right; Attack +3 (targeting computer); Damage 30+3d10; Critical 20; Range 4

*Craft (1):*

1 Light Shuttles

## Ministry-Class Escort Frigate

The Earth Alliance has always been decidedly protective of its commercial traffic and dedicated a large amount of effort to make sure transfer points and frequented jump gates were always patrolled. As trade

routes grew into long and twisted things leading into other territories and through neutral space, they could not give up military craft so commonly. Equipped with many state-of-the-art EA weapon systems, an expanded hold to reclaim lost cargo or rescue passengers and enough room for a small flight of generic fighters in an

aftmost landing bay, the Ministry serves many roles for a commercial convoy. Considered to be

more or less perfect for its job until 2254, when the Sh'llassan Imperial council unveiled their deadly plasma-armed variant, the Ministry has only seen a few minor changes over the years.

Unlike most Earthforce military craft, which see dozens of refits and revisions, the Ministry's efficiency speaks for itself. It has been widely distributed to many Earth Alliance companies and agencies, which may have sold or traded them away for a generation. Since

its inception as a general commercial escort, it has been seen in many races' fleets and with a variety of minor alien adjustments.

Colossal Spacecraft; hp 230; DV 10 (–8 size, +8 agility); DR 8; Spd —; Acc 3; Dec 2; Han +2; Sensor +3; Stealth 14; SQ: Long-Ranged, Medical Station (+2 on all Medical skill checks on board), Cargo 10,000 lb.; 2 Officers, 3 Pilots, 3 Sensor Operators, 10 Crewmen, room for 25 passengers/wounded

*Weapons:*

*EA Alpha*

Four Particle Beams; 1 Front/Left, 1 Front/Right, 1 Rear/Left, 1 Rear/Right; Attack +1 (targeting computer); Damage 5+3d8; Critical 20; Range 1

Two Laser Cannons; 1 Front/Left, 1 Front/Right; Attack +2 (targeting computer); Damage 20+3d10; Critical 19-20; Range 5

*EA Beta*

Four Light Pulse Cannons; 1 Front/Left, 1 Front/Right, 1 Rear/Left, 1 Rear/Right; Attack +2 (targeting computer); Damage 10+2d6; Critical 20; Range 3; Rapid Fire

Two Standard Missile Racks; Guidance 4; Damage 30+3d10; Critical 20; Speed 5; Fuel 5; Reloads 10



*Sh'lassan Plasma Variant*

Two Twin-Linked Medium Plasma Cannons ; 1 Front/Left/Right, 1 Rear/Left/Right; Attack +2 (targeting computer); Damage 30+6d10; Critical 19-20; Range 2  
Two Medium Plasma Cannons; 1 Front/Left, 1 Front/Right; Attack +2 (targeting computer); Damage 30+6d10; Critical 19-20; Range 2

*Centauri Common Variant*

Two Guardian Arrays; 1 Front/Left, 1 Front/Right; Attack +2 (targeting computer); Damage 20+2d10; Critical 20; Range 1; Rapid Fire; Act as Mk II Interceptors

Two Twin-linked Particle Arrays; 1 Front/Left, 1 Front/Right; Attack +2 (targeting computer); Damage 10+3d10; Critical 20; Range 3

Two Matter Cannons; 1 Front/Left, 1 Front/Right; Attack +2 (targeting computer); Damage 30+3d10; Critical 18-20; Range 5

*Narn Common Variant*

Two Ion Torpedo Launchers; 1 Front, 1 Rear; Attack +3 (targeting computer); Damage 30+3d10; Critical 20\*; Range 8; Burst Radius 2

Four Light Pulse Cannons; 1 Front/Left, 1 Front/Right, 1 Rear/Left, 1 Rear/Right; Attack +2 (targeting computer); Damage 10+2d6; Critical 20; Range 3; Rapid Fire

\*Ion Torpedoes score two critical hits every time a critical confirms with them. This does not apply to ships caught in the ion torpedoes' blast radius; only a ship that has been directly hit suffers the additional critical effect.

*Craft (1):*

6 Fighters of Huge size or smaller  
2 Light Rescue Shuttles

## Raider Craft

Relying on cobbled and scavenged parts, field-trained crews and the black market sources they have access to, raider cells do everything they can to create workable and effective fleets. Rarely much to look at, raider vessels are the personification of utility over aesthetics. They need to function well and long enough to hopefully claim enough salvage and raided cargo to surpass their worth, even at the cost of their crew members.

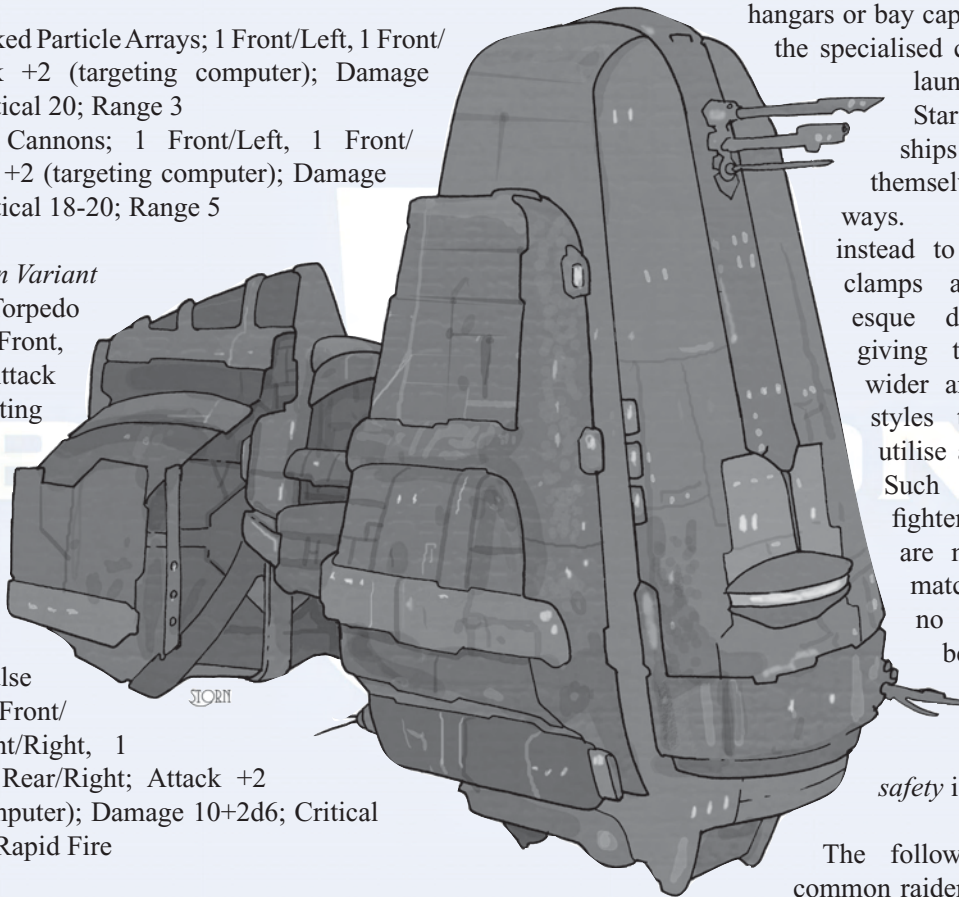
Raider tactics are heavily fighter-based and thus nearly all of their vessels have very large hangars or bay capacities. Unlike the specialised cobra bays that

launch EarthForce Starfuries, raider ships do not restrict themselves in such ways. They choose instead to use magnetic clamps and umbilical-esque docking tubes, giving them a much wider array of fighter styles that they can utilise at short notice. Such jury-rigged fighter attachments are not as safe as matched bays but no raider would be deterred on account of something so minor as a safety issue.

The following craft are common raider spacecrafts or average statistics of their patchwork capitol ships. There are also slightly revised versions of raider ships that were printed elsewhere.

### 'Battlewagon' Attack Cruiser

The stereotypical raider assault ship, the term 'Battlewagon' comes from the overall clunky nature of this style of spacecraft and its unnerving ability to bring so many weapons to bear against a target. They tend to be surprisingly heavily armoured, with many raider cells welding plate after plate on top of previous damage. Battlewagons may not be pretty to look at, but





they are more than a match for the kind of commercial craft they prey upon. They are equipped to carry two dozen light fighters in trench-style launch bays, capable of vomiting out a stream of dogfighters in just a few moments. Battlewagons have massive fusion reactors to power their numerous weapon systems and overworked thrusters, but keep a secondary power core attached directly to their jump engines in case there is a fusion or bridge accident and the jump engine can then be fired manually. While this normally means the Battlewagon is doomed for scrap, the crew can readily get to their fighters or shuttles and hopefully get into the jump point for a swift escape. Heavy and lumbering, the raider 'Battlewagon' wears many faces; all of them a nightmare sight for commercial convoys everywhere.

Colossal III Spacecraft; hp 630; DV 2 (-12 size, +4 agility); DR 20; Spd —; Acc 2; Dec 1; Han +0; Sensor +2; Stealth 8; SQ: Jump Point, Long-Ranged, Engineering Station (+2 on all Repair and Technical skill checks on board), Cargo 150,000 lb.; 3 Officers, 16 Pilots, 15 Sensor Operators, 35 Crewmen, room for 25 passengers/prisoners

#### *Weapons:*

Laser Cannon; Boresight; Attack +2 (targeting computer); Damage 20+3d10; Critical 19-20; Range 5  
Twin-Linked Medium Pulse Cannons; Front; Attack +2 (targeting computer); Damage 10+2d10; Critical 20; Range 4; Rapid Fire

Eight Particle Beams; 2 Front, 2 Left, 2 Right, 2 Rear; Attack +1 (targeting computer); Damage 5+3d8; Critical 20; Range 1

Two Twin-Linked Particle Arrays; 2 Rear; Attack +2 (targeting computer); Damage 10+3d10; Critical 20; Range 3; Rapid Fire

#### *Uncommon 'Headhunter' Battlewagon*

Laser Cannon; Boresight; Attack +2 (targeting computer); Damage 20+3d10; Critical 19-20; Range 5  
Twin-Linked Railguns; Front; Attack +2 (targeting computer); Damage 10+1d10 (ignores DR); Critical 20; Range 6; Ammunition 50; No Reloads

Ten Particle Beams; 2 Front, 3 Left, 3 Right, 2 Rear; Attack +1 (targeting computer); Damage 5+3d8; Critical 20; Range 1

Two Twin-Linked Particle Arrays; 2 Rear; Attack +2 (targeting computer); Damage 10+3d10; Critical 20; Range 3; Rapid Fire

#### *Rare 'Siege' Battlewagon*

Heavy Laser Cannon; Boresight; Attack +2 (targeting computer); Damage 80+8d10; Critical 19-20; Range 6  
Twin-Linked Heavy Pulse Cannons; Front; Attack +2 (targeting computer); Damage 20+3d10; Critical 19-20; Range 5; Rapid Fire

Six Twin-Linked Medium Plasma Cannons; 1 Front, 2 Left, 2 Right, 1 Rear; Attack +2 (targeting computer); Damage 30+6d10; Critical 19-20; Range 2

Two Tri-Linked Particle Arrays; 2 Rear; Attack +2 (targeting computer); Damage 10+3d10; Critical 20; Range 3; Rapid Fire

#### *Craft (12):*

24 Delta-V/Delta-V2 Fighters or 12 'Double-V' Fighters

20 Salvage Light Shuttles

## **Command and Control Ship (Revised)**

(Originally printed in *The Babylon 5 Roleplaying Game and Fact Book*)

Incredibly expensive to purchase and operate, only the most sophisticated raider cells can hope to acquire or build a command and control ship. Usually lightly defended for their size and importance, such vessels rely on their squadron of fighters to protect them and will typically retreat from battle to where the cell's other fleets may be waiting. This is a common occurrence, even against civilian transports with adequate escort protection, as the raiders cannot afford a lucky hit that will eat into their illegal profits. Most command and control ships used by raiders are usually heavily modified commercial ships or ancient military vessels that have been decommissioned and so may be found sporting a bewildering array of weaponry though few are heavily armed.

Colossal III Spacecraft; hp 450; DV 0 (-12 size, +2 agility); DR 14; Spd —; Acc 1; Dec 1; Han +0; Sensor +2; Stealth 15; SQ: Jump Point, Cargo 166,000 lb.; 2 Officers, 20 Pilots, 12 Sensor Operators, 54 Crewmen, 500 Troops

#### *Weapons:*

Two Medium Plasma Cannons; 1 Front/Left, 1 Rear/Right; Attack +1 (targeting computer); Damage 30+6d10; Critical 19-20; Range 2

Two Light Pulse Cannons; 2 Turret; Attack +1 (targeting computer); Damage 5+2d6; Critical 20; Range 3; Rapid Fire



*Craft (4):*

12 Delta-V/Delta-V2 Fighters or 6 'Double V' Fighters

6 Light Shuttles

## Delta-V Light Fighter (Revised)

(Originally printed in *The Babylon 5 Roleplaying Game and Fact Book*)

Favoured by raiders and smaller military forces, the Delta-V (also called the Zephyr) can be found throughout the galaxy. Though lacking in the strengths of heavy fighters from the main races, the Delta-V is capable of atmospheric flight, thus greatly increasing its utility for minor military powers.

Large Spacecraft; hp 20; DV 12 (-1 size, +3 agility); DR 5; Spd 35; Acc 8; Dec 4; Han +4; Sensor +1; Stealth 15; SQ Atmospheric Capable; Cargo 8 lb.; 1 Pilot

*Weapons:*

Twin-Linked Light Particle Gun; Boresight; Attack +0; Damage 2d8; Critical 20; Range 1

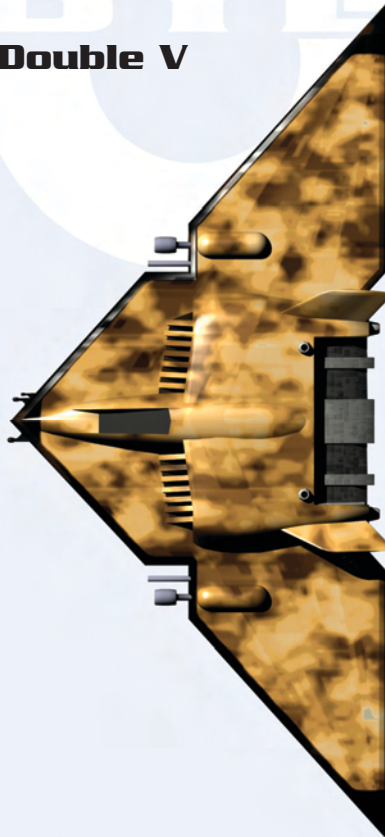
## Delta-V2 Combat Fighter

Delta Industries made untold profits with their widely known and recognised Delta-V, despite the notorious reputation it acquired from its primary purchasers or its knack for coming apart under the slightest amount of fire. It was affordable and available to all - that was its strength. After seeing the dockside modifications like the 'Double V', the company knew there was a market for a new design. They surprised the galaxy and unveiled a new and improved model in 2260 for the public. At nearly double the cost of its predecessor, the 'V2' is actually a well-made and well-armed 'combat fighter'. Larger than a light fighter, but not quite as bulky as a heavy, the V2 is a much needed revamping to the old chassis. Keeping its signature 'chip fighter' look and the ability to use the same launching and docking methods of the older model, the V2 is superior in all other ways. Stronger weaponry, faster thrusters, more condensed armour plating and superior manoeuvrability sets the V2 apart as a new era for raiders... at least those who can afford them, that is.

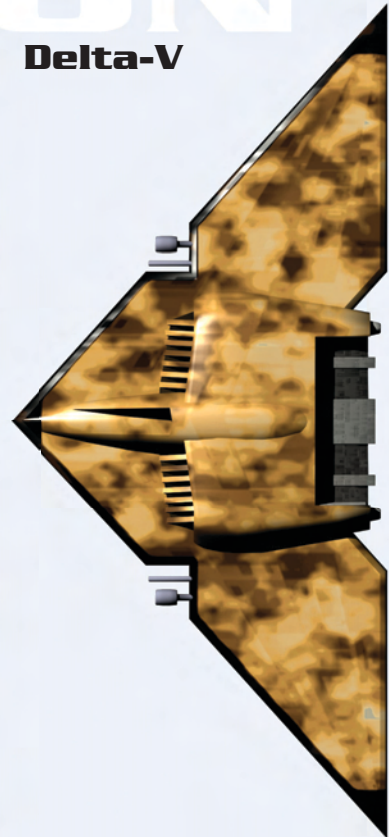
**Delta-V2**



**Double V**



**Delta-V**











## Modified 'Decoy' Combat Freighter

Raiders are tricky foes and few are above traps and ambushes when preying on the trade routes. These ships are just another ace up a raider cell's sleeve. When a commercial freighter or bulk transport is captured and looted, sometimes the hull is refitted with additional power couplings and several new weapon systems scavenged from other vessels. These vessels are awkward and haphazard, but look exactly like the commercial craft it was created from. Using fake manifests and blanketing sensor scramblers these ships join other convoys or attract small escorts to track their movements or lure them to a pre-determined ambush point, where even the decoy freighter will cast off its façade and open fire on its 'fleetmates' while the main raider fleet joins the fray from hyperspace. They are not meant to survive many conflicts, but often burn themselves out trying to give their owning cell much more from the resulting ambush.

Colossal Spacecraft; hp 180; DV 5 (–8 size, +3 agility); DR 8; Spd —; Acc 1/2; Dec 1/2; Han +1; Sensor +0; Stealth 15; SQ Ghost Scan\* (75%), Cargo 6,000 lb. + 6 cargo pods; 3 Officers/Pilots, 1 Sensor Operator, 4 Crewmen

\*Ghost scan implements can be set to give off false cargo readings when scanned a percentage of the time listed.

### *Weapons:*

Four Medium Pulse Cannons; 1 Front, 1 Left, 1 Right, 1 Rear; Attack +2 (targeting computer); Damage 10+2d10; Critical 19-20; Range 4; Rapid Fire

Two Particle Beams; 2 Turret; Attack +2 (targeting computer); Damage 10+3d10; Critical 20; Range 3

### *Craft (3):*

Three Armed Shuttles



### The 'Double V' Fighter

Before the advent of later models, raider cells were forced to use the mediocre Delta-V in nearly all circumstances. Frustrated with mortality rates and the lack of fighter firepower, raider engineers began welding two Delta-Vs atop one another to create brutish 'heavy' Delta fighters. Nicknamed 'Double V' for obvious reasons, these craft were better suited for attacking heavier vessels – but still lacked in overall survivability. They did require more hangar room, but could still utilise existing launch formats easily. In fact, any raider ship wanting to use Double Vs simply cuts the number of fighters normally carried in half due to space constraints.

After a week of work and three successful Technical (engineering) checks (DC 20), two functional Delta-V fighters can be combined into a single Double V. For Double Vs, use the following statistic block.

Large Spacecraft; hp 30; DV 11 (–1 size, +2 agility); DR 7; Spd 30; Acc 7; Dec 4; Han +3; Sensor +2; Stealth 14; SQ Atmospheric Capable; Cargo 50 lb.; 1 Pilot, room for 1 Passenger

#### Weapons:

Twin-Linked Light Particle Gun; Boresight; Attack +0; Damage 2d8; Critical 20; Range 1  
Standard Fighter Missile Rack; Boresight; Guidance 4; Damage 15+2d10; Critical 20; Speed 5;  
Fuel 3; Reloads 5



Large Spacecraft; hp 35; DV 14 (–1 size, +5 agility); DR 8; Spd 40; Acc 8; Dec 4; Han +4; Sensor +2; Stealth 16; SQ Atmospheric Capable; Cargo 14 lb.; 1 Pilot

#### Weapons:

Twin-Linked Particle Guns; Boresight; Attack +1 (targeting computer); Damage 3d8; Critical 20; Range 1  
Ultra-Light Pulse Cannon; Boresight; Attack +1 (targeting computer); Damage 8+2d6; Critical 19-20; Range 1; Rapid Fire

### 'Strike Carrier' Cruiser

Alike in design to the Battlewagon, 'Strike Carriers' come in a variety of shapes and styles. They are

specifically designed to carry large numbers of swarming fighters through a jump point and be able to release them in a single wave. Slightly smaller than the hulking war cruisers, Strike Carriers use an external 'rail' style docking system for their fighters. Magnetically attaching up to two dozen fighters to specially designed access tubes, the Strike Carrier can dispatch and recover fighters remarkably fast; something that is a priority to most raiders when things get rough. Strike Carriers are armed only slightly less formidably as their Battlewagon brethren, choosing far more short-ranged weaponry to aid in the defence of their fighters over heavier yield weapons. Even so, its ability to unleash fighters faster than even the bays on some military carriers can make up for a lot in the first few seconds of any conflict.



Colossal II Spacecraft; hp 360; DV 7 (–10 size, +7 agility); DR 15; Spd —; Acc 3; Dec 1; Han +1; Sensor +3; Stealth 10; SQ: Jump Point, Long-Range, Engineering Station (+2 on all Repair and Technical skill checks on board), Cargo 60,000 lb.; 2 Officers, 10 Pilots, 8 Sensor Operators, 25 Crewmen, room for 10 passengers/prisoners

#### Weapons:

Six Medium Pulse Cannons; 3 Front, 1 Front/Left, 1 Front/Rear; Attack +2 (targeting computer); Damage 10+2d10; Critical 19-20; Range 4; Rapid Fire  
Eleven Particle Beams; 2 Front, 3 Left, 3 Right, 3 Rear; Attack +1 (targeting computer); Damage 5+3d8; Critical 20; Range 1

#### Craft:

24 Delta-V/Delta-V2/‘Double V’ Fighters (due to external rail docking, Double Vs do not take up any extra space)  
8 Salvage Light Shuttles

## New Spacecraft Pricing

The new spacecraft listed in this chapter are a mixture of many styles, shapes and designs the galaxy has to

offer. Some are readily available for the companies or individuals that can pay the astronomical sums production foundries require, others must buy second hand or used vessels when they can. Most simply acquire their ships when signing on with a large company.

The following table shows the *factory* pricing to purchase one of the aforementioned vessels. Special circumstances surrounding certain vessels are listed in the ‘Notes’ column.

## New Equipment – Tools of the Trade

There is a saying amongst traders on the galactic market: ‘trust your instincts... and your scales’. No trader should simply set and finish deals on hunches, no merchant should accept everything at face value and no raider should trust his fellows to play nice and be good about business. A person’s skill can only take them so far before they will need assistance. This assistance can come in the form of a data crystal, an employee or, as this section will denote, specialised equipment.

### New Spacecraft Factory Pricing

Spacecraft	Cost	Notes
‘Battlewagon’ Attack Cruiser	200,000,000 cr.	Black Market Only, multiply price by 3 or 5 times for Uncommon or Rare Variants
Callos Wartime Freighter	100,000,000 cr.	
Command and Control Raider Ship	275,000,000 cr.	Black Market Only
Delta-V Light Fighter	10,000,000 cr.	20% discount for orders of 5 or more fighters
Delta-V2 Combat Fighter	18,000,000 cr.	20% discount for orders of 5 or more fighters
Huntsman Bounty Frigate	500,000,000 cr.	Trade Marshals Only
IPXS <i>Arbiter</i>	N/A	Not for Sale, IPX Only
Kestral Patrol Boat	75,000,000 cr.	Original version multiples price by 5
Livestock/Slaver Transport Barge	63,000,000 cr.	
<i>Ministry</i> -class escort Frigate	38,000,000 cr.	Price varies on supplying government
Modified ‘Decoy’ Combat Freighter	95,000,000 cr.	Black Market Only
<i>Penguin</i> -class Refrigerated Freighter	70,000,000 cr.	
Shyairael Outpost Lander	325,000,000 cr.	Abbai Only
‘Strike Carrier’ Cruiser	185,000,000 cr.	Black Market Only



There are a surprising number of helpful items available to help characters succeed in their respective avenues concerning the galactic market. These items, unless noted, are relatively easy to attain through commercial means. Some trade companies that may hire a broker or merchant could want to help their investments by granting access to these items free of charge but some may simply expect a character to already have them.

The following are several items that were created to aid in the manipulation (both beneficial and malicious) of the galactic market and its patrons. They are split into four separate categories: armour & clothing, equipment, spacecraft components and weapons.

### Armour & Clothing Descriptions

**Brakiri Tradesman Suit:** Considered the finest quality of tailoring in all of Syndicracy space, the tradesman suit is not only a fine piece of clothing but also a marvel of inspiration. Made for the most dedicated Brakiri traders, the suit not only is made from stain resistant and flame retardant silken fibres that shimmer in the right light but also has a number of built-in advances aimed at any trader's best interests. Every tradesman suit has access to the following benefits:

- ⑤ Eight replaceable nutrient and hydration patches, allowing wearer to go 36 hours without food or water without feeling the effects of hunger or thirst (replacement patches are 5 cr. each)
- ⑤ Two replaceable stimulant injectors, which can be called upon to ignore the need for sleep for 8 hours
- ⑤ Short-wave tracking transmitter, DC 12 Computer Use to locate suit from up to 5 miles of transmitter
- ⑤ Damage resistant under-layer, granting DR 1

**Ejection Vest:** The cheapest version of an EVA suit for pilots, normally used by raiders or downtrodden cargo

#### Armour and Clothing

Item	Cost	Weight	DR
Brakiri Tradesman Suit	1,750 cr.	9 lb.	1
Ejection Vest, Mk III	600 cr.	32 lb.	2
Freehold Trade Marshal Longcoat	500 cr.*	10 lb.	1
Raider Combat Suit	200 cr.	20 lb.	2

\*Price is for Freehold Trade Marshals only, black market versions cost 5 or 10 times more

runners, the Mk III Ejection Vest is little more than a prolonging tool to stave off a painful death. A blast-armoured vest attached to a thin insulated jumpsuit and an oblong helmet, the ejection vest is designed to grant up to thirty minutes of life-support for a pilot forced to eject from his craft. Not only does it carry a half-hour of breathable air within it but it also has a sedating additive the pilot can trigger, normally to fight the effects of hypoxia. Some have nicknamed the sedating spray the 'last sleep', as most pilots caught into a situation where they have to use it are dead long before the effects of the sedative would wear off.

**Freehold Trade Marshal Longcoat:** Offered to any Trade Marshals when they add the Drazi Freehold to their license, the Marshal Longcoat is armoured and flexible. Able to be worn over existing armour or flight suits, the longcoat stacks with other types of protection well. This reduces all Dexterity-related rolls and checks (including Defence Value) by 1 for the extra encumbrance but could be the difference between shrugging off a raider's PPG shot and bleeding out in a Zhabarian alley somewhere. The collar of the longcoat can be buttoned around the mouth and nose to help protect the wearer's face and has several internal pockets, holsters and sheathes that allow him to conceal up to 3 pistols, two small melee weapons and up to four *other* fist-sized devices (typically grenades or mag-cuffs). So well-known is the Marshal Longcoat that the wearer receives a +2 equipment bonus to Intimidate and Diplomacy checks with any raider, trader or merchant knowledgeable of the League of Non-Aligned Worlds.

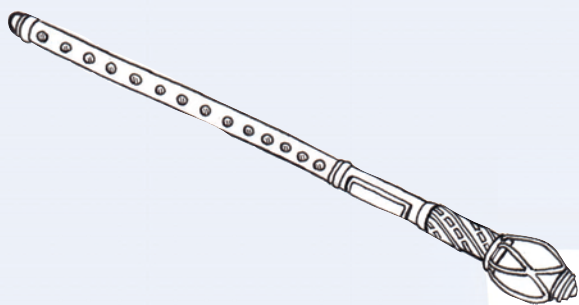
**Raider Combat Suit:** Not truly armour or clothing, the 'combat suit' is a patchwork of layered armour like leather patches, steelweave sashes, riveted plates, pieces of other armoured suits and so forth. It is inexpensive, easy to come by and better than wearing nothing at all. Many wear their combat suit wherever they go, staying safe but easily labelling them as up to no good by the common observer. Even if the wearer is doing nothing wrong, many eyes will dance toward him just in case. Wearing a Raider Combat Suit penalises the wearer's Hide skill checks by -2.

### General Equipment Descriptions

**Bacterial Scan Wand:** This simple sampling device is basically a lightly radiated isotope wand wrapped in several hundred layers of removable film strips used to detect the presence of bacteria and other signs of cargo leakage or spoilage. By running the wand over a set of



crates or other storage devices a few times slowly while depressing the proper buttons, the film strip (which can be removed in minutes) will show whether or not such invasive, trade-breaking organisms are present. This requires a very simple Technical check (DC 10) and about ten minutes. While most traders use these to verify if a trade has gone bad, it has been known for Pak'ma'ra buyers to keep them on hand to see if a shipment has 'aged' enough for their tastes.



**Commercial Data Feed:** Little more than a small earpiece (or alien equivalent) tucked inside the auditory organ of the user, the Commercial Data Feed streams constant market information to the wearer. This may seem a bit hectic and confusing at first, but those who get used to the market-babble can make subtle adjustments and quick changes when making decisions on their trades and deals. High-tech raiders have also begun to use these devices to get a better idea as to where or when a shipment might come through a specific transfer, allowing them better ambush windows. Wearers of this device gain a +1 equipment bonus to Knowledge (commerce) and Knowledge (trade routes) checks, but suffer a -2 penalty to Concentration skill checks at the same time.

**Laser Scale:** A complex device made by the Hyach decades ago, the Laser Scale tests over two hundred different qualifying descriptors of an object (or group of objects) and calculates its mass, density and weight. It is a simple to use device the size of a large pen or marker that is terribly fragile and very expensive. It is not infallible, but generally is within 2% or 3% of genuine values.

**Magnetic Cargo Netting:** Heavy and unwieldy, these 50 foot lengths of powered electromagnetic cabling are wound into safety netting for extremely heavy cargo. When attached to the walls, floor and ceiling of a ship's hold these nets can hold well over 100 tons stationary. A simple electronic passcode powers down

the netting so it can be removed (normally by cargo lifter) or adjusted. It requires a Technical check (DC 12) to place the netting to best suit the cargo and the ship but failure only results in wasted space or awkward placement. Each netting length is powered by a small fuel cell that costs 45 credits and lasts for roughly a month of constant use.

**Ocular Scanning Lens:** Used by merchants and crafty collectors, this cylindrical lens similar to a jeweller's loupe can quickly carbon date an object for its rough age. More importantly it can detect imperfections and instabilities that certain counterfeit productions always have. Wearing the Lens grants the wearer a +2 equipment bonus to Appraise and Knowledge checks pertaining to the item being scanned.

**Tracer Credit Chip:** A dirty tool for underhanded types, the Tracer Credit Chip is exactly what the name implies. It is a mock chip of a particular denomination of credit with a powerful electronic tracer inside of it. These chips are synched with a powerful software code that can be plugged into any sort of scanning or communications device to locate the chip, including handhelds or even ship's scanners. Used by assassins to find targets, raiders to track shipments and traders to get revenge on deals gone wrong, these credit chips are decidedly illegal in all of the major galactic governments. To defeat anti-counterfeiting scrutiny, real credit chips are used to make these items and increase the DC of related skill rolls to discover such things by 5.

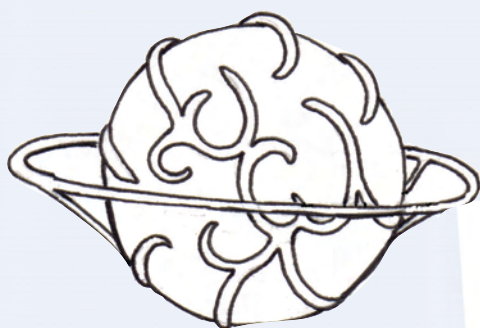
### General Equipment

Item	Cost	Weight
Bacterial Scan Wand	750 cr.	3 lb.
Commercial Data Feed	300 cr.	—
Laser Scale	320 cr.	1 lb.
Magnetic Cargo Netting (50 ft. x 50 ft.)	500 cr.	200 lb.
Ocular Scanning Lens	650 cr.	—
Tracer Credit Chip	2,500 cr. <sup>1</sup>	—
Xenotranslator	2,000 cr.	11 lb.

<sup>1</sup>This is in addition to twice the amount of the credit chip being modified



**Xenotranslator:** Much more than the basic translation device used by several League races, the Xenotranslator is also a conversion device for written or numeric communication. Not only receiving and emitting audio translations of over a hundred known languages, the device can also be run over written texts. This will scan and record the text or numbers and produce the desired translation on the attached screen. These are expensive devices that can only be purchased directly from Interplanetary Expeditions, who reportedly discovered and patented it in the 2250s.



## Spacecraft Component Descriptions

The following components are specialised add-ons that can be fitted to nearly all noted spacecraft systems. Ships with thoroughly alien technologies (Minbari, Yolu and Tal-Kona'sha for instance) may not accept them without serious alterations. Such processes are difficult and rarely succeed, which is up to the decision of the Games Master to set the task.

Normally it merely requires a Technical (engineering) skill check and time to wire the component into an existing starship. The difficulty and time necessary is based on the component, and is listed on the table further below.

### Spacecraft Components

Item	Cost	Technical DC	Time Needed
Dedicated Auto-Pilot Code	13,000 cr.	12	1 hour
Emergency Stasis Pod Launch Tube	95,000 cr.	15	2 weeks
Ghost Scan Emitter	15,000 cr.	14	8 hours
High-Impact Crash Foam System	3,000 cr. <sup>1</sup>	10	1 week
Secondary Command Counter	165,000 cr.	25	2 months

<sup>1</sup>Price is for enough tubing for a 20 ft. by 20 ft. by 20 ft. cube

**Dedicated Auto-Pilot Code:** Unlike a normal auto-pilot system which would activate at the request of the pilot, these software strings activate when the pilot *cannot* request otherwise. Devised to bring wayward vessels home when lost, stranded or captured, the Dedicated Auto-Pilot takes control of the vessel anytime jump coordinates are locked into the computer without first deactivating it. An unwary raider or salvage crew that activates the jump engines (which this component requires) will automatically send the vessel back to the point set by the component's purchaser. Activation locks out all external commands without the proper shutdown codes, which are decidedly difficult to fake (DC 35).

**Emergency Stasis Pod Launch Tube:** Disguised to look like any other cargo crate or storage device, the stasis pod can hold up to two humanoids in a life-support enriched stasis for up to three weeks. When triggered the pod ejects out of a specially crafted port on the wall or floor of the hold disguised to look like any other bulkhead (DC30 to recognise) and seals with emergency foam immediately after. Used in case of raider attacks or catastrophic accidents, the pod is very dense and hard to damage (hardness 16 and 40 hit points) and is capable of surviving in a cold vacuum after a ship explosion rather well. Electronically locked from the inside, it cannot be bypassed other than by physical means from the outside. It is often used as a last-ditch effort for survival.

**Ghost Scan Emitter:** By sending out subtle wavelengths pertaining to other types of cargo, a ship can disguise what sort of items fill its hold. By no means foolproof, the Emitter has only a 25% base chance of fooling an active scan of the ship. Every additional Emitter adds another 25%, up to a maximum of 75% no matter how many emitters are attached to the communications arrays. Each Emitter can be set to put out two types of cargo wavelengths to be picked up, but once set they cannot be altered unless removed, reset and then reattached.



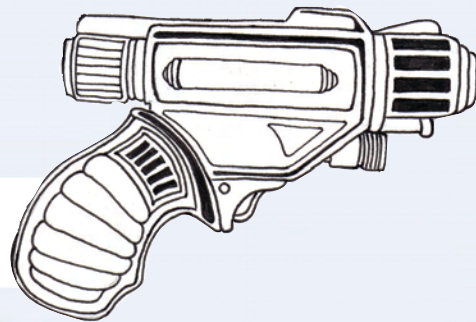
**High-Impact Crash Foam System:** Tubes of concentrated hydro-shock foam can be placed anywhere along exiting power conduits to be triggered in case of an emergency crash. The power conduits can be rigged to unfurl the casing on the tubes at the press of a switch in the cockpit or bridge which will cause rapidly expanding oxygenated foam to fill the area instantly. This foam can be ‘breathed’ by oxygen breathers so as not to asphyxiate them if caught in its swelling mass, but is not thick enough to fight the effects of a vacuum or hypoxia. The foam expands extremely quickly (1 equivalent round) with amazing stability and capacity, surrounding and binding any loose objects in place with its cushiony and spongy mass. The foam has a hardness of only 4 and 10 hit points per square foot, but offers a Damage Reduction of 15 to anyone caught inside. Through its immobilisation/protection many pilots and cargo have survived crash landings they should have never walked away from. The foam begins to degrade in ten minutes of exposure to atmosphere, freeing all those inside to survey damages. The foam system is a one use item but the cost seems well worth it to most cargo runners and pilots.

**Secondary Command Counter:** Large trade ships that get boarded by raiders or raider vessels that are boarded by the authorities will sometimes have crewmen free from their attackers’ grasp for hours or even days while they scour the vessel. Crafty ship crews will install a special secondary command are in an uncommon area, such as an out-of-order shower or supply closet, and give themselves a chance to retake their ship from there. Although the crowded screens and jumbled controls are packed into a much smaller console it does offer full control of the workings of the ship at a -2 penalty to any skill checks required. Although slightly at a disadvantage, the crewman can make taking his ship much more difficult for the attackers. Opening airlocks, disabling gravity, sending out unexpected communications and even firing some weapon systems at their own ships can all dissuade ship attackers from lingering too long.

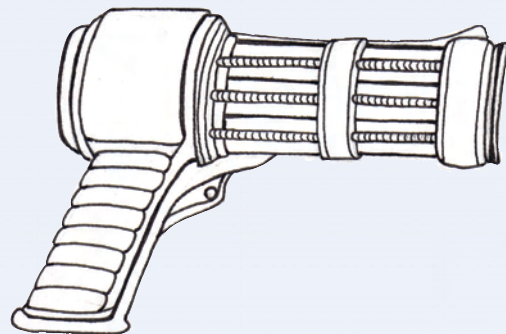
## Weapon Descriptions

**A/V ‘Governor’ PPG:** A slightly more bulky version of the W&G Model 10 civilian PPG, the ‘Governor’ is fully equipped to record up to an hour of data feed of both audio and video (A/V) information during a fire fight. The lens is inside small ported tubing just under the barrel itself to minimise image distortion when firing. The information is stored on a mini-crystal

in the handle of the pistol, which can be removed and watched later. This feature is often used by law enforcement agencies and bounty hunters to verify ‘kill’ shots of wanted criminals or by traders who want to have evidence against their enemies. Recently there have been several ‘Governor Files’ that have been sold on the black market made of hours of spliced fire fight footage set to new age and industrial music. These files are immoral and disrespectful of the men and women seen dying on them, but are said to fetch upwards of 10,000 credits a piece.



**Morph Gas Inducer I-4:** Using the same sort of non-lethal means used by so many governments across the galaxy in grenade form, the Inducer I-4 is a tiny pistol-like device that hurls thin-skinned capsules of liquefied Morph Gas at a nearby target. These are favourites of ‘live capture’ bounty hunters and slavers, who would much rather disable a target than harm them. Each globule fired only produces a one foot square of Morph Gas, so gas masks or other precautions are rarely necessary. Due to the small amount produced, the shots must be aimed at the upper body of the target to affect them; reflecting in a -2 penalty to hit. If successful, the victim will need to pass a Fortitude save (DC 18) or be rendered unconscious for 1d6+2 minutes. A character wearing a breather mask, pressure suit or similar device is immune to the effects of Morph gas.





**Pulse Charge:** A grenade used by those who wish to disable a ship quickly from the inside, a pulse charge is a powerful electromagnetic pulse device that scrambles electronics. To use effectively the user must make sure the grenade goes off near the systems he wishes to affect. A good solution is to always detonate them near a cockpit or command bridge, but near the communications arrays or jump engine is also a good choice. Any systems affected by the invisible wave of supercharged energy (determined by the Games Master) will be effectively at a -10 penalty to use in any way for 1d6 hours. The penalty slowly fades after that time at a rate of -2 per hour until the grenade's effects wear off completely. Anyone caught in the immediate blast of a pulse charge will not suffer any damaging effects, but will need to pass a Fortitude save (DC 13) to overcome the resulting nausea. Failure will cause vomiting and general discomfort for 2d6 minutes. These are dangerous devices to carry around and can be utterly devastating during hyperspace travel or docking procedures, thus explaining their overall forbiddance in most systems.

**Wireknife:** Too dangerous to be used by anyone but the foolish or the very skilled, a wireknife is a short 10 inch length of semi-ceramic stiff wire attached to a powered hilt. When dormant the wireknife is little more than a strange-looking implement not unlike a cooking utensil or scientific instrument. When activated the wire heats in seconds to a temperature in excess

**Additional Supply Costs**

Supply Type	Cost	Weight
A/V Mini Crystal (1 hour)	15 cr.	—
Morph Gas Capsule Pack (10)	500 cr.	—
Wireknife Battery Pack	75 cr.	—

of 150° Celsius. It is primarily used by raiders to cut cargo netting and crates open to grab their contents, but can be a very deadly weapon when wielded properly. Due to its construction the wireknife is considered an exotic weapon and does not receive any Strength bonus to damage; the cutting heat does the damage, not the pressure of the attack. Wireknives ignore the hardness of any object struck or the Damage Reduction a target receives from armour. The wire is fragile (hardness 2 and 3 hit points) when not in use, and comes with a hard-shelled carrying sheath to protect it.



**Weapons**

Weapon	Cost	Damage	Area of Effect	Critical	Ammo	Range Increment	Size	Weight	Type
<b>Pistol Weapons</b>									
A/V 'Governor' PPG	900 cr.	2d6	—	19-20/x2	6	50 ft.	Small	1 lb.	Energy
Morph Gas Inducer I-4	1,100 cr.	—	—	—	10	15 ft.	Small	1 lb.	Projectile
<b>Grenade Weapons</b>									
Pulse Charge	500 cr.	Special	40 ft.	—	—	20 ft.	Small	3 lb.	Energy
<b>Exotic Weapons</b>									
Wireknife	1,500 cr.	1d6	—	18-20/x2	30	—	Tiny	1 lb.	Slashing



# Personalities

*'Some cause happiness wherever they go; others, whenever they go.'*

*Oscar Wilde, Earth novelist*

This is a short collection of some famous or infamous characters a Games Master may wish his Players to come into contact with over the course of their campaign. Some are upstanding businessmen looking to make a profit the best way they can, others are dastardly raiders eager to sink their proverbial teeth into the next shipment that comes along. Regardless of their origins or how the Games Master chooses to use them, each one is unique in their own way and could fit into many different scenarios.

## Commerce Captain Dedradi Callo, Royal Centauri Merchant Fleet

*'I remember once when my fleet was set upon by those rabid dogs we left behind on Gromahk. When they began to circle one of my freighters to attach their lamprey grapnels, I triggered the reactor to meltdown. It may have cost our house a few thousand ducats, but I'd gladly pay that from my own salary just to see the lightshow again!'*

**12<sup>th</sup> Level Centauri Officer (fleet)**

**Hit Points:** 31

**Initiative:** +2

**Speed:** 30 ft.

**DV:** 16 (+6 Reflex)

**Attacks:** +12/+7/+2 melee or +14/+9/+4 ranged

**Special Qualities:** 77 Reputation\*, Rallying Call, Way of Command, Branch Elite

**Saves:** Fort +9, Ref +6, Will +9

**Abilities:** Str 11, Dex 15, Con 17, Int 16, Wis 13, Cha 14

**Skills:** Appraise +8, Computer Use +10, Concentration +8, Diplomacy +6, Drive +6, Intimidate +12, Knowledge (commerce) +13, Knowledge (trade routes) +10, Listen +6, Pilot +13, Sense Motive +6, Spot +8 and Technical (engineering) +8

**Feats:** Data Access, Fire Control, Independently Wealthy, Prehensile Tentacles, Public Perception\*,

Spacecraft Proficiency, Veteran Spacehand, Weapon Proficiency (spacecraft weapons)

**Standard Equipment:** Merchant Fleet Armoured uniform (DR 2), Kurago PPG\*, Masterworked Coutari  
\*This item is from *The Centauri Republic Fact Book*.

Among the most powerful men in the Merchant Fleet and an upstanding member of House Callo, Dedradi is sixth in line to the patriarchal seat of the house. He was raised to be ruthless and cunning, never to drop his guard for even a second and be merciless with his enemies. When he was old enough to join the Purple Fleet he did so proudly. After two tours along Narn and League space, he retired into the life his family had set for him and became a captain in the prestigious Merchant Fleet.

Aboard his personal flagship, an Altarian Destroyer named *Price of Glory*, Dedradi now goes from commercial station to commercial station to look after the investments his house has made in other races or 'lesser' houses. He has great contempt for the Narn





race and happily goes out of his way to cause them harm; financially if not physically. His resources are near infinite, allowing him to live much grander than most in his position. There is rarely a moment that the good captain does not have a drink in one hand and a woman (or three!) in the other. Even with his vices he comes off as royalty and is one of the best commercial planners and fleet captains the galaxy knows.

#### Roleplaying with Callo

Dedradi Callo is a patriot and a loyalist member of his house. He would do nothing to harm his fellow house members, save to those keeping him from the patriarch's chair, who he constantly attempts to manoeuvre into dangerous situations and deadly plots. On the outside he is friendly and jovial unless dealing with known 'Narn sympathisers', who he treats like social lepers. Like many of his species he is passionate about all things.

When conducting business or behind the bridge of the *Price of Glory*, he is deadly serious and cannot accept failure. Demanding, exacting and precise, Dedradi knows what should be and *will be*. Any other outcome would be unacceptable and dealt with appropriately.

From the Centauri's conquest of Narn in 2259 until their liberation in 2261, Dedradi Callo is almost *too* happy to be around. He is reliving his grandfather's tales of slave-trading and public executions, dealing with less-than-reputable sources to inflict pain and suffering upon the Narn. During this time he seems far less interested in financial gain as he does punishing the Narn for escaping the Centauri long ago.



#### Arturous Sorrati, 'Heaven's Sword'

*'I have stood before kings and slaves, old men and infants. All just flesh... mortal and finite. I do what I do in service to the one immutable truth in all things, all places - the progression of life unto death.'*

#### 9<sup>th</sup> Level Centauri Agent

**Hit Points:** 26

**Initiative:** +9

**Speed:** 30 ft.

**DV:** 21 (+11 Reflex)

**Attacks:** +7/+2 melee or +11/+6 ranged

**Special Qualities:** 0 Reputation\*, Security Systems, Sneak Attack +3d6\*\*, Skill Mastery (Hide, Move Silently)

**Saves:** Fort +9, Ref +6, Will +9

**Abilities:** Str 13, Dex 20, Con 16, Int 14, Wis 12, Cha 10

**Skills:** Appraise +6, Balance +10, Bluff +8, Climb +10, Computer Use +6, Concentration +6, Disguise +8, Escape Artist +10, Gather Information +8, Hide +10, Intimidate +8, Jump +6, Listen +8, Move Silently +11, Pilot +7, Search +5, Sense Motive +6, Spot +6, Technical (electronics) +8



**Feats:** Bloodcrest Assassin, Exotic Weapon Proficiency (wireknife), Improved Initiative, Two-Weapon Fighting, Untouchable\*

**Standard Equipment:** Two fully powered wireknives in wrist sheathes, Needle Gun armed with Gael's Revenge\* darts, A/V Governor PPG



\*This feat is from *The Centauri Republic Fact Book*.

\*\*This includes the bonus die from the Bloodcrest Assassin feat, all of which are doubled against Centauri targets.

Possibly the deadliest assassin ever to shed blood on the tiles of the Imperial Palace, the man once known as Arturous Sorrati, who now goes by the media-created title of 'Heaven's Sword', is one of House Sorrati's finest. He has over a hundred recorded Centauri kills and is rumoured to have two or three times that in 'foreign work'. He is best known for sneaking in on targets in the most unexpected of locations; the bath, at dinner, with a lover or aboard a crowded transport for instance. He is cold, calculated and, to date, without failure.

He has worn so many disguises in his lifetime that his true face has become obscured to all, save the most senior members of House Callo who can call upon him for particularly nasty jobs. Having earned the nickname 'Heaven's Sword' by the Centauri media when his target – a priest of one of the many household gods – survived long enough to stagger in front of cameras and ask the gods for forgiveness before succumbing to his fatal wounds. It is rumoured that he no longer even wears his crest, shaving his head to blend in with humans or slaves in order to pass by unnoticed until the time to strike rises.

His weapon of choice, a pair of wireknives, has become his signature in the last forty kills. Occasionally he will make an assassination look like an accident or natural causes with poisons, but these are rarely attributed to the Sword. He has mastered the ability to push both wireknives into the organ cavity of his victims in one fast motion, killing them nearly instantly no matter how much protection they might wear. Death takes his victims so quickly that they rarely even get out a single cry for help before their organs are punctured and burned into steam.

He is the ghost of vengeance for House Callo and a well paid ghost at that.

#### Roleplaying with 'Heaven's Sword'

Coming into contact knowingly with Arturous Sorrati is a dangerous affair that could end up with several dead Player Characters. Unless on assignment for one of them or they are members of House Callo or Sorrati themselves, it is likely that he would kill them all just to keep his identity secret. Should he be in disguise or masquerading as someone else, he is a convincing actor and proficient disguise artist.

It is most likely, unless the Games Master has a special reason for Heaven's Sword to be interacting with the Player Characters directly, that he would be acting under any one of a thousand identities or aliases. In that case, each one is as varied as the job requires it to be.

Other than the bloody-handed assassin with no remorse or care for life, he has no real personality anymore. The boy some people remember Arturous to have been, drowned in rivers of blood long ago.



## Richard 'Rich Overnight' Zales, Freelance Trader

*'You want it when? I don't think that'll be a problem.'*

**6<sup>th</sup> Level Human Worker (white collar, specialised Free Trader)**

**Hit Points:** 14

**Initiative:** +1

**Speed:** 30 ft.

**DV:** 13 (+3 Reflex)

**Attacks:** +4 melee or +4 ranged

**Special Qualities:** White Collar, Salary Increase

**Saves:** Fort +6, Ref +3, Will +4

**Abilities:** Str 12, Dex 12, Con 13, Int 17, Wis 14, Cha 15

**Skills:** Appraise +9, Bluff +12, Computer Use +6, Concentration +6, Diplomacy +8, Knowledge (commerce) +15, Listen +6, Profession (trader) +10, Sense Motive +10, Spot +8, Technical (electronics) +7

**Feats:** Contacts (x2), Skill Focus (Knowledge (Commerce)), Trader\*, Trusted Informant

**Standard Equipment:** Datapad, Commercial Data Feed, W&G 10 Civilian PPG

\*This item is from *The Earth Alliance Fact Book*.



One of the only legitimate businessmen on the hub of societal detritus that is Praxis IX, Richard Zales learned very early in his life growing up on Io that success only comes to those willing to snatch it from the grasp of another. When he was a teenager he and his brothers ran street corner cons and scams on passers by, making enough to feed themselves and keep foster services off their backs. He eventually got a real job working with a local merchant, found his natural talents could actually make him very rich and set his sights on becoming a trader.

Buying out his employer through a third party in less than five years, Zales liquidated the shop and bought an Earth Alliance trade license. Finding that his lies and shady practices were not welcome in the EA markets, he fled the authorities all the way to Praxis IX. Taking an alias to avoid old debts, he has used his skills to make quite the reputation and a catchy advertisement line: 'If you want to get rich overnight... get Rich Overnight.' He is one of the wealthier men on Praxis Colony without a legal warrant for his arrest.

Rich Overnight is known for his ability to arrange fast transports and safe routes for any sort of cargo shipment a buyer wants from him. Through a network of unsavoury allies and legitimate spacers he knows where the best deals happen and rarely has to resort to trickery or shady practices any longer to get the best out of his deals. When all else fails he can call upon his well-paid and loyal informant Irak'al, a Pak'ma'ra lurker and suspected telepath who knows far more than he should in matters of military routes and governmental policy.

### Roleplaying with Zales

Rich Overnight is a businessman first and foremost. With him everything is a negotiation or the set up for a new opportunity. He is addicted to the wealth and the significant power it offers and does anything for more of it. He has no problems hiring his services out to anyone who can meet his prices or make him a profit, but rarely sees such an opportunity in the populace of Praxis Colony.

When not in business dealings he is a very happy and playful man in his mid-30s, slightly balding and weathered from the recycled air of the Colony. He dresses well, but not well enough to attract thieves and muggers between domes. He loves a good game of Proxima-rules Hold 'em, even if he is not terribly good at it. In fact, it is the only time that Zales seems



undaunted at losing money. He can walk away from a gambling table after losing 10,000 credits with a smile, but closing a deal at 4% instead of 5% will ruin his day.

### Sahsa Lok'akat, Zocalo Merchant

*'I may only sell trinkets and jewellery, but so many people leave my kiosk with a smile that I honestly feel good about my 200% mark up. It shows me that I am making lives better at a reasonable price.'*

**8<sup>th</sup> Level Brakiri Worker (white collar, specialised Merchant)**

**Hit Points:** 17

**Initiative:** +0

**Speed:** 30 ft.

**DV:** 12 (+2 Reflex)

**Attacks:** +5 melee or +4 ranged

**Special Qualities:** White Collar, Salary Increase, Darkvision 60 ft.

**Saves:** Fort +8, Ref +2, Will +3

**Abilities:** Str 12, Dex 10, Con 15, Int 19, Wis 13, Cha 17

**Skills:** Appraise +13, Bluff +10, Computer Use +8, Concentration +8, Diplomacy +10, Knowledge (commerce) +11, Listen +8, Profession (merchant) +8, Sense Motive +12, Spot +10

**Feats:** Contacts, Expert Hagglar, Latent Telepath

**Standard Equipment:** Datapad, Ocular Scanning Lens, Babylon 5 Commercial Communications Link

A successful and self-made kiosk merchant in Babylon 5's Zocalo, Sahsa is a regular fixture in the station. She has been around for nearly ten years selling her second-rate jewellery and costume decorations and many of the station's own staff and dignitaries know her by face if not by name. She has sold earrings to Talia Winters and a set of cufflinks to Chief Garibaldi. Ambassador Mollari wears one of her 'signature series' lapel pins and Lieutenant Corwin bought a nice necklace for a date from her once. Not in the business to make a fortune but just to enjoy the people, Sahsa is always happy to open her kiosk 'doors' each day.

Unaware of her innate telepathic ability to get vague impressions and project subtle feelings, she honestly believes herself to simply be 'good with people'. Manifested in her eerie ability to finish other people's sentences and pick out the *perfect* gift for her shoppers,



she would never believe herself to be a telepath, even if one of her own people told her. She considers herself to be a helpful and skilled merchant and nothing else. If she was to ever think that she had an extra edge other than her experience and knowledge, it would crush her opinion of herself completely.

Even during the hectic reign of President Clark, when non-humans were living with difficulty under the constant threat of Homeguard or Nightwatch, Sahsa stayed stalwart at her kiosk. A defender of her little bastion of the galactic market, no amount of subtle threats or risk of danger would cause her to run from her role, even if it was just selling trinkets and gaudy jewellery.

#### Roleplaying with Lok'akat

Genial, friendly and happy to see anyone walking up to her kiosk, Sahsa is a warming change to the normally cold and impersonal atmosphere of the Zocalo. She welcomes all of her customers by name if she can or at least with a handshake if she cannot. Even when she knows a thief is on the prowl she stays accepting, but wary, of them until they decide whether or not to try to snatch something. Being a well-known face for many security guards, her kiosk rarely has to wait long if she has to call upon their help.



She never goes for the 'hard sell'. Rather she shows what she feels is the best choices for the person she is dealing with and lets them decide if her prices are fair. She never gets angry with a haggling consumer, only at those who complain about prices without offering one of their own. She is always willing to help out a Zocalo patron with information if she can but knows better than to get involved in matters beyond her influence.

## Zhozhak Ro, Freehold Trade Marshal

*'They once would have called what I do murder. Now they call it justice. I love my job.'*

**6<sup>th</sup> Level Drazi Agent / 5<sup>th</sup> Level Soldier**

**Hit Points:** 35

**Initiative:** +7

**Speed:** 30 ft.

**DV:** 19 (+9 Reflex)

**Attacks:** +13/+8 melee or +12/+7 ranged

**Special Qualities:** Security Systems, Sneak Attack +1d6, Skill Mastery (Pilot), Covering Fire

**Saves:** Fort +8, Ref +9, Will +3

**Abilities:** Str 18, Dex 16, Con 15, Int 13, Wis 11, Cha 13

**Skills:** Appraise +7, Bluff +8, Climb +6, Computer Use +5, Concentration +5, Diplomacy +5, Forgery +6, Gather Information +8, Hide +8, Intimidate +9, Jump +7, Knowledge (commerce) +6, Listen +5, Move Silently +8, Pilot +8, Search +6, Sense Motive +6, Spot +10, Technical (engineering) +6

**Feats:** Dense Scales, Improved Initiative, Improved Unarmed Strike, Point Blank Shot, Rapid Shot, Weapon Focus (PPG Pistol), Weapon Focus (Unarmed)

**Standard Equipment:** Freehold Trade Marshal Longcoat, Drazi Fleet Armour\*, Twin A/V Governor PPGs, Drazi Straight Blade\*, Morph gas grenades, Morph Gas Inducer I-4, Trade Marshal Contract (Drazi Freehold, Brakiri Syndicracy, Gaim Intelligence, Pak'ma'ra Territory and Hyach Gerontocracy)

\*This item is from *The League of Non-Aligned Worlds Fact Book*

Every criminal's nightmare when crossing into League space, Zhozhak Ro is a famous Trade Marshal and bounty hunter of debtors, smugglers and raiders. Having bleached and dyed his scales in a jagged pattern like the painted chassis of his vintage Kestral patrol



boat (*The Watchman*) he is very distinct looking and loves the attention it gives him. Donning his battle-worn Marshal longcoat and flaunting his authority whenever possible, he is given a rather wide berth when in League stations and transfer points.

He has a heavy hand when doling out justice for the League and more than a few of his targets have been willing to give themselves up before Ro would shoot them regardless. His view on his missions is simple; if the target had not done anything worth dying over, why would they send him? He takes prisoners only when required to or when convenient for him, but forces them into the same cryogenic storage for transit.

In combat he is a juggernaut of resilience, wading into a fire fight with PPGs blazing away. Raider circles speak of the 'unkillable Ro' and the many times he has been shot, stabbed, immolated and even spaced. These may or may not be true stories but they always bring a sadistic smile to Zhozhak's scaly face.

### Roleplaying with Ro

All Drazi are attributed with high tempers and bad attitudes. Zhozhak Ro embodies most of those attributes with a certain *flare*. Easily angered and a bit



of a sadist, he uses fear and intimidation as his driving forces when dealing with anyone but an employer or would-be ally. If someone has something he feels is good for him he will put on a completely different tone, playing up his role as a force of justice rather than a cold-blooded vigilante.

He has close ties with the Freehold-sponsored Choshaka raider cell and knows a great deal about raiding in the League. In exchange for his ignoring their activities they serve him up their rivals, paying enormous illegal bounties for each competing raider executed. Just speaking with Ro will let a bit of his immoral tendencies slip to the surface, as he is unable to hold most conversations without at least snarling, but his abilities and influence are vast. He knows this and does not care what other governments might think of him; he is a League property and almost untouchable.

### Ju'Rid, Raider Fighter Ace

*'There is nothing more satisfying than feeling the frozen corpses of spaced Centauri crews bouncing off my hull. It is like raindrops in the desert.'*

**4<sup>th</sup> Level Narn Officer (fleet) / 5<sup>th</sup> Level Raider Ace**

**Hit Points:** 28

**Initiative:** +3

**Speed:** 30 ft.

**DV:** 17 (+7 Reflex)

**Attacks:** +11/+6 melee or +12/+7 ranged

**Special Qualities:** Rallying Call, Born to Fly, Pinpoint Shooting, Safe Distance

**Saves:** Fort +6, Ref +7, Will +6

**Abilities:** Str 14, Dex 16, Con 18, Int 12, Wis 12, Cha 11

**Skills:** Appraise +6, Bluff +4, Computer Use +8, Gather Information +8, Intimidate +10, Knowledge (trade routes) +4, Knowledge (Centauri) +5, Listen +6, Pilot +14, Search +8, Spot +6, Technical (electronics) +6, Technical (engineering) +8

**Feats:** Data Access, Dogfighter, Improved Vehicle Dodge, Pour it On, Spacecraft Proficiency, Vehicle Dodge, Weapon Focus (spacecraft weapons), Weapon Proficiency (spacecraft weapons)

**Standard Equipment:** Auricon 7 PPG pistol, Pulse Charges, Photo Album of dead relatives, Raider Combat Suit

The teachings of several of the Narn prophets speak of moving on past aggression and into healing, even the words of G'Quan speak of futures born out of the healing of pain suffered. Ju'Rid never took those words to heart and chose instead to redirect his pain onto others. Most specifically, the Centauri.

In 2260 he and his comrades, a group of like-minded anti-Centaurists calling themselves the Chak'malak, have become a terrible plague on Merchant Fleet shipments that even come within two jumps of their many hidden cell outposts and bases. He leads swarms of cobbled fighters against warships, knocking systems out with the 'altered' weapons output on his personal Double V fighter. Personally replacing the normal missile rack with a miniature ion torpedo launcher, Ju'Rid takes no prisoners when dealing with the Centauri.

He is not above spacing civilians or firing upon surrendered ships, equally happy with plucking escape pods or rescue craft out of space with his torrential fire. He is a fantastic pilot and a clever raider and knows he is driven by hatred over profits, even if his brothers back on Homeworld suffer for it. His is a guerrilla war in space, only through massive financial damage to the Republic does he believe their oppressors will learn that the Narn will no longer sit back and wait another hundred years to throw off the shackles of tyranny.





### Roleplaying with Ju'Rid

A true fanatic, Ju'Rid is actually quite amiable towards others willing to drive against the Centauri Republic, mysterious dark allies or not. Most of his conversations lean toward his hatred of them, with more than a few loud anti-Centauri toasts and the resulting bar brawls adding to his growing reputation as a troublemaker. Until he or every other Centauri in the galaxy is dead, he will always carry a chip on his shoulder.

To other Narn he is warm and solemn, trying to help them in person as best he can. He hates the indignities inflicted upon them on account of his 'crimes' against the Republic, and will go to great lengths to help any Narn in peril. Especially if it means crossing blades with Centauri. He is determined, driven and nearly obsessed with destroying any who hurt his people and carries around an album of photos taken of dead relatives killed in the search of freedom; his most prized possession.

### 'Commander' Brent Forrest, Freedom Station Elect

*'It's okay, I got cold feet my first time out too. But you have to go out this time. No excuses. You just have to chomp down on that fear and swallow it up, or you'll end up a pretty little flower of burning atmosphere and fighter fuel specked with little meat flecks. OK, no pressure...'*

#### 19<sup>th</sup> Level Human Raider

**Hit Points:** 45

**Initiative:** +8

**Speed:** 30 ft.

**DV:** 24 (+14 Reflex)

**Attacks:** +13/+8/+3 melee or +17/+12/+8 ranged

**Special Qualities:** Infamy (+6), Hard Target (+4), Glancing Shot, Safe Distance, Raider Captain, Crippling Shot, Hasty Retreat, Kill Shot, Raider Commander

**Saves:** Fort +8, Ref +14, Will +8

**Abilities:** Str 11, Dex 19, Con 13, Int 17, Wis 12, Cha 16

**Skills:** Appraise +16, Bluff +14, Climb +8, Computer Use +13, Concentration +11, Diplomacy +8, Disguise +10, Escape Artist +6, Forgery +15, Gather Information +10, Hide +6, Intimidate +18, Knowledge (commerce) +9, Knowledge (trade routes) +13, Listen +6, Pilot +20, Profession (diplomat) +5, Search +6, Sense Motive

+12, Spot +10, Technical (electronics) +7, Technical (engineering) +7, Technical (scrapping) +5

**Feats:** Contacts, Distrustful\*, Dogfighter, Improved Initiative, Pour it On, Skill Focus (Appraise), Skill Focus (Pilot), Spacecraft Proficiency, Trusted Informant, Vehicle Dodge, Veteran Spacehand, Weapon Focus (spacecraft weapons), Weapon Proficiency (spacecraft weapons), Weapon Specialisation (spacecraft weapons)

**Standard Equipment:** Brakiri Tradesman Suit, Freedom Station secured commlink, Unregistered military PPG pistol, 20,000 credits in 'spare change'

Quite possibly the most influential and powerful man anywhere on Freedom Station, and maybe even the whole Tirrith System, 'Commander Elect' Forrest is the foreman of the 13 chosen Elects that run the station for the otherwise oblivious Tirrith Free State. He is an aging Grecian-looking man in his early fifties, with a suave demeanour and the kind of glint that only a man with such power has behind his steel grey eyes. No one crosses Brent Forrest and lives long. No one.







Most of the raider cells that call Freedom Station home pay homage in one way or another to the Commander, most often in gifts and prized information otherwise paid for by lesser criminals. A dozen or more flight leaders and raider 'captains' report directly to Forrest and very little happens within five jumps of Freedom without his knowledge. He has 'gotten away with it' for so long that he no longer even cares about the galactic governments, as he has highly bribed officials in nearly all of them who would gladly look the other way to avoid earning his sizeable ire.

It was during Sheridan's civil war with Earth that Forrest surprised those who know him. After the death of a brother no one knew he had, he angled his raiders toward military targets all along the Earth Alliance borders, attacking supply ships loyal to President Clark and scuttling most of what he found there. He spent millions during those long months, even coming once or twice to Babylon 5 in order to meet with agents there... agents friendly to Sheridan's cause. What his reasoning or connections were no one save his closest allies know, but he and his raiders may have had a large impact on certain battles throughout the war unbeknownst even to Sheridan himself.

### Roleplaying with Forrest

This man has seen it all and carries with him a lifetime of internalised regret and outward expertise. He is too good at his job to simply give it up and almost misses the threat that comes with riding in an old Delta. He can never seem to shake the notion that he cannot be bested when behind a fighter console but rarely gets the chance to prove it due to constant issues on Freedom Station.

He hates being a politician or a diplomat, as the Tirrith Free State has made him, but knows it is a necessary evil to create the raider palace that Freedom Station has become over the years. It can be read in his eyes he wants to be free of his position, even though the Free State continues to elect him every cycle. Quitting is a coward's death, but withering away under stacks of paperwork when the void calls out to him may be just as lethal.



# Designer's Notes

Wow. Here we are at the end of this little adventure. What a ride. This book was a great deal more difficult to create than it was to envision. As a writer and a designer, my mind tends to focus on the fantastic and the malleable, not crunchable numbers and rules to enforce them. With a great deal of help from my wife; the 'licensed financial advisor'; and some playtesting by my local 'we can break anything once' gaming group, I think the final version is far more polished than its predecessors.

At first I thought about using a completely numberless system that simply used 'units' like they taught me to use in Basic Economics back in school, but I decided against it for two reasons. One, younger players and Games Masters might not want to have to translate their units into credits and two – because 'units' are as *boring* now as they were back in Economics. I wanted the players to throw a few dice and laugh maniacally about the thousands of credits they just made, not just some mysterious *unit* that does not play risk with their characters' bank accounts like a credit does. It might be just semantics and feel free to use your units to your heart's content if you want to... I just preferred 'real' monetary values, that's all.

When I started this project I had so many other ideas for prestige classes, feats and more specialised spacecraft than you could imagine (and as gamers, I expect you can imagine *a lot*). With some fantastic guidance from the big men in charge and my fellow writers, not to mention a little nudge from a playtester to 'stop and think who would ever use that' I think it stayed relatively well contained and as streamlined as possible when dealing with such an immense and fractious subject.

I hope it suits you out there and that players and Games Masters alike can enjoy getting away from the nooks and crannies of the Babylon 5 universe not just to fight in huge wars and save the galaxy. Oh, and to the first player who makes his million credits using this book – trade or steal, either way – drop me a line on [www.mongoosepublishing.com/forum/php](http://www.mongoosepublishing.com/forum/php) and let me know!

Seriously though, I raise my glass to the end of this work, the number of hours put into it and the thousands of Babylon 5 fans out there enjoying the universe I have the privilege to help shape.

Anything worth dying for is better served living for,

Bryan





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*'Money doesn't matter to them. Power doesn't matter to them.'*

*Vir Cotto*

*'Money and power always matter.'*

*Londo Mollari*



MGP  
3356



# Merchants, Traders & Raiders

*'There is nothing finer than setting eyes on so many tons of spinning metal, thousands of people and miles of electronics held together by millions of credits. It is beautiful.'*

A wise person once said, 'Money is the root of all evil'. There is very little that has not or will not be done for money. Be it dollars, credits, ducats, toka or ook'ar'a... greed sees no difference. The lifeblood of trade lies in the worth of currency and few would argue against its greatness. While some understand just how powerful the application of funds can be, traders feel its weight like no other.

The Babylon 5 universe is filled with starship battles and riots that permeate the galaxy. Yet not all plots and schemes are enforced from behind a firing console or powered-up PPG. Most are fought with credits and politics, boycotts and embargoes. Wars of this kind can be fought without a single shot being fired but still crush entire populations in their wake. A merciless master of trading warfare controls thousands, making pawns of all others.

Whether you wish to escort priceless shipments to a safe harbour or attack them for fun and profit, this book is your invaluable key to success! Whether used for plot support or reference material, *Babylon 5: Merchants, Traders & Raiders* embroils Babylon 5 fans in the dangerous world of trade plots and piracy. Some of the facts within these pages are public knowledge – but some are secrets the megacorporations kill to keep...

## Inside You Will Find

**Life on the Trade Routes:** *Babylon 5: Merchants, Traders & Raiders* contains all the essential information a player or Games Master needs to run companies that span the jumproutes or intrepid independent trading ships.

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