Signal GK

ISSUE №12

Adventure in the DAGUDASHAAG Sector

Signal GK

CONTENTS

2 Contents Page . . . . . You're reading it!
3 Editorial . . . . . By Leighton Piper
3 Starport Freefax . . . . . By J. Campbell

Port of Call:

4 Ersharsa . . . . . By Neil Taylor

Background

11 T4 Review . . . . . By Tim Osborne

Adventure

12 The Hunter File . . . . . By Andy Lilly

Background

32 DagMet . . . . . By Leighton Piper

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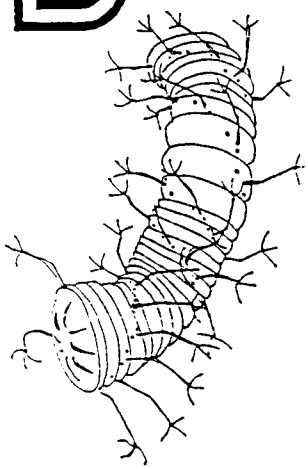

Acknowledgements

The name *Signal-GK* is not intended to infringe upon the earlier GDW adventure of the same name. For review purposes, please refer to it as either '*GK*', '*S-GK*' or '*Signal-GK the fanzine*'...

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Editorial

Welcome to SGK-12! Many apologies for the delays in this issue but I hope you will find this edition worth the wait. There are two subsectors again - Khandi and Iiradu. Two more and we've covered the whole sector. I think we can say that no other sector in the 'Traveller' universe has been developed to this depth. And that's down to a lot of people who have contributed in various ways to help us reach this level of coverage. We want to hear more from you. Please send in your artcles, adventures and especially your artwork.

As most of you will be well aware the new 'Traveller' edition has been launched. Back under the control of Marc Miller, T4 (as it is being called) harks back to the days of the little black books in its relatively simple game mechanics. For those who have yet to see a copy read Tim Osborne's brief review to savour a taste of what your missing. The first supplement 'Millennium 0: The Third Millennium' is out now, written by Andy Lilly and David Burden. Jae and I get a mention as the book contains material originating in Signal-GK. There are plenty of other supplements for publication soon. If anyone wants to do a review as and when they are released please send the article in to me. The Dagudashaag Library Data as the 'Encyclopaedia' could possibly see the light of day as an official publication.

At the the end of November (Saturday the 30th I think) Recon '96 is to be held in Leeds. The convention is a mix of roleplaying and war games. There should be a Traveller game or two - I hope to going and may even run one. Drop me a line at the usual address if you want to know more.

I'll leave it for now and wish you all the best at Christmas and the New Year. Ta Ta.

The Editor,

Leighton Piper

STARPORT FREEFAX

- **Despirately Seeking Ssuzi** - Feremtan Tower Complex, Level sub-23b, 3800 hrs. I'm only in Port for 3 days so don't fail me!!!

- **Unique Opportunity** - Trader down on her luck seeks to part with a cargo of two tonnes of singing sand pictures from Dashi. Forced to sell at rock-bottom prices due to extortionate docking fees. Cr. 250 ono will secure.

- **Contact:** Caitlin Foxx on Deltacom FreeFax 666-123456

- **Free Access to Communet** - A new interface provides access to all Communet channels on all 350 Data-Levels. Undetectable once fitted, this magic box of tricks also allows unlimited access to local networks. Cost: Cr. 60 plus tax from Electronic Magic - FreeCall 0800-59845786

- Use of the Interface within Imperial space is prohibited by Imperial Law.

- **Rare Books on Weaponry** - The Old Ways Bookstore has recently acquired a consignment of large print books on personal combat weaponry from an Imperial source outside the system. Orders are now being taken for personal delivery to your home by secure courier. Interested parties should contact the proprietor, Liam O'Connell as soon as possible.

- Call 0912-31316669

- **Passengers Wanted** - The 'Kunte Kinte' will be departing from dock 7b, Alfer Downport at 3900 hrs tomorrow for Gisi. We currently have two staterooms unfilled and have decided to let them for middle passage.

- Interested parties should contact the ship's purser Luc-Jean Mongillierre on Idex 0534-6779012455.

- **Safari to explore the outback of Jarsae** - looking for partners to help finance the trip and share the adventure. Investment of Cr. 50,000 could secure a return of $^1/_2$ a mill!

- Interested? Contact Pol on 0988-24316755

PORT OF CALL

Port of Call: Ersharsa

World Name: Ersharsa

Location:

Iiradu 3001 (Dagudashaag sector) UPP: C89A644-B

Physical Data:

Diameter: 6,250 km Mass: 0.335 std Surface Gravity: 0.351 std Rotation period: 1.932 std. days (46.36 hrs.) Orbital period: 1.932 std. days (tidal locked to Limakorann) Seasons: none (tidal locked) Axial tilt: 0 deg. (tidal locked) Orbital eccentricity: none Satellites: none Surface atm. pressure: 2.20 std Atm. composition: nitrogen, 5% O^2 Atm. terra-forming: none

Temperature:

Base surface temperature: 152K (-120C) Axial tilt modifiers: none Rotation modifiers: +3.5K, -11.5K Orbital eccentricity: +0.6K, -0.6K (from Limakorann) Other modifiers: none Weather control: no terra-forming: no

Mapping Data:

Tectonic plates: 122 (one per thermal cell) Native Life: yes Terrain terra-forming: no Continents: no (ice crust) Oceans: world (beneath ice)

Seismic Data:

Stress factor: surface dominated by plate movements core melted tidal forces from gas giant

Resources:

Natural resources: agricultural, compounds, crystals Processed resources: agro-products, non-metals Manufactured products: - Information: recordings, documents (science papers)

Population and Ports:

World population: 8,000,000

Primary cities: Feremtan (190,000), Trosh (170,000), Prumaal (150,000) Beron (120,000), Alefer (110,000), Sishshussan (110,000), Limak (110,000)

Secondary cities: 112 bases, fixed or mobile Tertiary cities: mobile bases scattered across the world

Social Outlook:

Progressive, Advancing; Passive, Neutral; Harmonious, Friendly

Tech Level details:

BB-BB9BB-7B9B-97-D High Common: B Low Common: B Energy: B Computers/Robotics: B Communications: 9 (*) Medical: B Environment: B (* radio comms. is hampered by transmission through water: global comms. use up-links to satellites from surface base stations - if no base station is reachable the contact may be impossible.) Land Transport: 7 (there is almost no land transport undertaken) Water Transport: B (primary transport) Air Transport: 9 Space Transport: B Personal Military tech: 9 Heavy Military tech: 7 Novelty tech: D (imports)

Ersharsa - System Survey

➡ General System Data and History

Ersharsa/Iiradu (3001 C89A644-B 802) is the inner-most moon of the gas giant Limakorann, orbiting the K3 V main sequence star Ershanuur.

A total of 8 planets including 2 gas giants, plus their families of 15 satellites orbit Ershanuur. Limakorann and Ersharsa orbit well outside the habitable zone of the star, but intense tidal friction has melted the core of Ersharsa. This in turn has melted the original icy outer layers, turning the planet into a literal world-of-water.

The Ershanuur system was explored early on by Vilani prospectors but ignored in favour of better prospects elsewhere.

Some 600 years ago a Scout Survey made a more complete inventory of the planetary system, and reported the unusual liquid body of the planet.

A follow-up investigation showed that the world was truly extraordinary, possessing unusual native life and free oxygen.

A research base (the Ersharsa Science Institute) was established to study these new aspects, and over the years the associated colony has grown into a full scale world government with a population of 8 million.

The immense oceans of Ersharsa are home to a rich variety of life, many of which have proved edible to humans. An export trade has developed which provides food to a number of nearby systems with trace or exotic atmospheres, and sends delicacies and exotica far across the sector.

Fantastic displays of bio-luminescent life in the dark waters draw tourists from far and wide. Despite the tourism, fisheries and processing of organic compounds, the economy still needs the Science Institute's funding. Additional research projects have developed as the Science Institute has grown and diversified.

The inner planet Heresimuur has a 600-strong Solar Institute, which studies the star, probing into the outer stellar-sphere. There is an observatory on Muuruunin (Ershanuur II), run by the once-exiled "Free-Fall Heads". The Varantuual Nazariim Company has a base on Varantuush (Ershanuur VI), which has an inclined elliptical orbit stretching from the mid-reaches of the system to the outer reaches.

Throughout its political history, Ersharsa-system has been ruled by elected Councils drawn primarily from the Scientists, but expanded over time to encompass the growing non-research population. The precise nature and political complexion of these Councils has varied over the years.

Ersharsa from Space

Ersharsa looks similar to its sister world Kilimshasa (Limakorann VI). They have similar size, dense atmospheres (though different compositions), and have a solid icy crust, but Ersharsa's frigid atmosphere showed evidence of free oxygen.

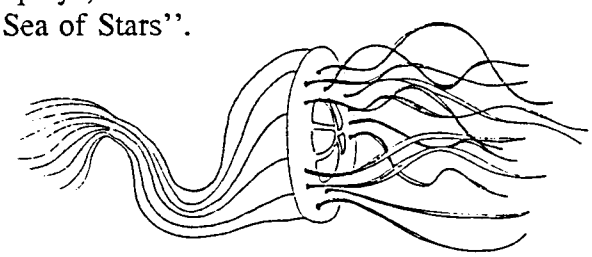
Their interiors are very different: Kilimshasa is far out of the gravity well of Limakorann, and orbits peacefully in chilly solidity, while Ersharsa is gripped by the huge mass of the parent and rent by immense tidal forces. This tidal friction has heated the rocky core of the planet enough to melt it. The molten rock in turn has melted most of the icy body of the planet except for the outer km or so, which freezes from the chill of space. Immense thermal plumes rise from the core through the watery 'mantle' so that near the surface the hydrosphere is temperate - around 20 centigrade (although near freezing at the ice boundary itself). Deep below, some 1100 km down, where the molten rock meets water, complex chemical reactions take place under intense pressure, producing rich hydrothermal vents around which native life-forms cluster in profusion.

Very little is known about these "deep ones" as the pressure is nearly 35,000 std. atmospheres and has crushed all probes sent to investigate long before they near the core-mantle boundary.

Indirect evidence is available about the depths as much organic matter is carried up on the thermal plumes. However, those which reach the human investigators are limited to the "lower" pressure species that have already "processed" (eaten and digested) the deeper matter. It is thought that the vent dwellers have a chemistry based on reduced compounds and powered by the rich chemicals coming from the vents.

The chemistry is exotic by normal standards as the chemical waste gases emitted deep below include free oxygen. The oxygen dissolves in the deep waters, is carried along the up-wellings and released as bubbles when the pressure drops. The bubbles rise to the surface and gather below the ice crust providing a minimal ice/water-enclosed 'atmosphere'. The combination of tectonic currents thrusting crustal ice-plates against each other over the buoyant gases produces intermittent spectacular oxygen eruptions. In these, gas and spray burst through the ice and are flung high into the atmosphere before raining back to the planet. Not all of the gas falls back, as some is captured by the gravity of Limakorann. Ersharsa actually orbits inside an immense, tenuous, doughnut shaped cloud of partly ionised gas encircling Limakorann along Ersharsa's orbit.

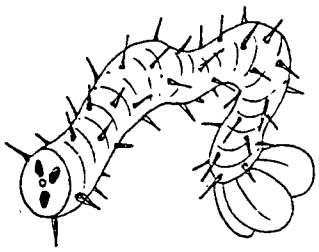
One might expect a world buried beneath kilometres of ice, far from a distant red dwarf star would be a dark and gloomy place, but not Ersharsa. The native life indulges in spectacular bio-luminescent displays, so that the Ersharsans live in a "Sea of Stars".



The immense size of the thermal plumes means that the life-forms in them are as isolated as on the separate continents of Earth. Indeed the Down-current dwellers and the Up-current dwellers are so different as to form different animal kingdoms. Down-current life is predominantly buoyant, using gas bladders and swimming limbs to maintain height against the current, and has

a very low mineral content. Up-current life is heavier than water, with dense mineral plates and hyper-saline body tissues, so that it continually sinks against the current and so holds station.

Under the ice, large pockets of air accumulate from rising bubbles, and in these you find air-breathing crawlers clinging to the underside of the ice. These crawlers hunt and fight each other, or make forays out into the water currents to hunt worm-fish.



There is no photosynthetic life such as plants - all life is chemosynthetic, filter- or detritus-feeder, or predatory hunter.

The dominant life-forms are tubular, segmented worm like creatures, with radially symmetric tentacles; or with one or more spiral arrays of arms along their length. Many have long branching antennae for tracing chemical signals and currents; some swim with these fern-like limbs. Reliable reports indicate worms up to 27 metres long; there are tales of a Kraken that could swallow an entire submarine whole.

Electromagnetic and sonar sensors suggest that it is probable that there is some form of Intelligent life around volcano communities on the core surface. All attempts to communicate have failed dismally - with no signs that the signals even reached their targets. Scientists remain hopeful of making contact although sceptics point out that due to the vastly different pressure environments, the Natives would explode, or the Humans implode, were they ever to meet.

The Ersharsan Economy

The citizens of Ersharsa are occupied variously in science, tourism and fishing. Fishing centres on the oxygen-breathing worms, which are quite edible, although the non oxygen-breathers brought up are toxic to humans and similar life; only the native life-forms seem capable of eating them.

There are now several Science Institutes based on Ersharsa, most studying the life, chemistry and geology of the planet, although some study Limakorann and its giant weather systems.

Tourists come to watch the atmosphere-geysers (there is an "Old Faithful" Hotel based on one particular specimen), and to see the "Sea of Stars".

Many hope to see the fabled Kraken of the Deeps, said to have carried off entire submarines; or at least to see it on sensors...

A number of the neighbouring star systems trade with Ersharsa for "fish" and other produce, as they have small, vacuum-planet ecologies. Delicacies such as the more exotic species are sent far across the sector.

Some of the chemicals found in the worm-fish are extremely flavour-some, some irritant (rivalling the legendary Chillies of Earth), and some are stimulants or hallucinogens. Some have been developed as medicines, especially those from the rare deep-dwelling species.

The Ersharsans live in scattered communities, in submarine pressure domes on the underside of the ice-crust, or in large cruising submarines. The latter are used both by fishing communities and research scientists. Like the native life, different human communities organise around the different bio-geographic regions: the up-welling hot currents, the down-welling cold-currents, and the intermediate tectonic (crust carrying) currents. The convection cells are some 2000 km across, so there are approx. 120 cells across the world; not all of these are occupied by humans but many are, as there are different life-forms in each.

Politics and Government

The Government of Ersharsa is elected by proportional representation, in a combination of transferable votes and party-lists, with reserved segments for minority interests. It is usually formed from a coalition of interests, although sometimes one faction may subsume several others and grow to dominate politics from some years. However, a coalition of one form or other is the norm.

Three Councils make up the bulk of the Government: one elected by Region, one by Faction (roughly the left and right political spectrum), and one by Community (the various Science Institutes, Fishers, etc. form Political Communities). For the past 300 years, the Community Councils have dominated the others and form the most important wing of the government.

Ersharsans strongly favour the regulated trade that has cushioned them over the years, as they rely on serving various communities which in turn are dependent on sector funding and intervention. The new deregulatory policies being mooted at sector level do not go down well in the minds of these people.

The Science Council is especially worried, seeing a threat to the Sector funds it has relied on for so long.

Culture

The Ersharsans are interested in discovery and innovation within their world, but also in maintaining the status quo across the sector, as they draw so much of their funding from long-term Sector Science projects.

The thriving tourist economy brings a continual influx of visitors, and demands for entertainment that have been passed on to the residents. They import holo-vids and synth-music, from the cultural centres of the sector, and add a home-grown music inspired by haunting whistles and rhythmic clicks from native fish-worms.

Star System data

Name/Location: Ershasa/Iiradu 3001 (Dagudashaag sector)

☆ Primary Ershanuur K3V .672 solar masses

○ I Heresimuur F320226-A 6 2 0.2 AU, 39.8 day

● orbit 7 Forosh YS000000-0 50 km, 2.567 day

● orbit 8 Denosiir YS000000-0 200 km, 3.136 day

● orbit -- -- empty

○ orbit --II Muuruunin GS00225-A 8 0 0.55 AU, 181 day

○ orbit III Pennaala SGG30 48,000 km, mass 10.5 earths, 1 AU, 1.22 std. yrs.

● 2 -R00000-0

● 3 -R00000-0

● 5 --- Y100000-0 2720 km, 2.857 day

● orbit 9 --- Y100000-0 1600 km, 6.900 day

● orbit 11 --- YS00000-0 640 km, 9.323 day

● orbit 20 --- YS00000-0 480 km, 22.86 day

● orbit 50 --- YS00000-0 1120 km, 90.35 day

○ orbit IV Triulfaran H737100-A 2 0 1.6 AU, 2.47 std. yrs.

○ V Limakorann LGG140 225,600 km, mass 1259 earths, 2.8 AU, 5.715 std. yrs.

● 6 Ershasa C89A644-B *main world

● 8 Luneial YS00000-0 240 km, 2.960 day

● orbit 9 Silvenial YS00000-0 560 km, 3.532 day

● orbit 11 Losentuul Y400000-0 6880 km, 4.773 day

● orbit 13 Kiliimian Y400000-0 7040 km, 6.132 day

● orbit 200 Kilimshasa Y6A0000-0 10360 km, 370.0 day

● orbit 250 Satre HS00000-0 410 km, 517.1 day orbit nav. beacon staging post outside the 100 diam. limit

● 325 Tremennelal Y500000-0 8160 km, 766.5 day

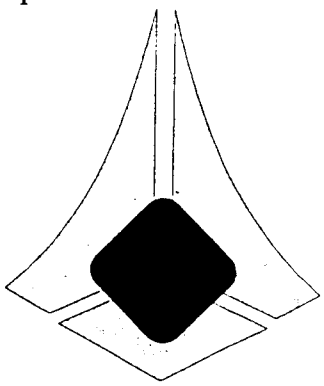
○ orbit VI Varantuush Y400117-A

● 7 1 inclined wanderer: 4.7 AU nominal, 13.64 std. yrs.

○ VII Ershanuur Y7A1000-0 0 0 10.0 AU, 38.58 std. yrs.

○ VIII Kririuun G615266-A 7 1 15.76 AU, 76.32 std. yrs. R00000-0

The **Gulkentaal Company** started as a branch of the Chemistry Institute but has become a commercial offshoot famous for potent distilled liqueurs made from native organic compounds.



Few tourists can take more than one of their Famous Brews, but some of the deep Fishers' crews have been seen to sink as many as eight glasses before passing out - such are the exigencies of long periods away from home.

Muuruunin

300 years ago, the then repressive government of Ersharsa exiled a number of dissidents to Muuruunin (Ershanuur II). (It was said at the time that they were "assigned to important projects requiring personal attendance".)

A change in voting patterns then produced an inward looking isolationist government, followed by a Moralist-Neutral party coalition, by which time the exiles had largely been forgotten. They and their descendants have turned their back on the main world and live in what seems an uncomfortable isolation on Muuruunin.

The colony's gravitics generators failed many years ago, and they could not then persuade anyone to replace them.

As a result they now have long-term adaptations to free-fall and could not take the high Gs of the main world. The current generation insist that they prefer "Floating Free" from the Heavies and they would not wish to live buried under all the mass of the main world, away from the sight of the stars.

Their star-gazing has led to the building of a respectable observatory with strengths in long-baseline interferometry, and large free-fall optical telescopes. They derive considerable advantage in this work from their planet's eccentric orbit. The Muuruuninians grow low-G adapted plants in hydroponics domes, including a large number of "recreational" plants...

Outsiders observe that their government is in many ways a shadow of the Ersharsan form, but rendered farcical by the small population governed. The main thrust of the government seems to be drumming up support for Fertility Drives, to boost the world's flagging population, but most ignore them. Despite this, Politics is their most heated issue; cynics say there is nothing else to talk about. Ships heading in-system to the Institute on Heresimuur sometimes stop-over and trade spares and water, in return for observatory data (and 'herbs').

Heresimuur

Most of the people on Heresimuur are from a branch of the main Institute on Ersharsa. They study the star Ershanuur from close orbit, and make probe trips into the outer reaches of the star itself. Armoured research vessels make close fly-bys of the star studying the corona and solar wind. A single ex-naval ship (one of the outmoded Asteroid-based "rock ships"), with an old generation Tech 15 Black-Globe generator (factor 4) is used for the deepest probe trips. This screen blocks some 40% of the incoming heat and radiation, and the rest can be tolerated for the duration of trips. They use advanced high Tech cooling systems, and take advantage of the high thermal lag in the bulk of the Rock. The screen does interfere somewhat with sensors, which must be carefully synchronised to the "flicker" of the screen generator, but the investigations would not be possible without this ship. The Heresimuurans form one of the voting Councils on Ersharsa.

Varantuush and the Varantuual Nazariim Company

Officially the company runs a research base on this small rocky planet. The planet's orbit is steeply inclined to the ecliptic (where the other planets orbit), and highly eccentric, so that at times it is carried far out of the system. The research takes advantage of the reduced electronic and neutrino noise from being far off the star lanes.

In reality, they are involved in processing and smuggling illegal drugs derived from Ersharsan life-forms. It is an underworld rumour that they also produce some potent poisons and neurotoxins. They find that their out-system position makes smuggling contact much easier as they are so far from Ersharsa Main and the star-port navigation systems.

Adventure Hooks

Ersharsa:

Precious Gems:

A prospector offers to sell gemstones of unusual and exquisite form. They are natural perfect crystals (not cut), with internal refractive layers giving an intense iridescent sheen, composed of heavy metal minerals they are exceptionally dense. Some contain trans-uranic radio-actives, and are fluorescent. The vendor will not reveal his sources, wishing to exploit them personally.

If purchased, a detailed examination of the gems reveals them to have a biological origin: they were secreted rather than deposited geologically. A Library search reveals few clues, but may offer some references to the strange life-forms on the planet Ersharsa -

- ☆ Ersharsan oceans are dominated by continent sized thermal plumes and are exceptionally high in minerals, dissolved from ocean floor volcanoes
- ☆Ersharsan sea-life has exotic specialisation's for life in vertical water currents. Life in down-welling currents possesses floatation devices, gas-sacks and the like, or swims vigorously upwards; while life in up-welling currents is heavily armoured and dense, relying on passively sinking against the current to maintain position.

☆Gem-stones have not been reported, but the biological form of these crystals is consistent with the up-welling Sinkers.

If the players visit Ersharsa, they will find more evidence to confirm their theories. Native prospectors may be induced to help them, or they may contact various of the many Science Institutes. Locating the creatures that secrete these particular gems will involve computer research scanning all catalogued creatures, and field expeditions to confirm findings and obtain more information. Each thermal plume is as isolated as an earth-based continent, and has many forms unique to itself, so it may be only plume that is the source of these. (There are 122 known plumes across the globe, distributed uniformly across the under-surface, approx. 2000 km apart.)

Life In the Depths:

Light and high-frequency radio signals are absorbed by water, but very low frequency radio (around 10 Hz and lower) can travel long distances underwater. Humans use this for limited submarine communications, with data rates less than 1 bit per second (colloquially the SlowNet): only global data is important enough to squeeze into these channels.

Engineers maintaining the global SlowNet have noticed significant radio noise at times, over certain regions, and more intense in deeper waters than near the ice-crust. The President missed some important messages as a result of interference and has ordered an inquiry. Analysis of records shows a pattern to the radio noise indicating an intelligence at the source. That source must be on the surface of the core of molten rock - it is too deep to come from any human device. Suggestions that it could be a lost submarine have been dismissed by the engineers who point out that the pressure and temperature are high enough to dissolve most substances, or to trigger phase changes in the remaining insoluble matter.

☆The pressure at the boundary of the rocky core of the planet is approx. 35,000 std. atmospheres: enough to crush any human built probe ever devised. In comparison, the pressure on the surface of Venus is a mere 90 std. atmospheres, and that in the depths of Earth's ocean trenches at depths around 7 km is only 560 atmospheres. The under-ice habitats around 3 km resist pressures around 60 atms.: Ersharsan engineers are renowned for their skill in high-pressure working.

☆Water above 647K and 22 atms. has passed the Critical point where gas and liquid become interchangeable - and becomes highly corrosive dissolving many substances. At room temperature and a pressure of 25,000 atms, water solidifies - but the temperature at the core of Ersharsa is much higher than that. Theorists argue that there are in fact 'continents' of solid water and 'oceans' of hyper-saline solution at the base of the ocean.

Investigations can follow several tracks:

☆deep scans: neutrino scans measure radioactivity (the core is radio-active), but patterns can be found suggesting concentrations of ordered activity

☆gravimetric and densitometer scans are limited by the sheer mass of water and rock around the areas

☆If an ultra- tech (Tech 16+) scanner could be purchased and imported this might be able to reveal details

☆meson scanners can penetrate anything, but only the highest tech scanner reflect anything worthwhile back to the measurers

☆sound waves carry well: large scale loudspeakers, or explosives can send sound to the core and produce measurable echoes. Placing sonic labs aboard a deep submersible 50-100 km down may offer the best results, but are hazardous. [This the realm of the Kraken...]

☆a probe of solid crystalliron or superdense matter (starship hull material) with solid state sensors may be able to resist implosion. Such a probe is still likely to suffer corrosion and fail, but probes may be revised and improved as the investigation progresses and may eventually permit contact to be made.

As evidence accumulates for deep water intelligence, the Science Institutes will wake up to the possibilities for extra research budgets and start to interfere and compete. Some will want to assist, some to take over investigations; others may try to steal information or sabotage missions. The largest Institutes are ruthless and highly competitive, if keen to keep a clean cover.

☆Players may be asked to form hit-squads, or to protect an Institute's team.

☆If players are investigating the depths themselves, they may suffer sabotage and face a sinking submarine needing urgent repairs or rescue.

☆As news leaks out, investigators from across the sector may wish to join in, as this could be a very significant find

In the end, the investigations can be both conclusive and yet remain tantalising. There are intelligent beings down there, with a centuries old culture, who are moving into an industrial era. Their activity has become measurable by humans. A communications-link may be possible but direct contact may never be made. Their world is a very strange world, of heat, pressure, and radioactivity, offering decades of investigation.

Across The Ice:

A tourist party watching a Geyser explosion has been caught out by an unusually large eruption, which has wrecked their transport. The eruption is forecast to continue for at least a week and the party must be rescued soon. It is unsafe to fly either aircraft or spacecraft into the continuing eruption, so an expedition must be sent overland. Meanwhile, the tourists face a failing power supply, and a breached hull.

☆The players may be asked to join the rescue mission. A G-carrier can set down tracked ATVs some 100 km from the trapped party, on the edge of the storm.

☆The rescuers face a hazardous journey across a jumble of ice slabs, kilometres across (thrust up by the explosions), while millions of tons of ice and snow are falling from the geyser. Much of that snow falls as a very fine, dry powder that will not consolidate but flows like dust: some 2m. of snow per day

☆or, they may have previously hired as guides or crew for the tourist party. They must contain the passengers' panic while repairing the generators and hull breaches within a few hours. The outside air is dense but barely breathable (2.2 atms, 5% oxygen) and intensely cold.

☆or, they may have been passengers, and the crew killed in the crash: the players must pull the other tourists through the crisis until help arrives.

☆For a truly thrilling ride, someone may propose a third alternative - a submarine passage up inside the geyser, through the breach in the crustal ice!

The breach is approx. 100 m across, and 2.5 km long; a froth of gas and water is hurtling up this at about Mach 2 (600m/s), so it will only take 4 seconds... if they survive!

Muuruunin:

Space Hippies

The Muuruuninians accept "interesting" visitors who try to fit in with their free-living ways, but have an intense dislike for bureaucrats and rule makers. Occasionally fugitives from Ersharsa try to seek refuge here, but most fail to fit in and are ejected.

☆The players are called in to visit Muuruunin and extract a wanted criminal who has been accepted by the Free Floaters. They must persuade the Floaters to accept (temporarily) themselves, and that the wanted individual is not a free-thinking rebel but a harmful criminal.

☆for a greater role-playing challenge, have the fugitive be wanted for tax crimes (with which the Muuruuninians are intrinsically happy)

Heresimuur:

Corsair Hunt:

The players operate a Mercenary Cruiser, and are on a bounty hunt for a particularly aggressive Corsair that operates in the adjacent sub-sector and has illegally acquired a Black-Globe generator. The crew seems to relish fire-fights. The players have a contract on these pirates, and a special Imperial licence to carry Nuclear warheads to tackle them. They have followed the pirates through jump to Iimkhir (Iiradu 3101), and observed their jump vectors as they jumped onwards. The computer indicates Ersharsa (Iiradu 3001). After emergence from jump space in Ersharsa system, they make contact with the nearest planet (Muuruunin) asking for any sightings of a black-globe equipped ship. A strange character responds, apparently floating in freefall ("Don't they have grav controls in this backwater?").

Once the message gets through, she informs the players that there are regular sightings of a globed ship deep in-system, near the Sun's surface. She shunts over some computer logs and signs off with a hazy wave.

☆The data shows intermittent tracking of a ship apparently using solar prominences to hide itself. The most recent sighting has it emerging round the solar rim less than one day ago - consistent with jumping in ahead of the players; they can reach it in 29 hours at 3G.

☆If they rush directly into this they will bear down on the Research vessel Prometheus as it emerges from a solar prominence, its black-globe capacitors nearing overload from the solar fire and sensors still blinded from the sun scans. They may launch their nukes in complete surprise, crippling or destroying it. (The Prometheus has no weapons systems to retaliate.)

☆If the players wish to contact Ersharsa main, they must delay and travel more than 1 AU round the sun to get clear contact (40 hours to travel and stop; 29 hours if they do not decelerate). Ersharsa traffic control can inform the players that the black-globe ship near the sun is the Prometheus, and a Government vessel which should not be disturbed. They claim no records of a ship jumping in with an operating black-globe. In fact, the Corsair is not based here, but does call at the Company "Research Station" on Varantuush - to trade for drugs.

The extra delay may allow it to reach Varantuush undetected. Since it has the black-globe operating it is extremely hard to detect - it is not radiating and absorbs the energy of active scans (needless to say its transponder is off). A detailed search of traffic control's scan records may show traces of a jump signature without a corresponding transponder; or of an initial manoeuvre drive thrust before coasting to Varantuush.

☆Following the Corsair to Varantuush may lead into the next adventure. (The players have acquired some experience in this task as they have already tracked the ship this far. They know to track indirectly by looking for records of M-drive flares, and forward plotting velocities to infer positions.)

Defend The Rock:

The drug-smuggling Corsair has a breakdown in its screen generators and needs to obtain spares - fast! There is no ready black-market supply of these rarities, but they know from the Varantuual Nazariim Company that the Solar research station on Heresimuur has a solar probe equipped with one.

☆The players are taking a tourist trip to the solar station, with a trip on the Prometheus to see the Sun from the "inside". The Corsair crew attempt to hijack the Prometheus to steal its Black Globe generator

☆As above, but the players are crew members, permanent or hired.

☆As above, but the Corsair attempts to intercept and board the ship. The crew must attempt to manoeuvre away (turning off the globe!) or coast free soaking the weapons fire (until the capacitors overload).

Varantuush:

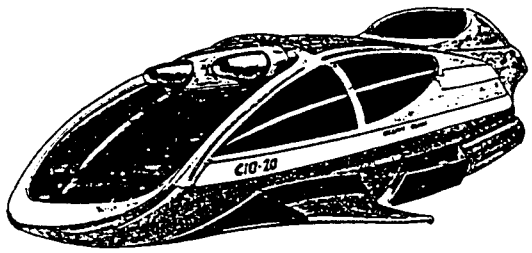
Drug Factory.

The Varantuual Nazariim Company runs a research station on this rock ball out on an eccentric inclined orbit. Officially it conducts research requiring freedom from electronic and other disturbances, and so must be well off the shipping lanes between the main planets down in the plane of the ecliptic. (They do perform such research.) They also smuggle illegal drugs. They ship legal (or quasi-legal) drugs in from synthesis plants on Ersharsa, where they are derived from the strange native life-forms, and process it further before smuggling it out. They currently have a contact with a Corsair equipped with an illegal Black Globe generator, and can approach the planet without any chance of being detected. It can only be spotted when the globe is switched off - e.g. to use the manoeuvre drive to change course. Various leads may bring the players here:

- ☆A quest for illegal pharmaceuticals may bring them to Ersharsa, known as a chemical foundry for complex organics. Unfortunately the Ersharsan companies seem to be clean and legal. If they can match a Formidable task against underworld contact skills, they may find a lead to Varantuush (Ershanuur VI). If they can satisfy the drug runners, they may purchase Psi drug, combat drug and others.
- ☆They may be engaged by the Ersharsan tax authorities to investigate irregular trading of some companies. Following financial trails may lead to revelations about the things they ship to Varantuush.

They may follow the Corsair here, expecting a simple fight, but implicating a large company in ill-doings.

If they seem likely to reveal their discoveries, the company's agents will try to move against them on Ersharsa.



Speeder

T4 Review

Marc Miller's TRAVELLER

What is there to say about the new TRAVELLER core system from Imperium games? Well I bought the soft back version. It runs to 190 pages, with loads of artwork. It basically covers the same rules as the 'Traveller Book'. books 1,2 & 3 of original Traveller. The basic rules are quite straight forward, like an easier, more Travelesque version of T.N.E., except for having to roll a D6 then halve the result, which seems a little messy until you examine the underlying probability of success for average characters, then it suddenly makes amazing sense - Of course if you don't like having to 1/2 die results, you can paint up a D6 in 3 colours, (2 sides for each colour - simple). I love this version of Traveller, in a way which I never could for MegaTraveller, 2300AD and its bastard son T.N.E., it is fresh and new. In Traveller 4 space is big and empty and needs to be explored. Everything is about adventure, set at the founding of the 3rd Empire this seems to be Traveller as Marc Miller intended it to be, almost 20 years ago. Marc Miller's Traveller is not contradictory as previous Traveller releases have been. Instead it takes the line that all Traveller editions are different eras and have equal standing. Eventually, they will all have a source book in this range, or so it seems. For the moment though Heplar and Thrusters exist side-by-side with their selection in the quick space ship design sequence being a matter of choice. This book is a worthy new Traveller. I love it! And I hope that it becomes as successful and popular as classic Traveller. I for one look forward to releases of Starships, Central Supply Catalog, Alien Archive, Milieu Zero: the Third Imperium, and First Survey all priced at $20.00, and due out this year (har, har).

WELL DONE MARC!

THE HUNTER FILE

by Andy Lilly

Thanks to Sarah Lilly, Pat Leach and Phil Edgeworth for play-testing

Section [1.] - INTRODUCTION

This adventure can be played using the background and rules of 'classic' Traveller, MegaTraveller or Traveller: The New Era.

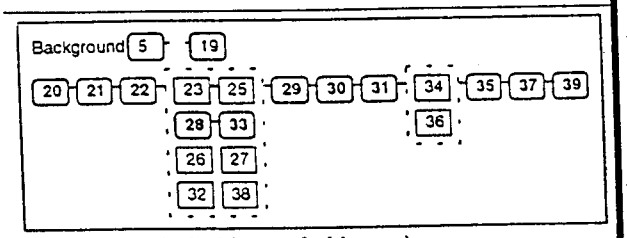
The plot can be varied to fit different worlds as described in Planetary Setting - Section [2.]. Player requirements are given in Players - Section [3.]. Investigative methods are described in Gathering - Section [4.]. Sections [5.] to [20.] describe the background to the adventure:

Paul Gambacci, a high-level diplomat (Section [5.]) has been stealing secrets (Section [6.]) for which a foreign power (Section [7.]) are paying him (Section [8.]).

A record of such a payment is accidentally copied (Section [9.]) onto one of several 'datcards' (Section [10.]) which clerk Lovar Hunter takes home for his son Kohl (Section [11.]). Gambacci realises what happened and pressures Lovar (Section [12.]) who returns all the cards except the important one (Section [13.]). Gambacci resorts to physical pressure (Section [14.]) but Hunter doesn't seem to get the idea (Section [16.]) and the next confrontation - with Hunter's wife - leaves her dead(Section [17.]).

Now the police are involved and his wife's funeral (Section [18.]) starts Hunter babbling. Gambacci decides to 'remove' him (Section [19.]) leaving his son Kohl to work out what has happened. He discovers the secret file, hides it in his mother's grave but is nearly caught by Gambacci's agents.

A chase ensues - Kohl encounters the players (Section [20.]) but is captured by the agents and taken to a secret interrogation centre at the Harridge Institute (Section [40.]). If the players investigate, they can get information on the Hunters (Sections [21], [22], [26] & [27.]), the Institute (Sections [25.] & [40.]), and Gambacci. Once Gambacci knows the players are involved (Section [29.]), he will try and have them killed (Sections [30.] & [31.]).



(Key events in bold rounded boxes)

Eventually Gambacci decides to leave the planet (Section [34.]) with Kohl (Section [35.]), via his coastal villa (Section [41.]) where a starship will pick him up (Section [37.]). If the players have found the missing datcard (Section [28.]) by now they can work out why it is so valuable (Section [33.]). The players may need to acquire weapons (Section [32.]) and a helping hand from an interested secret agent (Section [15.]) who will make sure their efforts do not go unrewarded (Section [39.]).

Section [2.] - PLANETARY SETTING

This adventure is set in Laraa *(subsector P of Dagudashaag - see Signal-GK issue 8)*, on the planet of Kadushi (3136 C-8899A7-C S Hi 804 Im M3V).

Shardi (3236 C-326ADB-E S Hi 604 Im M0V) and Amluamii (3135 B-425520-9 S Ag Ni 104 Im G0V) are each 1 parsec from Kadushi (in different directions).

Figure 1 shows Kadushi's capital city (Karashun) and its surroundings. If substituting an alternative planet for Kadushi, suitable replacements for Shardi and Amluamii must also be found.

Starport: Any Size: 5+ (For distances between locations.)

Atmosphere: Any (a standard atmosphere makes life easier; a tainted atmosphere or vacuum will have all major sites (cities and private villas) in enclosed domes with air-locks. In (Section [37.]) the scout ship must land outside the villa's dome; vacuum suits must be used to get to it.)

Hydrographic: 3+ (a 'sea' is required although it need not be water; if frozen, the Institute cruiser will be a jet-powered ice-runner.)

Population: 5+ (minimum required to support the government, university and cities in this scenario.)

Government: Any (change the ruling officials' titles accordingly - if Rebellion or New Era, replace references to the Imperium with an appropriate regional controlling power - a Rebellion faction, the Regency or Coalition.)

Law Level: Any (but 5+ means the players must work harder to get weapons, etc. - see (Section [32.])

Tech Level: 7+ (items of higher TL may be imported or brought in covertly.)

The referee should feel free to change the sex and race of any or all NPCs. S.I.D. agents and agent Jallion should 'fit in' with

the inhabitants of Kadushi. Character statistics are given for CT/MT. For TNE, subtract 1 from all characteristics and use the TNE rule book to determine the equivalent skills and calculate the corresponding skill levels.

Section [3] - THE PLAYERS

This adventure requires substantial investigation but has the potential for violence and combat; it should be suitable for almost any size or type of party.

The players can be on Kadushi for any reason. Their introduction is a chance encounter anywhere within Karashun city. If the players own a starship, local laws should prohibit it from entering orbit except using the regulated air-traffic lanes to and from the starport. Orbital scanning of ground targets, use of ship weaponry, or landing illegally (e.g. to smuggle weapons onto the planet) should be met with rapid retribution from Kadushi's ground and space forces.

Section [4.] - GATHERING INFORMATION

To understand the scenario, the players must acquire a fair amount of information. A typical research task is represented as:

Enquiring about the medic or asylum Hospitals:

Routine, Local knowledge:

Difficult, City library:

Routine, 1 hour List of information

i.e. the "List of Information" may be obtained by enquiring at the local hospitals or city library (a Routine task - CT roll 7+). Alternatively, locals (passers-by, bar-keepers, hotel staff, etc.) may have some relevant knowledge (a Difficult task - CT roll 11+).

Each attempt to find information takes 1 hour (in this case), whether successful or not. Rolls may be repeated if failed, to validate data or to get more information on a subject. Each re-roll takes the same time as the original task. The skills applicable to each information source are typically (A)dmin, (C)arousing, (Co)mputing, (I)nterview, (L)iaison, (R)esearch, (So)cial Standing and (S)treetwise:

Banks **(A,I,L,So)**

City library, Remote Terminal **(A,Co,R)**

City Library, Enquiries Desk **(A,C,I,L,R,So)**

Economic Bureau, Reception **(A,C,I,L,So)**

Economic Bureau, Lovar's Colleagues **(C,I,L,So)**

Harridge Institute **(I,So)**

Hospitals **(A,C,I,L)**

Law Enforcement Agency **(I,L,So,S)**

Local knowledge **(C,I,L,R,S)**

Roll separately for each person attempting to locate information (don't combine skills from different characters). You may give bonuses of up to +4 for relevant clever ideas. Claiming to be a government agent - and producing the necessary forged documentation - will not impress a library data terminal. It might encourage Lovar's office colleagues to speak up but at a police station such an attempt, if failed, might result in their disguise being seen through.

Bribery can be used to influence an informant, although it will cost dearly and the referee must make a secret 2d6 roll - if under the law level the bribed person takes the bribe but then informs his superiors or the police.

Bad failures will result in people being unhelpful or secretive, computer files being temporarily unavailable (or lost). Average success will give a rough outline of the information listed. As the level of success increases, so does the quantity and accuracy of the data. Where a reference is made to another section (e.g. the background sections [5.] to [20.]) appropriate extracts can be presented to the players.

Section [5.] - THE DICTATOR AND HIS AIDE

Kadushi is ruled by the charismatic dictator 'President' Peter Hanover. He has an overall hand in all planetary business but subsidiary bureaucratic offices in each major city handle most local affairs.

Paul Gambacci was a critical aide to Hanover's rapid rise and eventual replacement of the previous president Tanak Hanari - organising several 'black bag' operations to discredit Hanari. Yet Gambacci was passed over when positions in the prestigious military and secret service and was instead made Senior Administrator of the Economic Bureau.

Gambacci fumed quietly but continued to work, gaining the respect of his new colleagues and remaining a valuable aide to Hanover.

Like most senior government personnel he retains a private bodyguard (in this government one cannot trust state-assigned security staff).

Paul Gambacci

(Male Diplomat, age 36)

Str:9 Dex:8 End:4 Int:C Edu:A Soc:A Chr:7 Admin-2, Bribery-3, Computer-1, Forgery-1, Handguns-1, Liaison-2, Small Water craft-1, Wheeled Vehicle-1

Bodyguard Steven Stielberg

(Male Army Captain, age 32)

Str:8 Dex:C End:A Int:9 Edu:5 Soc:8 Chr:2 Combat rifleman-2, Demolitions-1, Grav Vehicle-2, Handguns-2, Intrusion-1, Unarmed combat-3, Wheeled Vehicle-2

Stielberg looks like an ugly brute, but is intelligent and adept with the well-concealed Gauss pistol he carries. When driving Gambacci's grav speeder, he has an automatic shotgun (for Gambacci's use in an emergency) and his own Gauss rifle. If disarmed, Stielberg is an expert in unarmed combat. He is authorised (by a government warrant) to kill in defence of Gambacci. Stielberg has been with Gambacci for 4 years and trusts him implicitly although he does not know about Gambacci's espionage.

Section [6.] -STOLEN SECRETS

Despite current appearances, Gambacci always desired 'the top job' and secretly resents his treatment by Hanover. To make up for this and to line his pockets for retirement, Gambacci began selling government secrets. The past year has been very profitable since he has access to documents both from his own department and, through his close work with Hanover, to any military or other secret paperwork which the president leaves lying on his desk in Gambacci's presence.

Gambacci either copies data (using a miniature camera concealed in his watch) or memorises it. He sends it to the fanatically religious Shardi.

Gambacci has no direct contact with the Shardi Intelligence Division (S.I.D.); he passes data using dead-letter drops, always in a different place, using a coded personal ad' in the local computer news system to tell S.I.D. where to make the pick-up. So far, no one suspects Gambacci is a traitor.

Section [7.] - S.I.D.

The Shardi are a religious sect intent on eventual domination of the entire universe. As well as Shardi itself they have colonies on many other planets. To spread their 'influence' they will supply arms, equipment or funds to any 'freedom fighters' who approach them. Their control of the system's mineral wealth, economic importance to surrounding systems and careful dissociation from actual terrorist acts has allowed them to remain free of Imperial (or other) 'entanglements'.

Their slave-like worker population is so brain-washed by the religion that they would rebel against the troops sent to free them from tyranny! The Shardi maintain 'aid' and 'trade' organisations as covers for S.I.D. operations.

A selection of S.I.D. agents are given below for use in the scenario. It is suggest that these be the only agents readily available in Karashun.

Group Leader Mark Tember

(Male ex-Marine, age 34)

Str:B Dex:C End:A Int:B Edu:5 Soc:7 Chr:9 Combat Rifleman-2, Grav Vehicle-1, Streetwise-1, Tactics-2, Unarmed Combat-2, Vacc Suit-1, Wheeled Vehicle-0

Agent Zyke Ferret

(Male ex-Army, age 30)

Str:8 Dex:8 End:B Int:5 Edu:7 Soc:8; Chr:9 Combat Rifleman-1, Electronics-1, Small Blades-2, SMG-2, Tactics-1, Unarmed Combat-2, Wheeled Vehicle-0

Agent Paulina Rowark

(Female ex-Marine, age 27)

Str:7 Dex:A End:8 Int:6 Edu:8 Soc:5 Chr:7 Computer-0, Demolitions-2, Disguise-1, Grav Vehicle-0, Handguns-2, Streetwise-2

Agent Jacob Carom

(Male ex-Army, age 26)

Str:B Dex:A End:A Int:8 Edu:7 Soc:7 Chr:9 Carousing-1, Combat Rifleman-1, Computer-1, Demolitions-1, Grav Vehicle-1, Interrogation-1, Tactics-1, Wheeled Vehicle-0

Agent Francesco Marretti

(Female ex-Army, age 29)

Str:C Dex:6 End:B Int:8 Edu:8 Soc:7 Chr:7 Combat Rifleman-1, Electronics-1, Grav Vehicle-2, Small Blades-2, Small Water craft-1, SMG-2, Wheeled Vehicle-1

Agent Charles Petzer

(Male ex-Rogue, age 30)

Str:6 Dex:6 End:8 Int:3 Edu:3 Soc:3 Chr:6 Brawling-2, Bribery-1, Carousing-2, Computer-0, Grav Vehicle-0, Streetwise-1, SMG-2, Wheeled Vehicle-0

Petzer is a stupid slob and will act as such. He is never used as an undercover operative.

Agent Sarah Frazer

(Female ex-Army, age 26)

Str:7 Dex:D End:9 Int:C Edu:B Soc:8 Chr:5 Combat Rifleman-4, Handguns-3, Grav Vehicle-1, Tactics-2, Wheeled Vehicle-1

Frazer is the team's rifle expert. She carries a stripped down Gauss rifle with highest quality sights and is an excellent shot with this - or any other rifle or pistol.

When working undercover, these agents use a thin bullet-proof jacket under normal clothing, with a concealed handgun and commando dagger. Those trained in unarmed combat may sometimes operate without weapons. If they know there may be trouble, they will be in combat environment (CE) suits with Gauss rifles and similar weapons - they don't mess about!

Anyone who co-operates with the players in the scenario may be threatened or, in extreme circumstances, assassinated by S.I.D. - e.g. Harold Robbins (See Section [19.]).

If the party try following S.I.D. agents at any point in the game, the agents will always take a long drive around the city to shake any followers before returning to one of several safe-houses (in run-down areas of town). The agents know to avoid Gambacci and the Institute and will only contact these via a drop point and local ad' (as per Section [6.]).

Section [8.] - PAYMENT

Gambacci has set up 50 holding companies (mostly on Kadushi) and personal bank accounts (under a false identity) on Napu, Lumzashgu and Khanirlu (a route away from Kadushi). S.I.D. pays into the holding companies which transfer money to the 3 accounts. When Gambacci retires, he will jump to each world in turn and withdraw the money. Should 1 or 2 accounts be compromised, he will still have the others to fall back on. The transfers are conducted after-hours from his own bureau offices! Gambacci's responsible position has allowed him to gain control privileges on several of his assistants' computer accounts, from which he makes the transactions without leaving any trace of his own identity in the system security files.

Such transactions are common in the department's day-to-day work with nothing to make these particular transfers suspicious.

Section [9.] - THE WONDERS OF TECHNOLOGY

(Day 1)

Gambacci spent a long day in his plush office on the top floor of the large building housing the majority of the government bureaucrats. He had been up to the penthouse several times for discussions with Hanover - particularly the upcoming trade summit with Amluamii (an agricultural world which supplies large quantities of foodstuffs to both Kadushi and Shardi).

Gambacci waited until most of his staff had gone home then tapped into an absent clerk's account and performed a routine transfer from the holding companies to his personal accounts. His tired fingers hit the wrong key without realising it and copied a record of the payments onto the datcard in the clerk's own terminal. Tired, Gambacci left for his villa south of the city (*point A in Figure 1*; see Section [41.]).

Section [10.] - DATCARDS

Datcards are credit-card size plastic cards used to store computer data. They are widely used, compatible with most computers and have varying storage capacities from a person's characteristics up to an entire encyclopaedia.

Section [11.] - THANKS, DAD

(Day 2)

Clerk Lovar Hunter returned home from the economic bureau, glad to see his wife Velda and son Kohl - the latter back from Tulip University for the holidays. Knowing Kohl always needed datcards for his lecture notes and thesis, Lovar had brought back a few spares from his desk, including one from his terminal, onto which he had copied a few of the newer computer games from the government server system.

Section [12.] - PANIC

(Day 3)

Next morning Gambacci checked for any new payments in his holding companies. Accessing his computer's file manager program he found a remote link still pointing to the datcard receptacle on Lovar Hunter's computer.

Panic gripped him - was it possible he could have accidentally copied something to the datcard? He checked but there was no datcard in Hunter's machine.

He could not afford to confront Hunter without good reason. A quick request to the network controller indicated a file had been transferred at the exact time Gambacci was performing his transactions. Casually, Gambacci approached Hunter and asked for the datcard left in his computer 2 nights ago, explaining that he had accidentally copied a personal memo onto it which, although not confidential, should not slip into the wrong hands. Hunter knew the datcard was at home and, nervous of a reprimand, denied any knowledge of it, suggesting another clerk might have taken it.

Gambacci was clearly unhappy and raised a few eyebrows by personally checking this with the other clerks. Drawing a blank, he feared Hunter might somehow have found the transfer data with the intention of using it for blackmail.

On returning home, Lovar asked Kohl to return all the datcards but did not explain why - his son didn't bother to tell him he had already copied the games datcard (including the incriminating file).

Section [13.] - SUSPICIONS

(Day 4)

Lovar returned to work, went straight to Gambacci and admitted taking a few datcards home a few nights back to do some accounts at home. Apologising for his forgetfulness he handed over the datcards. Suddenly friendly, Gambacci accepted his apology and Lovar left, satisfied. Gambacci checked all the cards but they were blank - had Lovar kept or copied the critical one? The sudden 'reversal' in Hunter's story made Gambacci even more suspicious. Was Hunter's mention of 'accounts' the first subtle hint of the blackmail to come?

Section [14.] - BREAKING POINT

(Day 6)

Gambacci nerves were at breaking point. Two days had passed without Lovar mentioning the datcard. When Gambacci repeated his questioning, the clerk seemed calm and held to his story that he had intended to use the datcards for his personal accounts. In desperation Gambacci contacted S.I.D. (via a dead-letter drop), detailing his suspicions of Hunter, and a request that S.I.D. help in revealing the truth.

Section [15.] - THE SECRET AGENT

Unknown to Gambacci, a set of coincidences - this S.I.D. contact, his requests about file transfers to Hunter's computer and previous evidence about leaks of secret government papers - had attracted the attentions of a roving undercover Kadushi Counter Espionage (K.C.E.) agent - codename Jallion. Jallion was investigating connections between Shardi activities and leaked government trade secrets when Gambacci drew his attention. Having drawn a blank on his other leads, Jallion decided he might as well spend a few hours looking more closely at Gambacci's office in particular.

Jallion may be encountered by the players at any point in the scenario, either by chance or (if he knows the players are involved) in a deliberate attempt to befriend them.

His cover identity for this mission is freelance news reporter Jack Ryan. He has all the equipment (cameras, sound gear, etc.) and high quality false paperwork which will stand up to examination by the local police. He will tell the players a big scoop will net him a lot of cash provided it's exclusive. He will also hint that he has lots of useful contacts. If the players don't take to him, he will continue to pop up at intervals, possibly even following them around.

Ryan is not critical to the plot but can be used to guide and aid the players. If they do well anyway, Ryan will spend his time away, investigating other matters. He will want to be kept informed of their progress, promising at least CR10,000 to each player for the exclusive story if and when it 'breaks'.

Jack Ryan/Jallion

(Male Secret Service, age 33)

Str:A Dex:8 End:8 Int:9 Edu:A Soc:5 Chr:A Carousing-2, Communications-1, Computer-1, Demolitions-1, Disguise-1, Forgery-1, Grav Vehicle-1, Handguns-3, Medical-2, Streetwise-3, Wheeled Vehicle-0

"Jack Ryan" is wiry and strong with hardened features which attract members of the opposite sex. He can charm most people with his bright smile and is always free with his money, especially if he might get a story out of it.

Jallion uses his looks and humour to make contacts. He will protect innocent bystanders where possible (e.g. the players) but is a ruthless agent with the security of Kadushi (and the president) his prime concern. As Jack Ryan, he may appear a little cowardly due to his self-preservation instincts, but in reality he knows no fear!

Section [16.] - THREATS

(Day 8)

Hunter arrived late for work, with a bruised face and black eye. He told his colleagues he had been waylaid the previous evening by a couple of thugs who demanded some piece of important information from him but he couldn't work out what they wanted so they beat him up and warned they would visit his wife next.

Gambacci, realising S.I.D. had made its first move, waited for Lovar to crack but the clerk seemed merely confused. Seeing the opportunity to increase the pressure on him, Gambacci told Hunter the datcard he wanted returned actually contained a file with top secret data. He suggested the men who waylaid Hunter were government agents... or even a foreign power! Lovar looked suitably worried and said he was thankful he had given back the datcards without copying any of them... or at least he doesn't think his son did.

This worried Gambacci further. Was Lovar hinting he really had copied the data? What did the son know about this? Bewildered, Gambacci left another message for S.I.D.

Section [17.] - AN ACCIDENT?

(Day 9)

Velda Hunter encountered a S.I.D.-hired knife-wielding thug in a side street in Karashun city. As the man tried to give her the threat message, she screamed and attracted the attention of several passers-by. The thug panicked, stabbed her and ran off. A witness called the medics but Velda was dead on arrival at the hospital.

Lovar was dumb struck at the news and returned home immediately. While pouring out his woes to his son, he mentioned the incidents involving the datcard. Distraught but logical, Kohl concluded that it was a conspiracy and told his father to go to the police.

Lovar was too shocked at Velda's death to react sensibly; when the police arrived to question him about his wife's death he told them nothing about the datcard.

(This incident brought the Hunters to the attention of Jallion - he had already noted Lovar as a possible suspect for the stolen government secrets).

Section [18.] - FUNERAL

(Day 10)

The cremation and burial of Velda Hunter took place at the Corinthian cemetery on the outskirts of Karashun city. Gambacci attended but Lovar was too distraught even to notice his presence among the many other office colleagues who were there - in particular his close colleague Harold Robbins, who helped arrange the funeral and stayed much of the evening to console father and son.

Section [19.] - SUICIDE

(Day 11)

Next morning, Harold Robbins mentioned, within Gambacci's ear-shot, how cut-up Lovar was about his wife's death. He mentioned that Lovar had got quite drunk last night and begun babbling about a conspiracy and the police. Gambacci realised Hunter was becoming a serious danger and might talk to the police. Desperate, he did not wait for a dead-letter drop but called an emergency S.I.D. contact number to explain the situation.

Mere hours later the news channels are showing footage of a splattered body lying in Highstar shopping mall: *"Lovar Hunter, a clerk in the Bureau of Economic Affairs, dived from the balcony four floors above only half an hour ago. It is thought that the sudden death of his wife several days ago de-stabilised Mr. Hunter's mind. Mrs. Hunter was stabbed to death by a mugger..."*

In truth, Lovar was shopping - waiting for his son to come out of a food store. From the shop doorway Kohl saw two burly men 'nudge' his father over the balcony. He rushed to the edge to see his father dead below. The murderers had already disappeared. On the verge of breaking down, but knowing himself the last link in the chain, Kohl managed to stagger back to his father's car and drive home.

Amidst many tears Kohl decided someone very nasty would kill to get hold of the

datcard his father had brought back from the office. Kohl plugged the card into his hand computer and quickly located the mystery file (see Section [33.]). He knew it might be the only bargaining point to prevent him becoming the next victim.

Barely able to think, he drove to the Corinthian cemetery - to his mother's grave where he buried the datcard under the new turf. In sudden concern that someone might still look here, he clumsily swapped the metal name plaque with that of the adjacent grave which was also recent.

Returning home, Kohl found strange men in the house - a group of 'removal' men (S.I.D. agents ransacking the house to find the datcard). One agent prevented him from reaching the car but Kohl's youthful athleticism allowed him to out-run the men. The S.I.D. agents could not use overt violence in this quiet suburban area and so gave chase in a van and car...

Section [20.] - THE ENCOUNTER

(Day 11)

As darkness fell, Kohl wandered the streets, distraught and confused. In the brighter streets near the city centre he realised a car was tracking him. Scared, he ran down an alley - sure enough the car screeched to a halt and someone began running after him. Clearly his location and clothing was known to his pursuers. In desperation he dived into the nearest building...

At this point, Kohl meets the players. The following night-time venues are suggested: a restaurant, bar or shop. Kohl will rush in, appear confused, then:

Restaurant: steal a jacket or coat (preferably a player's) from the coat racks near the door.

Bar: make for one of the players and try to scare them into giving him a coat, jacket, etc. to disguise himself. He may pretend he has a knife or gun in his pocket.

Shop (clothing): grab the nearest articles of clothing and start putting them on in the shop!

Shop (other): As per the bar encounter.

Kohl Hunter

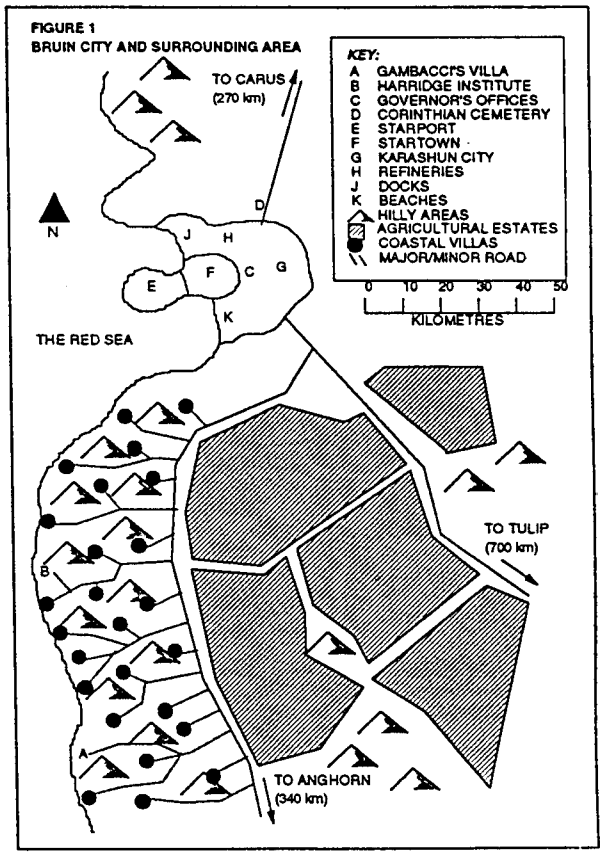
(University Physics Student, age 21)

Str:7 Dex:6 End:9 Int:6 Edu:A Soc:8 Chr:6 Carousing-1, Communications-1, Computer-1, Physics-1, Wheeled Vehicle-0

Kohl looks like a bleary-eyed, crazed youth, panting and sweating, potentially violent and possibly on drugs.

Whether he manages to gain a disguise, Kohl will try to get out the back entrance.

Whichever the situation, if the party do not subdue Kohl then an angry shop-keeper, club bouncer or bystander will do so. Two uniformed police officers will appear within seconds and congratulate whoever detained this dangerous escapee. Kohl will struggle madly but before he can say anything coherent a medic will appear and give him an injection, to knock him out.



Anyone enquiring will be told by the officers that Kohl escaped from an asylum transport a few streets away. There is no need for anyone to report the incident but if anyone presses further (e.g. compensation for damaged clothing or injury) then they will be told to make a statement at the local police station the next morning and they will be reimbursed. If pressed further, or obviously followed down the street, the officers will become aggressive and tell the party to back off. Cautious reconnaissance will reveal the officers and medic carry the drugged youth into an unmarked car parked around the street corner.

The car can be followed but if not done cautiously is guaranteed to be noticed - the car will then try to loose the pursuers in the back streets. Under no circumstances should the players catch or stop the car although tailing it should just be possible (make the players roll suitable tasks). After a short while driving around to lose any tails the 'officers' drive south, out of the city,

eventually turning off onto a small private road leading into the coastal hills. Kohl has been taken by S.I.D. agents to the Harridge Institute (*point B in Figure 1*; see Section [40.]).

Section [21.] - SO WHAT WAS ALL THAT ABOUT?

Even if the players didn't follow Kohl to the Harridge Institute, they should be inquisitive. If they enquire at the local police station, the officers will have no knowledge of the incident and dismiss it as a prank. It should become clear that Kohl was not a grab-and-run thief but a scared youth, running from some threat and trying to obtain new clothing as a disguise.

The many possible avenues of investigation need not be followed that night but should be spread over several days. If the car was not followed, the players will still find a link to the Harridge Institute by enquiring about the asylum van and medic.

Enquiring about the medic or asylum:

Hospitals Routine, Local knowledge Formidable, City library Difficult, 1 hour

There are no asylums in Karashun. The Four Winds Hospital handles a few such patients but was not transporting any on the given night. There are 2 private hospitals on the south coast road: the Alexandria (200km away) which does not have a psychiatric ward, and the Harridge Institute (70km south) which is an exclusive private clinic catering to the stresses and depressions of the rich and famous.

Enquiring about the coast area:

Local knowledge Routine, City library Routine, 30 minutes

The hilly coastal region south of Karashun has 100 or so private villas and ranches. Inhabitants include 5 film stars, 2 bank chairpersons, 5 company directors, a mad entrepreneur and 10+ high ranking government officials. The area is generally off limits to the public. Estate boundaries are often only vaguely marked but trespassers have been known to be arrested or even shot at by private security personnel.

Enquiring about the mystery youth:

Local Knowledge Formidable, City library Difficult, Police Difficult, 2 hours

Someone on the street may recall seeing Kohl Hunter's face on a news broadcast in the last day or so. "Something to do with a suicide" is all they will recall. The news archives (city library) contain a short bulletin mentioning Lovar Hunter's suicide (see Section [19.]) followed by a police message mentioning their desire to question his son Kohl - seen running from the scene of his father's 'suicide'. A picture of Kohl Hunter is flashed up and is easily identified as the youth encountered by the party. Local police can give the same information and picture. On exceptional success, it is mentioned that the 'suicide' was suspicious - perhaps a bystander saw the men push Lovar - although the police are not taking this too seriously.

Section [22.] - GETTING THE LOW-DOWN

Once the party have identified Kohl and found a link to the Harridge Institute, some further searching can be performed.

Enquiring about the Hunters:

Local knowledge (neighbours of the Hunters) Routine, City library Difficult, Police Difficult, Economic Bureau Formidable, 2 hours

Further details of Lovar Hunter's death may be given. His wife's recent and tragic death will be mentioned (see Section [17.]) including minor details of her funeral (seeSection [18.]). The Economic Bureau will be unreceptive, assuming the players to be reporters. If claiming to be close friends or relations the players can speak to Harold Robbins, who has taken over Lovar's work responsibilities and, if persuaded, will tell of Lovar's strange preoccupation prior to his wife's death and his son's disappearance. Harold knew Kohl quite well and describes him as a good lad - doing well at Tulip University.

Enquiring about the Harridge Institute:

Local Knowledge Formidable, City library Difficult, 1 hour

There are several news stories mentioning the Harridge Institute including its opening ceremony 10 years ago and the attendance of celebrities and government officials over the years (although it becomes clear that the majority of clients do not advertise their attendance). A recent article shows Paul Gambacci visiting the Institute to award Dr. Rimmer with a prize for innovative neural research. An advertising brochure can be obtained by applying to the Institute or by theft from the Karashun homes of staff. The brochures show internal details of the patient areas on levels 1 and 2 of the Institute (see Section [40.]), emphasising the plush decor and excellent service.

Enquiring about Paul Gambacci:

Local Knowledge Difficult, City library Difficult, Economic Bureau Difficult, 1 hour

No useful information is available except that he is a well-respected politician who rose quickly through the ranks because of his management skills. His background and links to Hanover during the previous presidency are shrouded in vagaries (as is much data prior to Hanover's coup d'etat). There will be mention of his coastal villa 120km south of Karashun (*point A on Figure 1*; seeSection [41.]).

Section [23.] - A CLOSER LOOK AT THE INSTITUTE

The Institute has perimeter ground sensors (2km out) and radar (see Section [40.]) to detect ground or aerial intruders some distance from the main compound. However, *Recon* or *Fwd Obsvr* skill will indicate a hill 1 km NE of the Institute which, although inside the ground sensor ring can be approached below the level of the radar. With suitable skills and equipment the players can reach this vantage point, e.g. using grav belts with *Electronics* or *Sensor* skills to fool the ground sensors.

Alternatively the Institute may be surveyed from the sea. A separate radar system sweeps the sea but has a blind spot extending out from the base of the cliffs for 100m. The steep cliffs have no beach so approach by foot along the coast is very difficult. However, a sea or grav craft staying close to the cliffs would be unobserved until within visual range of the Institute.

Pleasure craft can be hired at the docks on the SW side of Karashun from CR 25 (dinghy) to CR 1,000 (motor cruiser) per 12 hours. A deposit of 5x the hire charge must be paid and valid identity papers are required for insurance purposes.

The most notable visible feature of the Institute is its central transparent dome.

Enquiring about the dome:

Harridge Institute Difficult, 10 minutes; Local building design firms (skills: A,C,L,Mechanical,So) Difficult, 2 hours

The Institute, if asked politely, will refer the enquirer to Johnson Building Group (JGB) who constructed the building. The dome uses a special polymer manufactured by the Gashiedar Corp. JBG will not supply plans of the Institute (general policy for their customers' security) but some or all of the plans - excluding the secret level - could be obtained by hacking into their computer. Such plans show no furniture nor description of their function.

If approached in a suitable manner (e.g. by a 'rich' client interested in having a similar dome built), JBG will arrange a short visit to the Institute to see the dome at first hand. It is the only example of its kind within 500 km of Karashun.

The Institute may be broken into (see Section [40.]) to release Kohl - see Section [24.].

Section [24.] - RESCUING KOHL

If rescued, Kohl will be tranquillised but can be brought around using a stimulant. He will be suspicious but if convinced this is not a S.I.D. trick then he will tell the players everything he knows - Sections [11.] to [13.] and [16.] to [20.] plus his interrogation in the secret level of the Institute which he can describe although he does not know where he was (see Section [40.]).

Section [25.] - SURVEILLANCE

Surveillance of the Institute will reveal its daytime routine but not its covert night operation:

- **1-5am** S.I.D. 'guests' may be 'attended' by Rimmer and Meadows in the secure section.
- **7am** The chef (Alenzo Carrotti) arrives from Karashun on his motorbike and begins breakfast.
- **8am** Non-residential staff arrive from Karashun in 2 cars: Pietro Rosens gives a lift to Richard Evans; Sally Varny, Maria Gerund and Jane Amilio share a taxi.
- **8-9am** Breakfast is served to the guests.
- **AM** Morning therapy sessions.

- **1-2pm** Lunch PM Afternoon therapy sessions. 6pm Non-residential staff return to Karashun (same travel arrangements).
- **6-8pm** Evening meal
- **9pm** Chef returns to Karashun.
- **8-11pm** Evening entertainment in lounge.

The internal staff (Rimmer, Meadows, etc.) sleep until 8.30am and take a day-time nap if they have had a particularly long night-time session with a S.I.D. 'guest', leaving the non-residential staff to deal with the guests.

1-3 notable events happen each day (roll 2d6):

2: Rimmer takes out Churan Asagi in the Institute cruiser to enjoy the sun (and each other!) along the coast, returning in 1-6 hours.

3: As 2 but Richard Evans takes out 1-3 guests to enjoy the sun.

4: A new guest arrives at the clinic (e.g. playboy, film-star, politician, business person).

5: A staff member drives into Karashun (e.g. to pick up medical supplies, hand-deliver a message or pick up a scan or test processed by the city hospital). Return in 3-4 hours.

6: 1-3 clinic guests sun-bath or eat a sumptuous picnic in the Institute grounds*.

7: 1-3 clinic guests take a walk around the grounds*.

8: 1-3 visitors arrive to see a guest.

9: A supply truck arrives (food, medical supplies, laundry, etc.), drives to the rear entrance, unloads/loads then drives off. The drivers are usually known to the clinic staff.

10: The gardener and assistant leave/arrive (no more than twice a week but they are fairly erratic in their work patterns).

11: A guest leaves to return home.

12: A repair van arrives to deal with a minor malfunction (air-conditioning, comms link, radar system, jammed door, etc.) that could not be fixed by Dr. Rosens.

*50% chance of 1-2 staff accompanying the guests.

Section [26.] - THE HUNTER HOUSEHOLD

A search at the Hunter house will reveal nothing since all the belongings have been boxed and shipped to a storage yard (the Bruin Box Storage Co.) on the outskirts of Karashun.

Enquiring about the Hunters' possessions:

Economic Bureau Difficult, Storage yard Routine, Neighbours Routine, 1 hour

The only point of interest is that the possessions cannot be removed from the warehouse without the signature of Paul Gambacci.

The Economic Bureau will claim Gambacci kindly stepped in to help the family. If contacted, Harold Robbins will mention this surprised him since it isn't normal practice. The warehouse site has extensive security alarms and guards, locating the possessions will be difficult without using the site database, and a search of the possessions will reveal nothing useful (although it may be apparent that someone (S.I.D.) searched everything before it was brought here.

Section [27.] - TULIP UNIVERSITY

The journey to Tulip takes about 8 hours by plane, train or automobile. There is nothing critical to be gained here, but players may interview Kohl's teachers, learn more about Prof. Walsh and Dr. Rimmer (see Section [40.]), or even break into Kohl's university residence. Kohl was clearly an excellent (and stable) student and his room has no clues since he took his computer to Karashun and the datcards he left here have been taken by S.I.D. (since this is the holidays, it was not difficult to break in - but a cleaner will remember a strange man near Kohl's room).

Alternatively, the players could encounter S.I.D. agents as they search Kohl's room (the agents will flee). Jallion may also be introduced to the players at this point.

Section [28.] - CORINTHIAN CEMETERY

The cemetery has an 8' perimeter fence and is usually deserted at night except for a night-watchman. Velda Hunter's grave plaque is easily identified but closer observation will reveal scratches around its fastenings (where Kohl swapped it with the adjacent grave). Once the correct grav is identified, the datcard can be easily found beneath the fresh turfs. There can be no confusion with the husband's grave since Lovar Hunter's funeral has been delayed pending police investigation of his death.

Section [29.] - CONTACT!

If the players attempt to contact Gambacci, he will be unavailable for comment. Pretending to be a relative of the Hunters (or some other subterfuge) might eventually get a direct line to him but the call will be traced (Gambacci is a careful person). Gambacci might be 'intercepted' on his way in or out of the Economic Bureau but his bodyguard might react badly to anyone rushing up to him!

If the players have few clues Gambacci will sound interested and tell them to contact him if they get more evidence - he has a friend in the law office to whom he can pass the data. If he realises they know quite a bit, he will sound concerned and offer to meet them. He will ask for a contact number (so he can determine where they are staying) and will contact S.I.D. immediately. Within a few hours, he will call the players and arrange to meet them at a given time (within the next 2-3 hours) at the Hunter house.

Section [30.] - THE HEAT IS ON...

If the players approach the Hunter house a typical security 'large man in suit' will admit them at the door. Claiming to be State Security (he has appropriate ID) he will search and disarm them - standard practice when visiting a senior diplomat. Once disarmed, or if they refuse to disarm, the players are surrounded by heavily armed agents (hidden in the house since Gambacci's call). Naturally, these are S.I.D., not State Security, but for the moment they

will claim to be the latter. Having tied up the players they will accuse them of being the spy-masters for the traitor Hunter. Physical resistance will be met with force - the S.I.D. agents will kill if necessary, but would prefer not to mark their prisoners, nor to start a noisy gun battle, so they will use their daggers in the first instance.

The S.I.D. agents will interrogate the players to find if they know where the datcard (or copies) are hidden. Meanwhile one agent will be preparing a booby-trap, e.g. turning on the household gas supply, or spraying inflammable liquid (e.g. petrol) around. Whatever the players' answers, the S.I.D. agents will soon leave, chucking a flaming rag behind them. For petrol, the blaze will start immediately but will take time to engulf the house, giving the players time to escape or be rescued by colleagues outside. For gas, there will be an equivalent delay before the vapours encounter the flame... WHOOMPH! Use whichever method gives you most gratification.

Naturally, the players must be given an opportunity to escape by cutting their bonds on a sharp bit of metal, hidden knife, broken glass, etc. They should not be able to stop the fire but the house should not explode until a few seconds after they've escaped.

When and if contacted, Gambacci will say he was detained in an unexpected meeting with Hanover (true except Gambacci deliberately initiated the meeting as a cover story). If possible he will try to set up another opportunity for S.I.D. to assassinate the players (e.g. during Section [31.] the S.I.D. agents could plant a bomb or lie in wait for the players).

Section [31.] - SEARCHED!

If the players gave their residential number to Gambacci in Section [29.], the S.I.D. agents will spend the next half hour searching their belongings and taking any computer equipment, datcards, documents, investigation notes, evidence, etc. If the party left Kohl's datcard here without hiding a copy elsewhere then they had better return in time to stop the agents!

Section [32.] - EQUIPMENT, DISGUISES, ETC.

If the players cannot easily obtain weapons or armour or wish to buy bugging equipment or vice skills, these can be found in the back-streets of Karashun.

To locate a source of illegal equipment:

Difficult, Streetwise, Bribery, 2 hours.

Once found, the NPC will be cautious and suspicious. Prepayment is required and prices are high. Implications of government involvement will raise prices further!

An example: the 'Old Ways' book shop.

Those in the know ask the store-keeper for books on antique weaponry (using the book type, size, cost, etc. as a coded method for indicating the desired weapons, ammunition type and amounts). A huge sum is paid and the keeper tells them when and where the 'books' will be delivered. Weapons will still be limited and rare items may take a few days to arrange.

Role-play this encounter carefully: the players should leave the shop with no idea whether they have bought guns, or if they will receive antique books! As long as they do nothing to worry the 'suppliers', a package containing their order will appear at the given time and place.

Jack Ryan can help - he will say in his business he needs 'underworld' contacts.

Section [33.] - THE DATCARD

Kohl Hunter's datcard has 150 files on it. A careful analysis reveals almost all are games except for a few text files, of which all but one are lecture notes. This odd-one-out contains the following:

■ 8723-128974-AUG	50,000	6523-87SHC73-YTAG-02
■ 3784-128376-BYG	150,000	7623-76GHDRT-LKWD
■ 7452-987464-TTR	100,000	6523-87SHC73-YTAG-02
■ 8367-837742-BUY	75,000	6524-988UUUI-P896-732
■ etc.	etc.	etc.

The left side contains 50 company account numbers. The centre column is the transfer value in credits. The right side has the personal accounts receiving the money.

To identify the codes as bank accounts:

Difficult, Intelligence, Broker, Legal, Admin or Computer.

The total value of the transactions is CR5,000,000. There are only 3 receiving accounts: **6523-87SHC73-YTAG-02**, **7623-76GHDRT-LKWD** and **6524-988UUUI-P896-732** (see Section [8.]).

Enquiring about the company accounts:

Banks Formidable, 2 hours

Banks are unwilling to reveal information but may let slip that most of the accounts are with on-world banks. By clever subterfuge, the players should be able to get the company name of one of the accounts.

Enquiring about a company

(once its name is known):

Holding company (as Bank) Formidable, 2 hours; City library Difficult, 1 hour

Any investigation will quickly reveal they are just holding companies, each with a tiny office or postal address, unmanned and with a comms-answering unit. It should be clear these are merely a money laundering operation although this would be difficult to prove in court.

Continued investigation of the accounts or companies will arouse suspicion (the answering units record the caller's comm code and are regularly checked by S.I.D.). The players may receive a call from a 'company official' to check what their interest is. A meeting may be arranged using the claim of ''useful classified information'' as bait for a S.I.D. ambush.

Enquiring about a receiving account:

Banks Difficult, 1 hour

The banks are slightly more open and will say these are off-world accounts - thus beyond the banks' jurisdiction. If persuaded they will say which worlds the accounts are on and the banks (National Instar Bank, Romul Traders Society, Credit and Commerce Interstellar). Travelling to these planets to investigate further will mean the rest of the adventure is over before they return!

Section [34.] - TIME TO GO

At some point Gambacci or S.I.D. will realise the players are getting too close - it's time to get out! If Kohl has not already been rescued from the Institute, he will now be transported to Gambacci's villa. The players can determine this as follows:

- (1) At the Institute the cruiser is prepared for a journey late in the evening (unusual).
- (2) If a bug was planted in the Institute it will hear a late-night conversation between Rimmer and Meadows about a 'troublesome patient' (they never use "patient" to describe a paying client). Meadows says at least they're getting rid of the fool that evening - no more of his whining under the effects of the drugs.
- (3) The cruiser will leave (with Kohl on board) at 11pm (see Section [35.]).

If Kohl has been rescued by breaking into the Institute, (1) will occur, in (2) the discussion will be of the doctors' escape from the 'compromised' Institute. Rimmer is reluctant since the Institute is a valuable investment. In (3) the cruiser will be carrying Rimmer, Meadows, Asagi and Elarn rather than Kohl.

Section [35.] - THE BOAT TRIP

The cruiser will travel from the Institute to Gambacci's villa under cover of darkness, starting at 11pm - unlit and guided by the high tech navigation system. Whatever its other passengers, the cruiser will have 2 S.I.D. agents (Brach and Lyre from the Institute if they are alive) in full combat kit. They will use heavy automatic fire against any attempt to stop the boat - their orders are to get to Gambacci's villa at all costs - no surrender! If cornered with Kohl, they will kill him then fight to the death. If Rimmer et al. are aboard they will all fight as none of them wants to face treason charges. If Kohl is rescued seeSection [24.].

Section [36.] - RUNNING SCARED

If the players have missed the clues in Section [34.] they may still notice:

- (1) Gambacci leaving work very late (10pm). He (plus bodyguard) will drive straight to his villa. If the players can initiate a search of the offices (tell security a bomb is in Gambacci's office, persuade Harold Robbins to check, etc.) a short search will reveal that a large section of computer archives have been wiped (Gambacci's transfers and other personal data).
- (2) At his villa, there has been a fair amount of activity all day as his guards pack.

Section [37.] - THE PICK-UP

Gambacci will arrive at 11pm. The villa will go quiet and the guards will be alert and vigilant. The cruiser will arrive at 11.30pm and if Rimmer et al are onboard they will join Gambacci for a last swig of expensive liquor in the villa lounge. It is clear that the group is waiting for something...

If the villa is attacked during this time Gambacci et al will attempt to hold the villa at all costs, using delaying tactics (possibly pretending to surrender). The S.I.D. agents are fanatics (as is Gambacci's bodyguard) - willing to martyr themselves for the Shardi cause. One might 'surrender' with grenades hidden on him - as he approaches the attackers... BOOM!

Gambacci is waiting for an S.I.D. scout ship (standard design) which will land at 1am to pick up any survivors and carry them off to collect Gambacci's money from his off-world bank accounts.

It should be noted that at this point Gambacci carries nothing incriminating (having destroyed it all) except for the false identities required to access his 3 accounts. If all is lost he will try to destroy even these -he would still be convicted (Hanover doesn't take chances with traitors) but getting these IDs before he can destroy them would be an extra feather in the players' cap.

The ship will attempt to land even in a gunfight, unless it is in serious danger of being damaged. If any trouble is apparent, 2 heavily armed S.I.D. agents will sprint out to provide covering fire while Gambacci et al embark. If all is quiet they will be cautious but carry only holstered side-arms. The scout will not take off without its passengers unless it is clear they are dead or the 'law' is on its way, in which case as it takes off the scout will use its turret laser to 'erase' the opposition (and hopefully the evidence!)

Unless Jack Ryan has somehow been kept in the dark (an unlikely event), he will be with the players or will turn up as things start going badly for them. At the latest he will appear just after the scout lands.

At an appropriate point the area will be deluged with grav vehicles (with flashing blue lights) and battledress troopers with big guns. Ryan (as Jallion) has called in the local SWAT teams! To maintain his cover, the SWAT men do not know his real identity and will arrest him with the players until the police have worked out what's going on.

At the referee's discretion the scout can take off (if the players have managed to board it, there will be 3 S.I.D. agents onboard -pilot, co-pilot and weapons man). However, Ryan has also called in a Systems Defence Boat to stop the scout before it can jump.

SCOUT/COURIER CREW

Pilot Philip Archer

(ex-Scout, age 30)

Str:8 Dex:7 End:8 Int:6 Edu:8 Soc:4 Chr:6 Combat Rifleman-2, Leader-2, Mechanical-1, Medical-2, Pilot-2, Vacc Suit-1, Wheeled Vehicle-0

Agent Harriet Metalle

(ex-Scout, age 26)

Str:7 Dex:9 End:8 Int:7 Edu:8 Soc:6 Chr:7 Navigation-1, Pilot-1, Shotgun-2, Small Blade-1, Tactics-1, Wheeled Vehicle-1

Agent Hans Leiherman

(ex-Army, age 23)

Str:6 Dex:C End:B Int:8 Edu:7 Soc:7 Chr:9 Brawling-1, Bribery-1, Combat rifleman-1, Computer-0, Electronics-2, SMG-1, Tactics-1, Wheeled Vehicle-0

Armour and weapons should be determined to give the players a good fight!

SWAT SQUADS

Str:10 Dex:10 End:10 Int:8 Edu:6 Soc:6 Chr:6 Combat rifleman-2, Handguns-2, Tactics-1

Heavily armed and armoured. 6 squads of 10 men ought to be able to stomp the bad guys out of existence.

Section [38.] - RED HERRING

The Amluamii trade meeting (mentioned in Section [9.]) is a major event in the near future which might be linked to the Hunter deaths as a red herring for the players. The trade delegation will arrive in 4 weeks time at Karashun and there are some rumours that the Shardi are trying to bring political pressure to bear on Amluamii to reduce the prices of its processed foodstuffs. This is irrelevant to the adventure but Gambacci's leaking of trade secrets could be used as a link to a further adventure involving the trade delegation.

Section [39.] - MEDALS

When Hanover discovers Gambacci's treachery he will reward the players appropriately - with medals and publicity. Ryan will sign them up for an exclusive story at Cr25,000 each - a means for Hanover to ensure the 'correct' story gets reported without bribing them directly. Ryan will deny any connection with the government or police but may hint that the arrival of the marines at the villa was due to asking a big favour of his 'underworld' contacts.

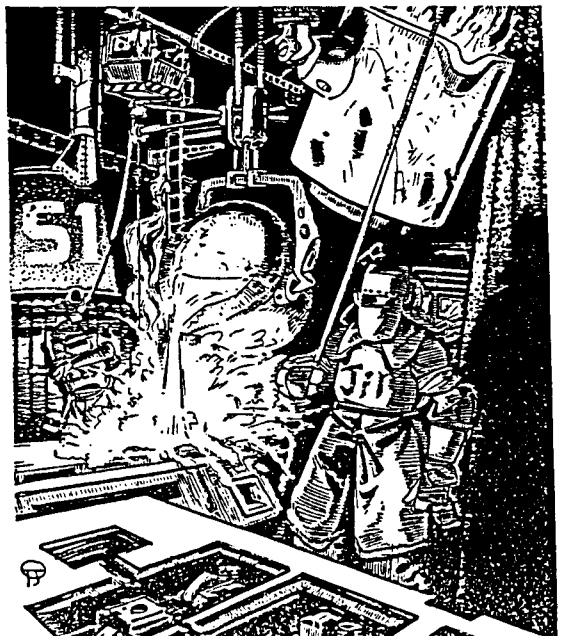
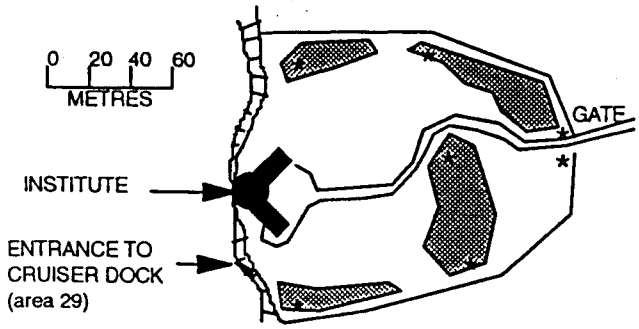
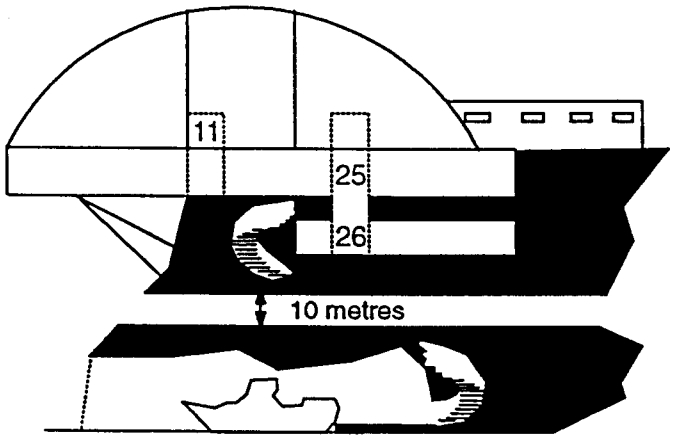


FIGURE 2
THE HARRIDGE INSTITUTE



(a) Grounds



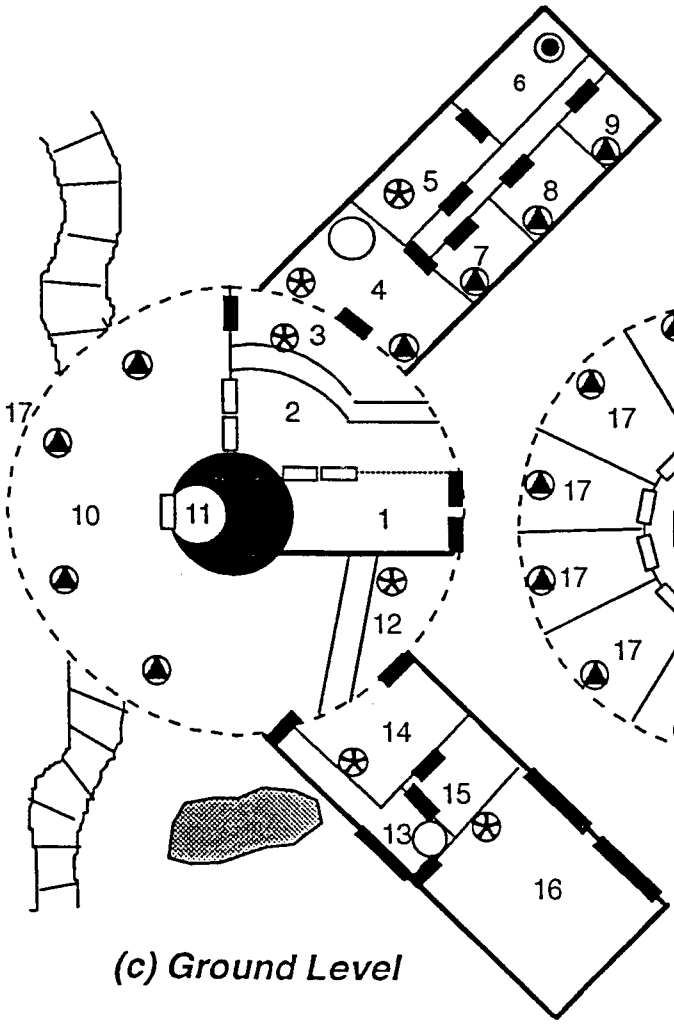
(b) Side cross-section

KEY:

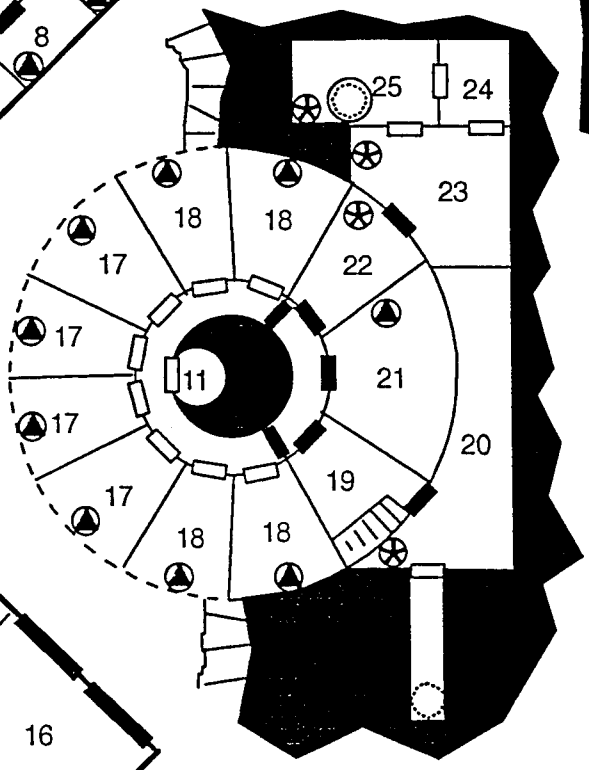
- * Security Camera
- Cliffs (15-20 m high)
- Trees and shrubs
- Entertainment Terminal
- Institute Computer
- Restricted Computer
- Lift, down only
- Lift, up only
- Lift, up or down
- Door, locked (staff only)
- Door, unlocked
- Dome 'window'

N

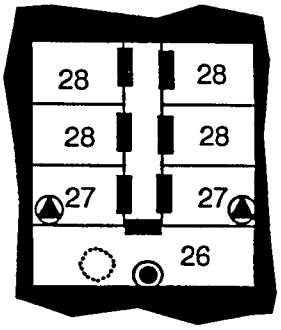
0 3 6 9 12
METRES



(c) Ground Level



(d) Sub Level



(e) Secret Level

Section [40.] - THE HARRIDGE INSTITUTE

To the outside world, the Institute is a small, privately-run clinic for treating stress and depression for rich people. It is run by Dr. Arnold Rimmer, an athletic 41-year old mentored by Arthur Walsh, brilliant ex-Head (deceased) of Psychology at Tulip University. Rimmer is genuinely brilliant (with a long list of qualifications) his treatments are very good (although expensive) while the Institute provides a secure and luxurious residence for its V.I.P. guests (the word 'patient' is never used). Treatments range from herbal therapies to high-tech medications. Rimmer started the Institute 10 years ago with a large endowment (rumoured to be from Walsh) although the clinic is profitable in its own right. Rimmer is a recluse who lives at the Institute with several full-time staff.

Dr. Rimmer, assistant Dr. Anne Meadows, and nurses Vorg Elarn and Churan Asagi have rooms in the clinic. The 'guests' get their attention during the day but at night (when the other staff have returned to Karashun) this select team deal with their S.I.D. 'patients', including plastic surgery to give agents new identities, medical care for wounded agents and an interrogation suite. Two S.I.D. agents reside in the secret level (currently Plinny Brach and Varc Lyre) only coming out at night.

The other staff have no idea of what goes on while they are absent from the Institute.

A map of the Institute is given in Figure 2 with a brief description below (see Section [25.] for daily activities).

PERIMETER

The Institute has a ring of ground sensors about 2km out. These will detect anyone moving on the ground or hovering below 10 metres. The sensors could be detected by trained personnel with a suitable electronic equipment. Higher flying objects of bird size or greater are detected by the Institute's radar system (range 30km) except where hidden by hills. A separate radar system watches the sea for shipping.

GROUNDS

The finely cultivated grounds are surrounded by 2 fences separated by a 10' gap. The outer fence is 15' high razor wire (to keep out intruders), the inner a 10' ornately-patterned wire fence (to prevent guests injuring themselves). The area between the fences has ground sensors as per PERIMETER above.

The approach road enters the compound through a heavy gate (difficult to ram open) topped with razor wire and with cameras on 30' posts either side. If guests are expected, a nurse will be here to greet them.

Cameras are discretely positioned around the grounds (marked on the map with asterisks) watched from the Institute security rooms (4, 26). All cameras have both visual and thermal-imaging capability.

The grounds are tended by an elderly gardener and young helper who visit discreetly twice a week. They are well known to staff and never enter the Institute itself, although Alenzo the chef gives them left-overs at the service entrance (13).

THE BUILDINGS

Doors:

Normal doors are activated by proximity detectors in the floor. Locked doors have palm-print locks which respond only to staff. Doors on the secret level are all palm-locks responding only to Rimmer, Meadows, Asagi, Elarn and the 2 S.I.D. agents. Any door in the building can be locked using a keycard (carried by Rimmer and Meadows) which can also over-ride even a locked door provided Rimmer or Meadows applies their palm to the palm-lock. The status of all doors is constantly monitored by the secret computer network. Unusual activity will be noted by the guards in 26.

Entertainment Consoles:

Provide access to videos, games, news, etc. Referred to within the Institute as EntCents.

Computer Terminals:

There are three computer networks. The first connects all non-secret computers (3-5, 12, 14, 16, 20-25) and handles administration and medical records. Network 2 controls the EntCents (7-10, 17, 18). The main computers for both these networks are in 4. The third network contains S.I.D. medical details (including interrogations) of current and past patients, administration and all Institute security functions, with terminals in 6 and the main computer in 26. The 3 networks are totally separate. S.I.D. medical data required temporarily in the operating theatre (23) is transferred by datcard from the computer in 26. All terminals except EntCents have password-controlled access. The secret network data can be wiped instantly by entering a complicated password known only to Rimmer.

Panic Buttons:

All computer terminals have a panic button which sounds an alarm in every room. The alarm location will be displayed on all terminals except EntCents. Normal staff will evacuate guests from the building while Rimmer and the S.I.D. staff deal with the problem. If the secret level has to be evacuated, Elarn and Asagi will help Lyre and Brach to smuggle any S.I.D. patients down to the cruiser dock (via 26, 25, 23, 22 and 19).

Sensors:

The entire building has fire detectors in every room with an automatic foam 'sprinkler' system, flooding a room in 10 seconds, smothering any fire while retaining sufficient trapped oxygen for any caught in it to breath for up to 1 minute.

Cameras:

All cameras (internal and external) are watched from the security room (26).

GROUND FLOOR

The ground level has the huge dome as its centrepiece. It is transparent from inside, allowing sunlight in while appearing opaque to the outside for privacy. It is bullet-proof and can be opaqued in sectors to shade areas or cut out the outside world if the weather is unpleasant.

All windows are made of the same material as the dome, are totally sealed (the Institute is fully air-conditioned) and have alarms on them to detect intrusion.

1. Hallway.

Transparent wall allows reception (2) to see visitors. A camera is hidden high in the central pillar.

2. Reception area.

Visitors wait in the plush seating bay by the entrance. A counter separates this from 3.

3. Reception desk.

Jane Amilio works here during the day (at her computer handling staff salaries, accounts, etc.).

4. Staff living area/rest room.

1-3 off-duty doctors/nurses will be here during the day. In the evening, this is a lounge for the live-in staff. There is a terminal in one corner and an EntCent in the other. A wall unit dispenses drinks. The lift buttons are for ground and sub level 1. Access to the secret level is by a palm-lock concealed above the controls.

5. Dr. Rimmer's Study.

Huge antique desk with terminal. Much paperwork including a current medical paper being written by Rimmer. Nothing incriminating here. Rimmer works here during the day when not dealing with guests. The walls have bookshelves of medical texts and plaques awarded to Rimmer. A small wall safe contains spare cash (CR35,000) and letters from satisfied patients (some in a very 'friendly' manner; Rimmer believes in the 'personal' touch).

6. Dr. Rimmer's Bedroom.

Large double bed, wardrobes with fine clothing, dressing table, etc. At night, if not doing S.I.D. work, Rimmer will be found here, often with Asagi. If not asleep, he uses the computer terminal which appears and acts as an EntCent until a special sequence of keystrokes brings up a prompt for a password which then gives access to the secret computer network.

7. Staff Bedroom.

Fairly plush. Single bed, wardrobe, dressing table, table and chairs. Dr. Meadow's room.

8. Staff Bedroom.

As (7). Churan Asagi.

9. Staff Bedroom.

As (7). Vorg Elarn.

10. Lounge.

Seating areas arranged in groups with sound-proofing chest-height divisions covered in plants. EntCents are spread around with sun-beds and exercise equipment to one side. During the day 1-6 guests relax here with 1-6 visitors. In early morning and evening some staff use the exercise equipment. At night this area is unused.

11. Guest lift

To guest rooms on sub level.

12. Bar.

Serves food and drinks. The chef is either serving here or working in the kitchen (he will appear if the bell on the counter is rung).

13. Service Entrance.

Large double doors allow access to delivery vans (concealed from the lounge by bushes). Goods go into the food store (15) or down to the store (19).

14. Kitchen.

Extensively equipped with labour-saving devices allowing chef Alenzo to cook for the entire Institute.

15. Food store.

Extensive stocks, high class cuisine.

16. Garage.

Large up-and-over doors (electrically

operated). Small refuelling pump. During the day there are 2-3 staff cars here with Rimmer's expensive grav speeder. Rosens may be here, tinkering with a vehicle.

SUB LEVEL

The dome extends down to provide windows for the guest rooms. Each room can dim/opaque its window. There are 3-8 guests in residence, from playboys to diplomats. The doors dividing these rooms from staff areas are locked except when guests are using the auditorium (21).

17. Executive Guest rooms.

Fabulously plush. Double bed, usual furniture. En-suite bathroom. Small wall safe for guest's valuables.

18. Guest rooms.

As per (17) but with little or no exterior view.

19. Store.

General stores (spares, tools, laundry). Winding stairwell down to the cruiser dock.

20. Engineering.

Some spillage from store room. Power, water, air and waste systems with pipes, cylinders, control panels and a back-up generator. The only clear path is from the lift to the store door with narrow pathways to the rest of the room. Disruption of any systems will not affect the S.I.D. level which has its own power supply.

21. Auditorium.

Can project holovideos or be used for live entertainment or medical briefings.

22. Operation prep' room.

Ranging from a tranquilliser or hypnosis to full anaesthetic. 5% chance at any time (day or night) of 1-2 nurses preparing a patient here.

23. Operating theatre.

Flexible design allows this to be used for minor consultations up to full operation (medical equipment stores behind wall panels when not in use). 5% chance (day or night) that the room is in use (from 1 doctor and guest up to 1-2 doctors with 1-2 nurses for an operation). Night operations will be healing injured S.I.D. agents or interrogating Kohl Hunter!

24. Medical store.

Complete stock of operation and neurological drugs as well as herbal preparations.

25. Staff prep' room.

Basins, showers, clean uniforms, theatre clothing. For lift, see (4).

SECRET LEVEL

Kohl Hunter will be kept in (28). Other patient rooms may contain injured S.I.D. agents (perhaps ones who encountered the players) or prisoners (perhaps leads into other adventures). One S.I.D. agent is always on guard in (26) unless both guards are required elsewhere (e.g. to subdue a patient).

26. Guard room.

A large computer console with screens showing camera views of the grounds and interior, door and alarm status displays. Interrogation equipment is kept in cabinets. One end has a lounge area (with EntCent) where S.I.D. staff can rest while watching the screens. An extensive automated food/drink dispenser is restocked once per week when Asagi makes a personal shopping trip to Karashun. Brach and Lyre are always armed. A wall cabinet contains the full armoury: 10 each of: CE suit, auto-pistol +2 clips, auto-shotgun +2 clips, sufficient demolition charges to enable Lyre to set up a self-destruct system for the Institute.

27. Agent rooms.

Pleasant fittings, single bed, EntCent. 25% chance of a guard being asleep in one room at any time. 28. Patient rooms. Pleasant fittings, stretcher-bed (with restraining straps) on wheels. All other furniture is wall-mounted cabinets which can be locked if the 'patient' is a prisoner. Wall connections for portable medical equipment.

THE STAFF

Dr. Arnold Rimmer

(Male Doctor, age 41)

Str:7 Dex:9 End:8 Int:9 Edu:A Soc:A Chr:9 Admin-1, Biology-2, Bribery-2, Computer-1, Genetics-2, Grav Vehicle-0, Handguns-2, Interrogation-2, Medical-5, Small Water craft-1

Attractive and athletic (S.I.D.-supplied anagathics keep his apparent age at 34 - he claims his youthfulness is due to his herbal remedies). Enamoured of Asagi.

Dr. Anne Meadows

(Female Doctor, age 35)

Str:9 Dex:8 End:7 Int:C Edu:B Soc:4 Chr:8 Computer-0, Electronics-1, Handguns-1, Interrogation-2, Intrusion-1, Medical-4, Physics-1, Streetwise-1, Wheeled Vehicle-0

Intelligent but from a poor background, she hates the wealthy clients - a major factor in persuading her to work for S.I.D. She runs the clinic when Rimmer is away.

Dr. Pietro Rosens

(Male Doctor, age 34)

Str:9 Dex:9 End:7 Int:5 Edu:D Soc:7 Chr: 8 Admin-1, Brawling-2, Communications-1, Electronics-1, Genetics-1, Mechanical-1, Linguistics-1, Medical-3, Wheeled Vehicle-0

Rosens is least senior but feels it is a great honour to work for Rimmer. He enjoys tinkering with devices and fixes minor faults on most of the clinic's systems.

Nurse Churan Asagi

(Female Doctor, age 31)

Str:A Dex:7 End:8 Int:5 Edu:5 Soc:7 Chr:B Computer-1, Grav Vehicle-1, Intrusion-1, Medical-2, Unarmed Combat-3

Highly attractive - Rimmer's lover. A S.I.D. agent sent to the Institute 2 years ago to keep a check on Rimmer. No one (including Rimmer) knows how deadly she is at unarmed combat.

Nurse Vorg Elarn

(Male Nurse, age 26)

Str:9 Dex:6 End:9 Int:7 Edu:9 Soc:6 Chr:7 Computer-1, Forgery-1, Medical-3, Small Water craft-1

A very highly trained Nurse who would rather have his own practice except that he is paid a huge salary to deal with S.I.D. patients.

Nurse Richard Evans

(Male Nurse, age 23, 1 term)

Str:8 Dex:5 End:6 Int:8 Edu:5 Soc:6 Chr:5 Brawling-1, Medical-2, Wheeled Vehicle-0, Small Water craft-1

Nurse Sally Varny

(Female Nurse, age 22, 1 term)

Str:7 Dex:9 End:3 Int:A Edu:9 Soc:5 Chr:7 Biology-1, Medical-1, Wheeled Vehicle-0

Nurse Maria Gerund

(Female Nurse, age 26)

Str:8 Dex:5 End:6 Int:8 Edu:5 Soc:6 Chr:5 Computer-1, Medical-2, Wheeled Vehicle-0

Secretary Jane Amilio

(Female, age 22)

Str:5 Dex:9 End:6 Int:7 Edu:9 Soc:8 Chr:B Admin-2, Computer-1

Competent but hired mainly for her attractive appearance.

Chef Alenzo Carrotti

(Male, age 54)

Admin-1, Cooking-4, Wheeled Vehicle-0

S.I.D. Agent Plinny "Fingers" Brach

(Rogue, age 26)

Str:8 Dex:8 End:D Int:6 Edu:7 Soc:8 Chr:4 Intrusion-1, JOT-1, Small Blade-1, Streetwise-2, SMG-2, Wheeled Vehicle-0

Recruited by S.I.D. after being badly injured in a failed bank robbery, hence his facial and bodily scarring.

S.I.D. Agent Varc Lyre

(Army, age 30)

Str:C Dex:6 End:B Int:9 Edu:B Soc:9 Chr:5 Combat Rifleman-1, Computer-0, Demolitions-1, Handguns-2, Heavy Weapons-1, Mechanic-1, Small Blade-1, Small Water craft-1, SMG-1, Tactics-1, Wheeled Vehicle-1

Ex-captain, turned mercenary. He works for the money but secretly thinks the Shardi are nuts. He repairs the 'sensitive' systems which Rosens doesn't know about.

Section [41.] - GAMBACCI'S VILLA

A map of the villa and surrounding grounds is shown in Figure 3. A description follows:

GROUNDS

Gambacci owns the land for 2-3km in all directions. The perimeter security fence is 15' high razor-wire with ground sensors 5' outside it (as per the Institute - see Section [40.]), extending onto the beach and a short distance into the water. The grounds are mostly surrounded by trees, with hidden cameras linked to the security room (2). A line of sonar sensors strung between the ends of the fences (underwater) act like the ground sensors. They often give false alarms in bad weather. The villa is on a slight rise with steps down to a patio and swimming pool to seaward. The boathouse has a small cruiser which Gambacci uses for entertaining friends and business associates.

During the day a maintenance droid tends the grounds and another sweeps the villa. The droids are simple and cheap - 2 small arms on a 30cm diameter sphere with camera 'eyes' on top and caterpillar tracks. Of an evening, Gambacci may entertain a woman friend, and/or 1 or more business or social guests - possibly even a large house party!

THE VILLA

The villa is plush but casual (to make guests feel at home). Doors and windows are constructed, secured and alarmed as per the Institute (see Section [40.]): locked doors can be opened by Gambacci, his bodyguard or house-keeper; alarms and cameras are linked to (2).

1. Entrance hall.

2. Security room.

Screens show camera views and alarm status. Wall cabinet: 2 Gauss pistols, 2 SMGs, 3 clips ammo each. A radio link to a remote carried by the house-keeper alerts him (giving exact details of the alarm) if he is not on station here. He will always check an alarm but will not hesitate to call the police (and Gambacci): a police grav car with 4 armed officers will arrive within 15 minutes.

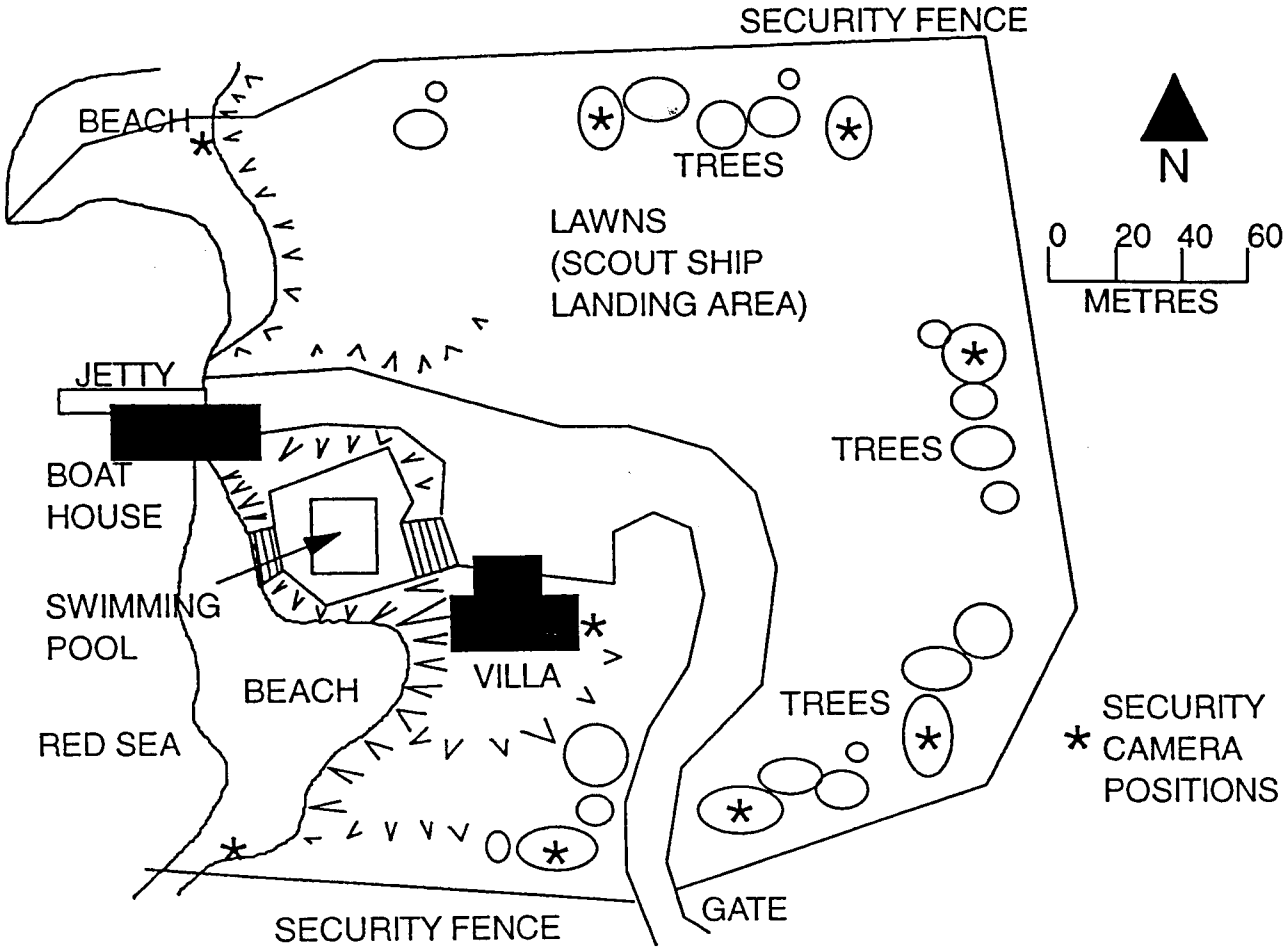
3. Droid room.

Storage/recharging.

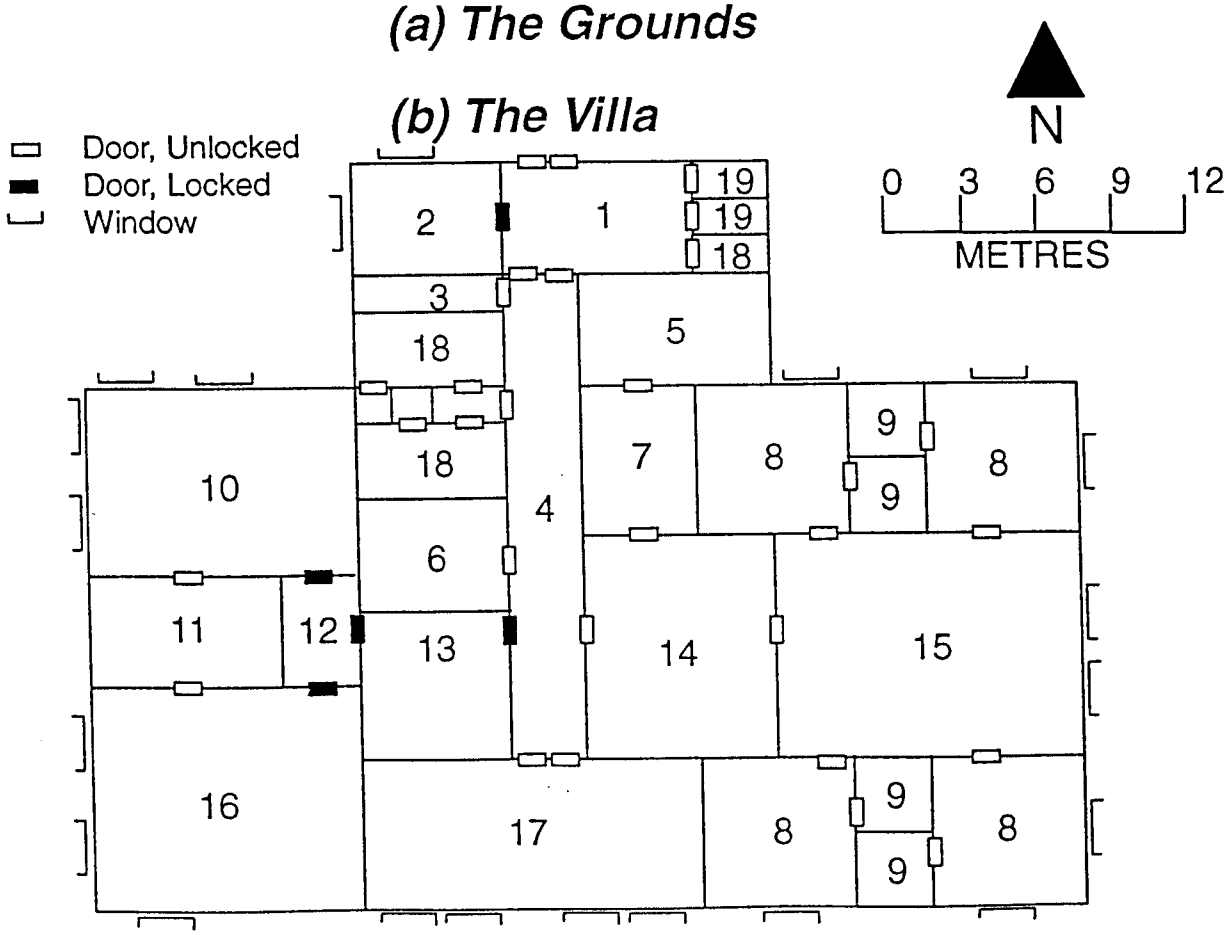
4. Hallway.

Wall holograms: Gambacci's graduation, diplomatic appointments, with famous people, etc.

FIGURE 3
GAMBACCI'S VILLA AND GROUNDS



(a) The Grounds



(b) The Villa

5. Food store.

Restocked once a week by a supply company (vetted by the Economic Bureau).

6. Games room.

Large multi-purpose games table, reconfigurable at the touch of a button. Animal head trophies from hunting trips.

7. Kitchen.

House-keeper prepares Gambacci's breakfast and evening meal here.

8. Guest rooms.

Very plush with entertainment suite.

9. En-suite bathrooms

For guest rooms.

10. Gambacci's study.

Some papers strewn about (nothing important), wall holograms of past achievements.

11. Bathroom.

Luxurious.

12. Ante-room.

13. Meeting room.

Large polished table with 10 chairs. Wall portraits of past Imperial emperors.

14. Dining Room.

Large polished table (expands to seat 4-20). Expensive wall paintings.

15. Visitors' Lounge.

Extensive entertainment suite. Usually exclusive to guests but can be opened to all for a large party.

16. Gambacci's bedroom.

Huge double bed, silk sheets. Expensive wood furniture, topped with objet d'art and mementoes of previous assignments. Personal diary - mainly social meetings (of all kinds!) - compromising but not incriminating! Mirrored ceiling (ooh, er!). Floor safe (well concealed) containing personal documents and CR25,000 in cash.

17. Private lounge.

As 15. Used by Gambacci when on his own.

18. Staff rooms.

Similar to guest rooms with en-suite facilities.

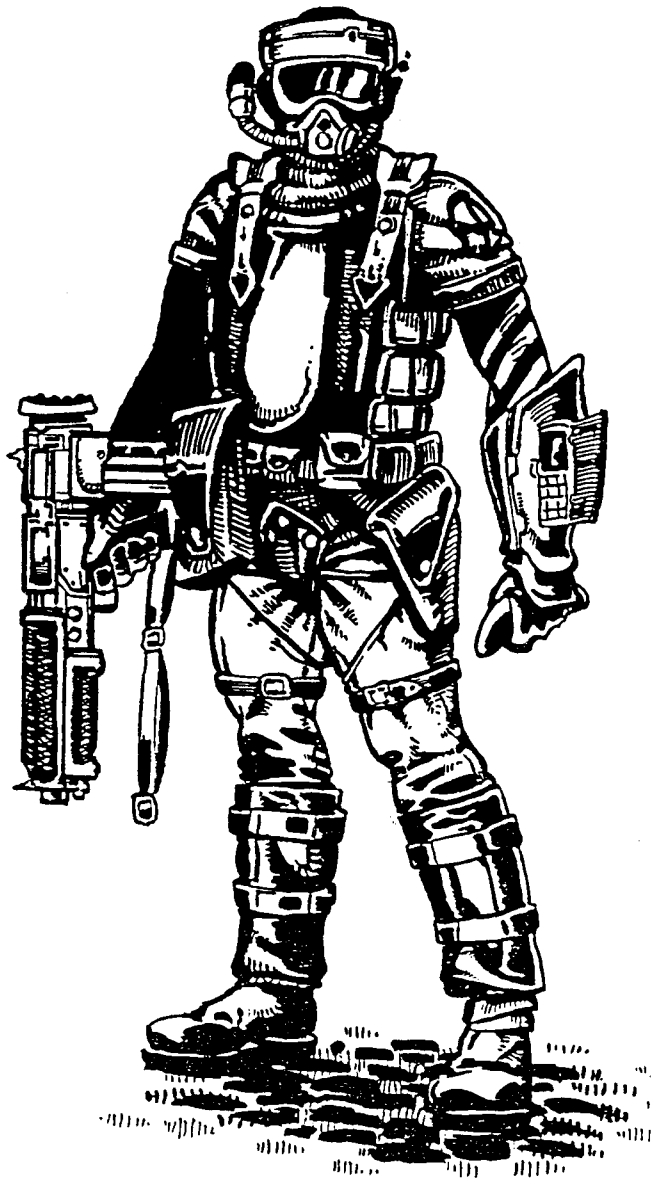
There is nothing here to incriminate Gambacci for his espionage or the Hunter affair - he knows it is the first place the authorities would search.

Andrew Simmons

(House-Keeper, ex-Army, age 40)

Str:8 Dex:7 End:7 Int:9 Edu:8 Soc:9 Chr:8 Admin-2, Combat rifleman-1, Computer-1, Cooking-2, Electronics-1, Grav vehicle-2, Handguns-2, Mechanical-2, Unarmed combat-1, Wheeled vehicle-1

House-keeper, home security and butler. He will defend the house but is not as dedicated as the bodyguard Stielberg, preferring to rely on police aid.



Corporate Brief: DagMet

Introduction - a brief history

Dagudashaag Metals and Mining Company, to give DagMet its full name, was formed out of the merger in 322 between the Sylean Entek Spinward Industrial Ventures and the Terran Independent Miners Co-operative. Both these original companies had histories of nearly a thousand years between them. Both grew out of the resurgence of trade and industry that followed in the close wake of the build up to and inception of the Third Imperium.

The Independent Miners Co-operative was initially financed through a prospectors' collective who pooled their resources. These funds helped to improve exploration and the surveying of new mineral sources in the coreward regions of Diaspora sector. The Entek Spinward Industrial Ventures owed their origin to grants and franchises offered by the emerging Sylean Federation in the expansion out of Core sector. Shortly after the founding of the Third Imperium, the two companies were beginning to compete in the same areas. Entek and the Independent Miners had moved most of their business to the core sectors of Dagudashaag and Gushemege. As the new Imperium moved on and expanded, both companies suffered commercially at the hands of the re-emerging Vilani megacorporations, Sternmetal and Delgado Trading. There was competition from other, 'indigenous' mining concerns such as Camrii-La Paz Pan-American Industrial Consortium (who have been based on Bolivar for nearly two thousand years). A chance meeting on a cruise liner, in 317, between the CEOs of the two companies (Petr Radalescu and Sadek Hinuur'Arl) set the course for the merger. Five years later their plans for a larger industrial combine bore fruit with the formation of DagMet.

Reorganisation, consolidation and new investment through new share issues led to a solid, but unspectacular recovery. Virtually all their business was now centred in Dagudashaag, as is the majority still. After the first twenty years, DagMet was quickly able to pick up a larger share of the mining sector of the regional economy. Cut price deals with the Imperial Navy on lanthanum contracts was a turning point for the company's fortunes and led to further lucrative contracts.

By 420 DagMet had become the single largest mining concern in the sector, with a greater turnover in this area than Sternmetal. It was during this period of growth, predominately at Sternmetal's expense, that a long-running feud between the two companies began.

DagMet then went through a period of stagnation with little investment and close horizons. To further the company and add new vitality, the DagMet board took on a new CEO in Jan Hassler-Finch. Hassler-Finch had done superb work in rebuilding the Pukh Chemical Company (which later formed the heart of Zadush-DagChem LIC - ZDC). His acquisition by DagMet led to further tensions with ZDC, a habit of antagonising other corporations that DagMet maintains to this day. Hassler-Finch led the buyout of a number of other small- and medium-sized companies to further expand DagMet's portfolio.

Main Products and Business

DagMet's primary business is still associated directly with the mining and ore processing industry, with sixty-five per cent of the company's investment and revenue coming from this area. Other related industries include chemical extraction and processing, fabrication and manufacture of mining equipment - these make up twenty per cent. The remaining portions of DagMet's holdings are a mixed bag and represent the probable future for the company. Businesses wholly owned by DagMet include: *Zithorl Holdings* (starport administration and maintenance), *Banskan Agricultural Investments* (agricultural production and processing), *Future Promises Enterprises* (cold berth and medical facilities) and *Freight Systems* of Ushra (bulk cargo transport). Mining companies owned by DagMet, but operate under their own names are *Astex LIC* (of Sapphyre) and *Inir-Hantekh* (of Khandi). DagMet also has partial ownership of a number of other companies. It owns eight per cent of *Camrii-La Paz Pan-American Consortium*, five per cent of *Arkayne LIC* and three per cent of *Communet*. These latter holdings are not public knowledge, held by a number of dummy companies.

The design and production of mining gear are important areas for DagMet, with a great deal of resources put into the continued development of industrial machinery for the company's own use and for general sale. Many of DagMet's offices have showrooms displaying their wares.

Intent and Aims

The Acquisitions Department of DagMet, fondly known as the 'AyDee Sharks', is continually on the lookout for new opportunities. DagMet avowed aim is to become the largest company in Dagudashaag.

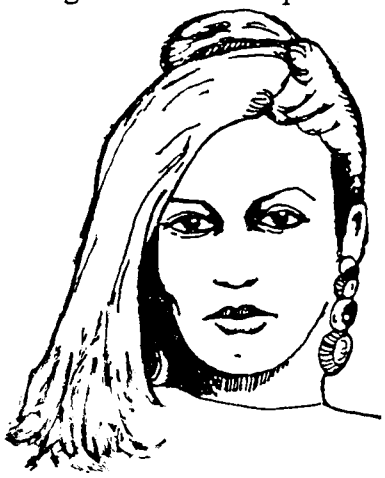
Market Strategy

In tune with its aims, DagMet is not afraid to use all its resources to this end. Hostile take-overs tend to be its favourite method of eliminating a troublesome opponent. It has on occasion extended the bounds of legality. DagMet has a large cadre of industrial and commercial analysts who have the task of monitoring competitors and take-over targets. It also has a large number of security operatives who have been used, or so it is claimed, to plan and implement strikes against competitors. There is a strong implication that DagMet destroyed the GenMett facility on Drogheda (2304 Arnakhish) There is no evidence as yet that conclusively ties the company to the incident, but with that worlds internal strife it is equally likely that the facility was levelled by the local resistance forces.

Key People

The current CEO is Augustus Johannssen, a pure solomani hailing from the Scandinavian region of Terra. A graduate in Business Administration from Malmo University, he took his doctorate at the London School of Economics before taking up a lectureship at Harvard University. Specialising in the Management and Economies of Manufacturing Industries, Johannssen quickly became a highly respected figure in the business community, and landed paid consultancy work for a small number of Terra-based conglomerates and the Central European Stock market in Bonn, Germany.

In 1103 he was 'head-hunted' by DagMet after presenting a paper on 'Tactics for Commercial Diversification' at the Medurman Business Conference the previous year while on a sabbatical. Johannssen has been the primary force behind DagMet's recent expansion.



Delinna Tuukhraan is currently the second-in-command at DagMet, being the company's president. She was brought into DagMet by Johannssen shortly after his appointment in early 1104. Tuukhraan has a track record as equally as impressive as Johannssen's but growing up in an around Vland sector she has a more orthodox vilani business background. DagMet's vice-president is Cleon Irukka-Watts, a native of Deneb/Deneb with a racially-mixed heritage.

- The Board Of Directors

There is a board of directors comprising of the CEO, the President, vice-president and twelve other members (each of which are heads of the various sections of DagMet). Amongst them are two aslan females, *Yehstahaiu* & *Esouearsatre*, heads of the Finance and Administration divisions respectively. Both have demonstrated to Johannssen a remarkable business acumen and are amongst his prized business assets. The are completely loyal to Johannssen, but free-spirited and honourable and thus he has complete trust and respect in them (much to the disgust of some other members of the board). Yehstahaiu and Esouearsatre will always give Johannssen an honest answer, they can in no way be described as 'yes-people'.

Key Facilities

Aiaiyal (1821 Pact) is the registered site of DagMet's headquarters and holds the core administrative and research facilities for the company. The DagMet site is located fifty kilometres from the capital Viis'tas, in the satellite town of Hariin. There are actually two DagMet locations in the area, the office complex in the town itself and the research/testing station on the outskirts.

The town centre site is an forty storey corporate block in the business district. It is almost a self-contained town complete with offices, conference rooms, research labs, testing areas, apartments, shops, a couple of bars, recreational areas, a cinema, a small but high-tech infirmary, vehicle parks and an air-raft landing pad. There is also an underground firing range. Some eight thousand humans and aslan work here with a small number of the more senior executives living in the corporate residences within the block. This corporate complex houses the bulk of DagMet's administrative and business activities: strategic planning, corporate finances, personnel dealings, etc.

Security is provided by the company's own guards. There are sixty discretely-armed personnel on duty during 'office hours' throughout the building, with an equal number available off-duty and on-site available in emergencies (each shift runs eight standard hours with thirty security operatives patrolling during the evening and night/early-morning shifts). Additional forces, up to 200, can be called from the Juno testing ground if something serious crops up at the HQ, which will take ten minutes by air-raft.

The research and testing station at Juno on the edge of Hariin is a eighty-square kilometre area used for development and evaluation of new DagMet equipment, products and mining/manufacturing processes. It also serves as a training ground for DagMet security operatives.

The camp is surrounded by a razor wire topped, chain-link fence. It is constantly patrolled day and night by two teams of three guards who move in opposite directions in small electric ATVs. There is a single entrance/exit with a security station on the inside armed by four guards. All guards are on a four-hour rotating shift. In all there are two hundred security men and women at the site. In addition to the guards there are various motion sensors and surveillance cameras along the fence perimeter, and a satellite in geosynchronous orbit providing overhead surveillance. There is a lot of valuable equipment, much of it experimental and expensive, on the site as well as millions of credits worth of information. Both the hardware and the data is subject to possible corporate theft and espionage.

Within the confines of the camp there can be found two large hangers, a barracks for the security operatives, a small apartment block, an administration building, a recreational complex, a medical centre and various research labs. A small runway and air-raft landing pads complete the layout of the central section. There are a number of 'test' mines and quarries within the perimeter that are the test sites for much of the mining equipment. There is also a small refinery and chemical processing plant on the northern edge of the camp, next to a river that passes through the site. A security training ground is located in the south-west corner. Vehicle 'evaluation routes' can be found criss-crossing the whole station.

Regional sites tend to be less grand affairs, found on all worlds with class A and B starports, those with high populations and those that have DagMet (or a subsidiary) operating within the system. Those systems that have more than one of the above criteria generally have larger offices, but do not approach the Aiaiyal set-up in scale. The bigger offices tend to have small apartment sections, discount corporate shops and medical centres. All have a detachment of on-site security, and all but the smallest offices will use DagMet's own forces. Most regional offices have showrooms displaying the range of services and wares, again the bigger the site the larger in general the display. There will be at least one sales representative and one public relations officer at each branch.

Resources/Stock

DagMet is nominally a publicly owned company quoted on the Medurman Stock Exchange. As of 1114 they were recorded to have a gross value of 16 trillion credits (MCr. 16,000,000), although many analysts believe their total assets approach five times this figure. The company's value comes in the form of equipment, expertise, land, buildings, credits, contracts, cash and mineral reserves, holdings in other companies, and a whole host of other areas. DagMet's reserves are known to be significant but exactly how much is held has never been revealed. The reserves include large quantities of precious minerals and

metals including lanthanum, other rare-earths, platinum, gold and zuchai crystals. Hard cash in all the major currencies is rumoured to be held. DagMet also has a sizeable investment in manufactured goods, of their own and others make. The inventory includes 'essential' supplies and equipment.

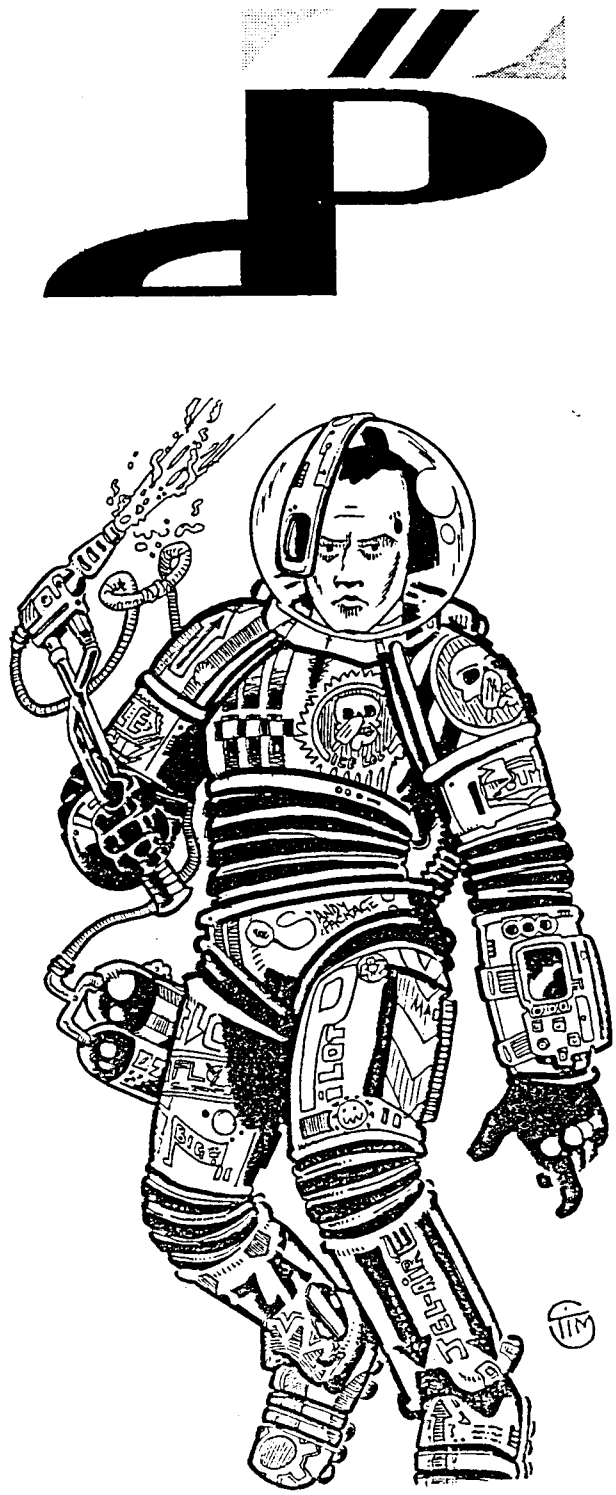
Augustus Johannssen has recently become the largest single individual owner of shares amounting to 2.4 per cent, with other board members owning a total of 4.9 per cent between them.

Shares amongst company employees accounts for another 4.3 per cent - small numbers of shares are given to employees as bonuses or rewards if they are not already included as part of their pay scheme - a good way to keep the shares within the corporate fold.

The remaining stocks and shares are spread amongst a host of banks, businesses and individuals - many of which DagMet has a controlling interest. The Imperial and sector Ducal households also own small parts of DagMet, 1.2% and 0.8% respectively. Continual wining and dining by senior executives of DagMet of the minor members and officials of these households keeps them sweet when it comes to shareholder meetings and voting.

There have been two official investigations into DagMet's dealings on the stock market and share issues, by the sector Commercial Affairs Bureau. One was the acquisition of Taschmer-Lenx Vidaak, a small engineering firm on Diishalum (0715 Shallows), in 879, and the second that the company artificially inflated its share prices during rumours of a Sternmetal buyout. Both investigations came to naught. There has been further scandal since when the renowned INDISS investigative journalist Siobhan Eckhardt was reported missing while looking into DagMet. Eckhardt had been gathering evidence that DagMet had been illegally buying the voting rights from shareholders to maintain the management's control over the companies plans and aspirations, some of which were very controversial. A partially complete holo-vid documentary was broadcast on a number of the major channels following her disappearance. The broadcasters were clear in their affirmation that there was no evidence in implicating DagMet in any wrongdoing for fear of legal action, but most who watched the transmissions could read between the lines. All official investigations have drawn a blank.

Her whereabouts has not been established despite numerous and persistent rumours that DagMet were involved in her disappearance. It was not the first time that Eckhardt had been investigating DagMet. DagMet have declined, on many occasions, to comment.



GATECRASHING:

Industrial Espionage

A rival of DagMet (Referee can decide which) needs someone to retrieve some vital information on a new DagMet mining process that offers a 5% productivity bonus. The information is held at one of DagMet's larger regional offices (exact location left up to Referee). The patron is offering Cr.100,000 on receipt of the correct material.

The PCs can either -

- 1) Get into the DagMet office and steal a hard or electronic copy of the information.
- 2) Hack into the DagMet computer system and pull out an the correct file.

The first option is probably the most difficult. During the day, there will be six armed DagMet guards on duty: two on the ground floor front reception desk, two in the first floor security office and two on patrol within and without the building. At night there are four guards, all inside: one on the front desk, one in the office and two on independent patrol in the building. Details of a typical DagMet guard can be found in the following box.

All doors and windows are alarmed - there is the main street entrance, and a back vehicle entrance into the building. Locks are electro-mechanical. The main doorway has a weapon detection system built-in which is linked to the building-wide alarm circuit. The office will have its own emergency generator which will kick in after five seconds. There are security cameras looking out over the front and rear entrances, the roof and at regular intervals around the edge of the building. The outside facing cameras are monitored from the reception security desk, the inside cameras from the security office.

Once in the building the PCs will need to avoid internal cameras and guard patrols. There will be a camera every 15 to 20 metres within the corridors, and a patrol in the vicinity of the PCs every 15 minutes.

The information the PCs seek will be found in the Systems Research Office and the branch Director's office - this can be found out through either bribery. blackmail, threat, charm, or trial and error.

In the research office the information is in the form of a sketchy and incomplete journal. The contents are hard to follow but a mining engineer could easily fill the gaps. The details in the Director's office are found on a computer. Both rooms are locked and alarmed as the main building entrances although the guard in the security office will have a master pass keycard to all rooms.

Instead of breaking in the PCs can try to enter the building through arrangement of an appointment, persuasion or bribery. Good reasons and large amounts of cash are required. Once in this way it is going to take some good rolls to slip off the back of the group unnoticed by staff, patrols and cameras, etc. Visitors or stolen passes may help here. It is very likely that the two rooms in which the information lies will be occupied. The Referee can wing it from here.

Example Tasks: All these following tasks assume the PCs have the appropriate equipment and taken appropriate related action, e.g. computers, electronic and mechanical kits, etc. If the PCs do not have the right gear then the referee should feel free to increase the difficulty level of the tasks.

- To approach either of the main entrances head-on without being caught on camera,

Formidable: Stealth.

- To approach from the sides where camera cover is less complete.

Difficult: Stealth.

- To notice a camera,

Average: Observation.

- To avoid a camera or patrol,

Average: Observation.

(If a camera isn't spotted then the chance to avoid being seen is Formidable).

- To locate the door/window lock alarm systems,

Difficult: Intrusion.

- To disable the alarm system on the door/ window/etc.,

Difficult: Electronics.

- To open a locked door/window,

Average: Intrusion or Difficult: Mechanical.

Failure to disable the alarms will activate them across the whole building if the disabling task fails catastrophically, or there is not outstanding success on the opening task when the alarm has not been disabled.

- To open the safe in the research office,

Average: Intrusion or Difficult: Mechanical.

- To locate and retrieve the computer files,

Difficult: Computer Ops (roll twice).

Failure on either will activate an alarm in the Branch Director's home. The referee can decide if he/she is at home and able to respond.

- To arrange an appointment (within 1d6 days),

Average: Liaison. - To persuade reception to let you in, Difficult: Persuasion. - To bribe you way in (multiple tasks may be needed), Formidable: Bribery.

To achieve the mission by taking the second of the two main options is physically easier and safer but tough in its own way.

There are computer terminals in the rooms of most decent hotels, on certain streets and within the local library which are linked to a global information system.

Standard charge is Cr.2 per minute. An *Average: Computer Ops* roll will lead the attempting PC to a DagMet electronic brochure. To get beyond this will require the PC's own machine (the public access terminals are fairly 'dumb' workstations). Once set up, to get into the DagMet computer system will take appropriate software and success on a *Difficult: Computer Ops* roll. Navigating the DagMet network will require some sort of stealth program to avoid triggering anti-intrusion systems.

- To locate the right area of the network,

Difficult : Computer Ops, one minute per attempt.

For each minute in the system a further Difficult: Computer Ops roll must be made to avoid being detected. If a stealth program isn't running then the avoidance task becomes Formidable.

When the correct location is found, a *Formidable: Computer Ops* roll is needed to gain access to the right file. The tasks takes one minute, any number of tries are allowed until the file is found or the alarm systems are activated. Once the file has been located a further *Difficult: Computer Ops* roll is necessary to exit without being 'noticed'. This will take two minutes.

If any alarms are activated a homing program will be initiated to try to track the intruding program and identify the source. Tracking tasks, as the avoidance tasks above, should be rolled by the referee for every minute or part that the PC remains in the system. The task asset for the DagMet computer/tracking program is 14. The task level can be changed depending upon the actions of the PC in his or her attempts to cover their tracks. Once the DagMet system has located the point of entry, a security team of six men will be activated and sent after the PCs.

If the PC attempting to get into the DagMet computers has psionic or empathic computer abilities and makes a Difficult roll, then further tasks should be lowered where appropriate. Conversely if a roll fails catastrophically then the referee should feel free to raise the difficulty levels of subsequent tasks. If the PC has obviously superior equipment at his or her disposal then this should also make the subsequent tasks easier. Again the opposite situation holds.

BAD PUBLICITY

The PCs are hired by DagMet to clear its name in the light of the continuing allegations following the disappearance of the INDISS journalist Siobhan Eckhardt. This scenario can take place on any world with a DagMet presence. There are many blanks in this scenario that the Referee will have to fit in.

Introduction While searching the local job ads or asking around for work, the PCs will be directed towards an advert requesting any person wishing to undertake some investigative work to contact a vid-phone number. On phoning the number the PCs will be invited to meet (later that day or the next whichever is appropriate) at a local DagMet office. There they will be interviewed by a senior Publicity Manager. He/she will ask the PCs if they are interested in the job offer (noted at the top).

DagMet want a group to investigate Eckhardt's disappearance and show that DagMet has had no involvement. On acceptance of the job the PCs will be instructed to start at Eckhardt's last known location (*Tiffany* 1913 D458520-A S Ag Ni), and given a list of her last movements and names of her known contacts and friends.

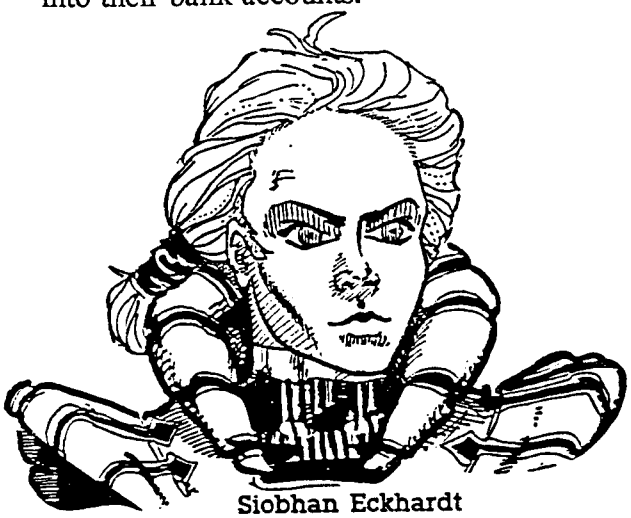
The publicist will be quite frank, Eckhardt was creating a lot of trouble for DagMet and her vanishing act was not unwelcome. But the continued rumour and innuendo has begun to cause the company a lot of damage both in its image and financially. The publicist will state categorically that DagMet has had no involvement in Eckhardt's disappearance.

He/she thinks that it is just a stunt by Eckhardt designed to damage DagMet. He/she will go on to state that Eckhardt is probably hiding somewhere, laughing.

The PCs will be paid as DagMet employees for a maximum of six months at Cr. 2,500 per month. A bonus of up to Cr. 50,000 in total will be offered if there is an 'acceptable' outcome. They will be paid a month in advance.

If the PCs have access to a starship DagMet will pay all reasonable, documented travelling expenses. Alternatively they will be offered a six-month travel-voucher (mid-passage) for use on one of their subsidiary companies (*Hallam Travel*).

The PCs will be required to file reports at the end of each month detailing their progress at a DagMet office at which point they will receive their wages - they will be given a smart-card which will have details of their contract that can only be read by senior DagMet employees who have access to a DagMet computer and the proper authorisation codes. When the office is satisfied with the report the PCs will be given their payment, cash or credit transfer into their bank accounts.



Siobhan Eckhardt

Eckhardt had been working for INDISS for eight years. She was a good reporter and steadily rose through the organisation's ranks to become one of their more senior journalists. Eckhardt's interest was strictly professional, always looking for a story to knock down the big Corps a peg or two.

Things changed in 1113 however when her brother, Francis Eckhardt, a mining engineer was killed in a mining accident on Irrii (1737 Sapphyre). He worked for Astex LIC, a subsidiary of DagMet. She believes DagMet orchestrated a cover-up, blaming her brother's incompetence rather than the more likely serious breaches of the mining safety regulations and laws.

Siobhan Eckhardt then became obsessive about bringing DagMet down.

After failing to get the investigation into her brother's death re-opened, she looked for other ways to rubbish DagMet. Her last assignment was getting quite close to seriously damaging DagMet's reputation

(see Corporate Brief: DagMet article).

The referee at this point has a number of options at his/her disposal; Eckhardt can still be alive or dead.

➡ 1. DagMet did hire someone to eliminate Eckhardt. A DagMet 'Black Ops' team have been charged with this task and lay a false trail to lead the PCs to the conclusion that someone else is responsible.

Outcomes: The PCs can be duped into fulfilling DagMet's needs, or they might discover the truth. Eckhardt might have got wind of her approaching death and gone into hiding or she may be held captive. In this latter case if the PCs find her the Black Ops team will now where to find their target. The PCs may need to be eliminated as well especially if they look like they are going to make trouble!

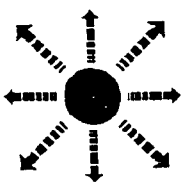
➡ 2. As above except that there is only one or a small group involved in her disappearance, i.e. an aggressive executive who has direct involvement in the vote-rigging allegations.

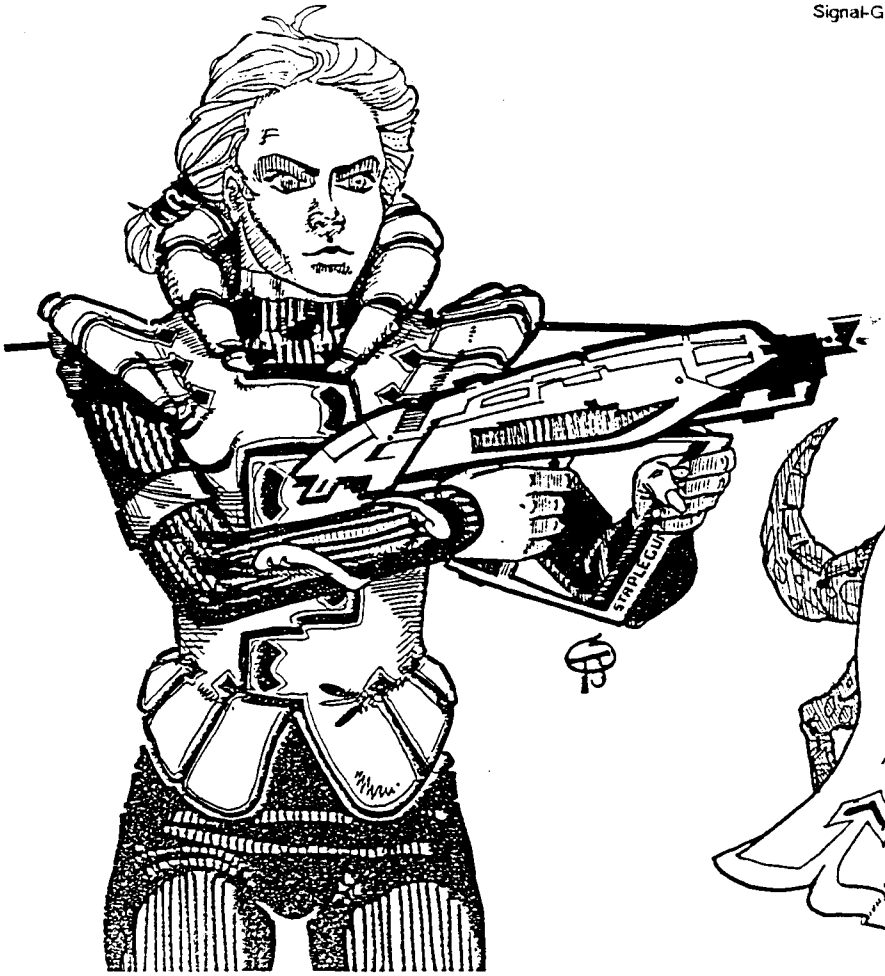
Outcomes: Similar to above. Ironically the best source of help in evading the Black Ops team might come from DagMet itself wishing to distance itself from renegade criminal elements within its organisation.

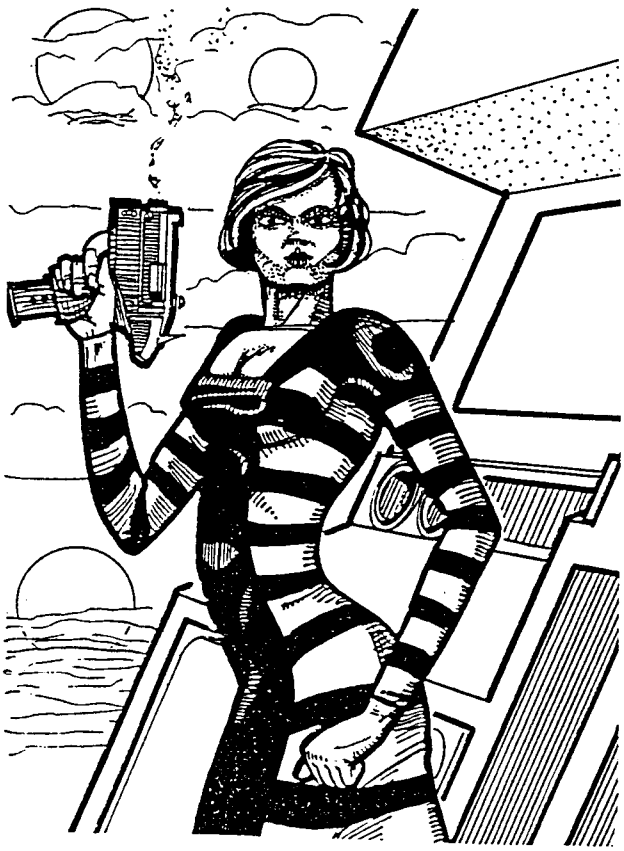
➡ 3. Eckhardt has gone over the edge. Her obsession has made her unstable liable to depression, paranoia or a host of other psychological disorders.

Outcomes: If still alive Eckhardt could be in hiding convinced that everyone is out to kill her to keep her quiet. She may be very elusive taking extremely elaborate precautions to hide her identity. If confronted she may become excessively violent.

These are only a few of the possible options, a combination of two or more themes could make a very interesting mini-campaign.



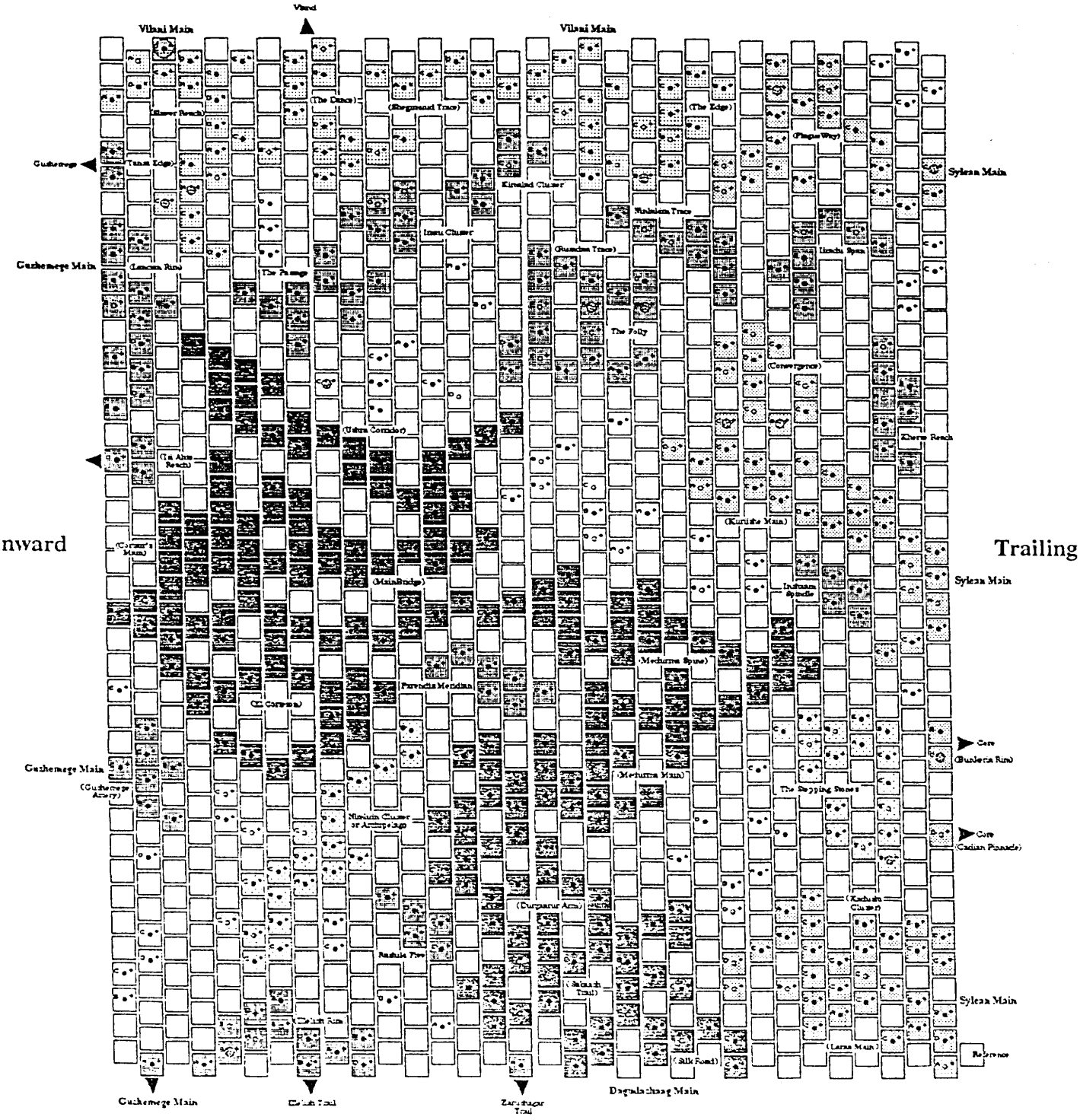

STAPLE GUN

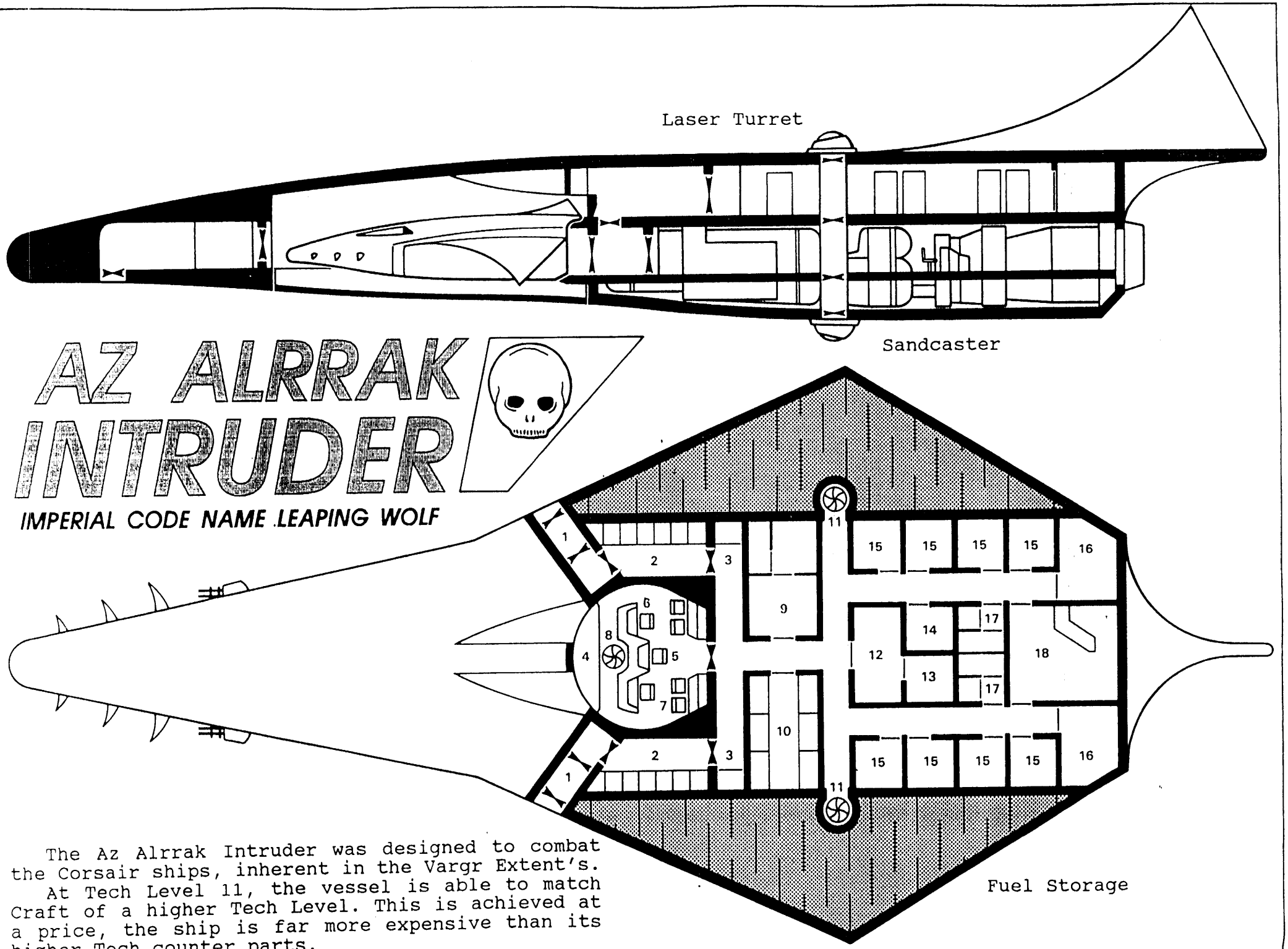


Dagudashaag

Main Jump 1 Clusters - shown with most common identifying titles

Coreward





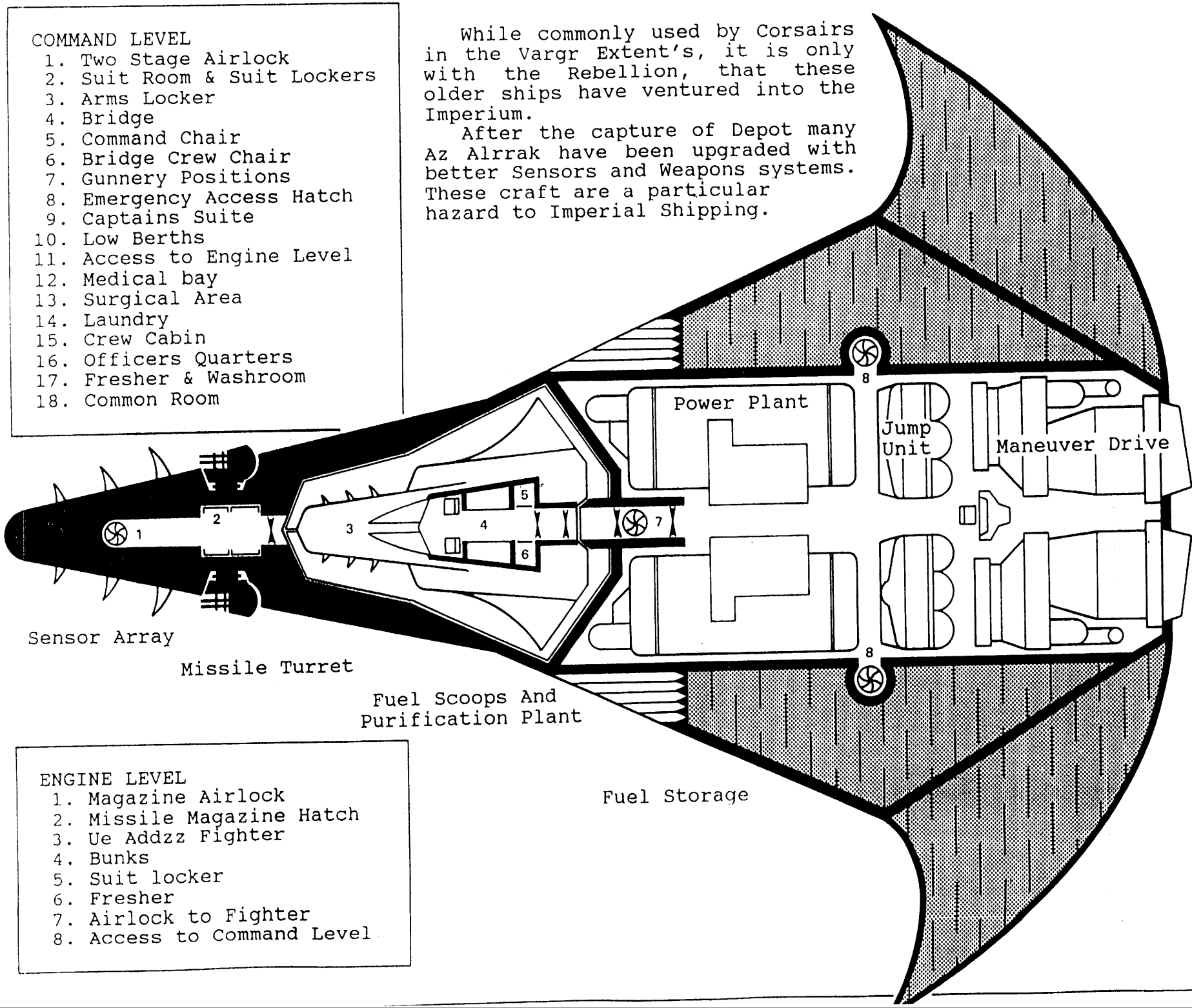
The Az Alrrak Intruder was designed to combat the Corsair ships, inherent in the Vargr Extent's.

At Tech Level 11, the vessel is able to match Craft of a higher Tech Level. This is achieved at a price, the ship is far more expensive than its higher Tech counter parts.

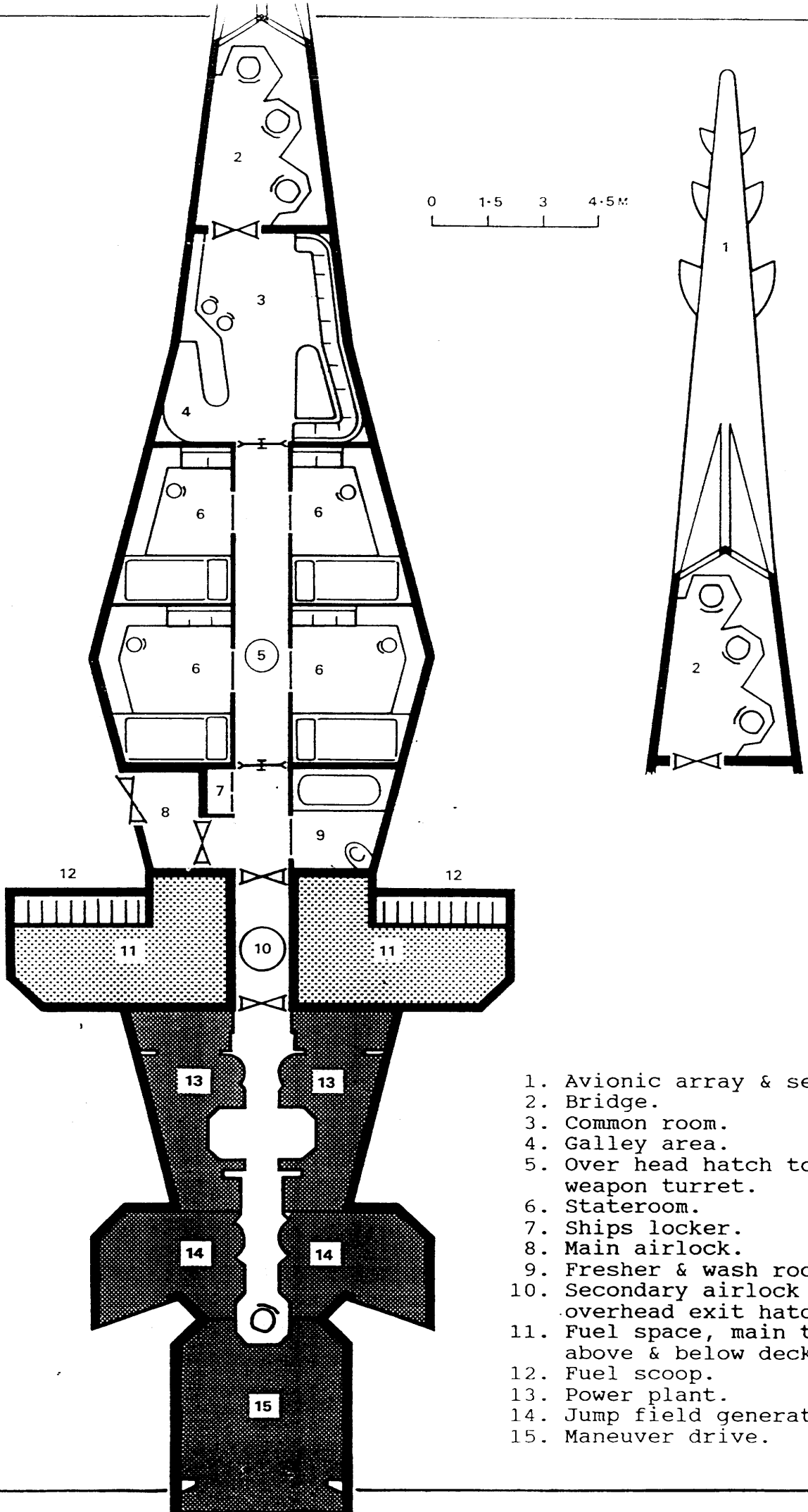
COMMAND LEVEL
1. Two Stage Airlock
2. Suit Room & Suit Lockers
3. Arms Locker
4. Bridge
5. Command Chair
6. Bridge Crew Chair
7. Gunnery Positions
8. Emergency Access Hatch
9. Captains Suite
10. Low Berths
11. Access to Engine Level
12. Medical bay
13. Surgical Area
14. Laundry
15. Crew Cabin
16. Officers Quarters
17. Fresher & Washroom
18. Common Room

While commonly used by Corsairs in the Vargr Extent's, it is only with the Rebellion, that these older ships have ventured into the Imperium.

After the capture of Depot many Az Alrrak have been upgraded with better Sensors and Weapons systems. These craft are a particular hazard to Imperial Shipping.



ENGINE LEVEL
1. Magazine Airlock
2. Missile Magazine Hatch
3. Ue Addzz Fighter
4. Bunks
5. Suit locker
6. Fresher
7. Airlock to Fighter
8. Access to Command Level



1. Avionic array & sensors.
2. Bridge.
3. Common room.
4. Galley area.
5. Over head hatch to weapon turret.
6. Stateroom.
7. Ships locker.
8. Main airlock.
9. Fresher & wash room.
10. Secondary airlock with overhead exit hatch.
11. Fuel space, main tanks above & below deck level.
12. Fuel scoop.
13. Power plant.
14. Jump field generator.
15. Maneuver drive.

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Vargr Garr Aedz Scout

From the very first glance any spacer could tell you that the Garr Aedz or Long Claw, as it is designated by Imperial forces, has been heavily influenced by Zhodani design.

It is in fact little more than a copy of the Chatl Class, Leader Scout. The similarity of hull outline is so great, that on several occasions it has actually been mistaken for a Chatl and in the most famous incident the Imperial Navy actually opened fire believing the target to be a Zhodani spy ship.

Designed and first built in the Gvurrdon Sector the Long Claw is intended as a courier ship.

It can now be found through out the Vargr Extents, used almost exclusively as an Emissary ship.

Like most Vargr ships the design is limited by the technology. These problems have been overcome to an extend by the installation of a TL 12 Jump system of Imperial manufacture, which gives the Scout a Jump 3 ability.

The range has been further extended by giving the craft enough fuel storage space for a second Jump. This however leaves the Scout with no space for cargo.

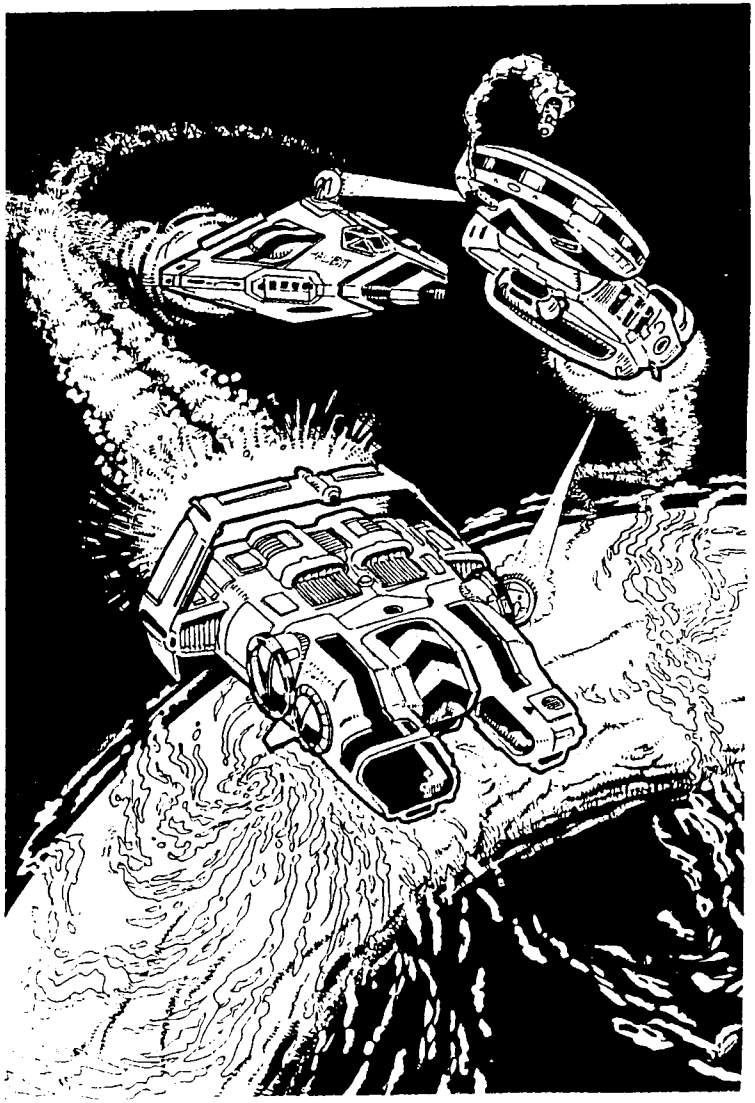
A far more important defect, considering the nature of Vargr space is the lack of offensive power, the standard turret fitting of three TL 7 missile launchers, lacks vital stopping power, yet the ships power plant is to small to cope with any more effective but energy demanding weapon system.

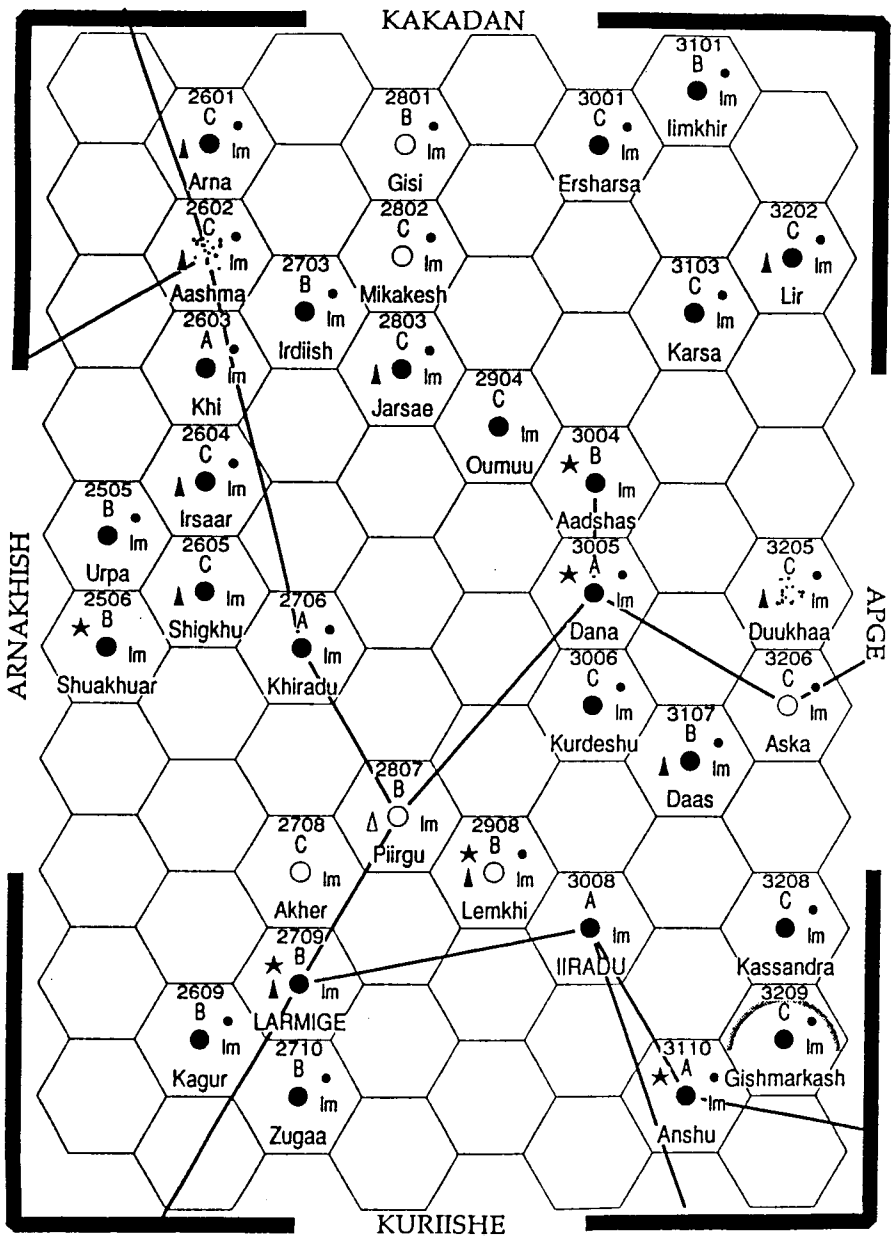
GARR AEDZ KAERZ Designated Long Claw Scout

CraftID: Scout, Type SF, TL 11, MCr 44.051
Hull: 90/225, Disp=100, Config=1SL, Armor=40E,
Unloaded=1279tons, Loaded=1331tons
Power: 9/12, Fusion=510Mw, Duration=32/96
Loco: 8/10, Maneuver=3, 6/8, Jump=3,
NOE=150kph, Cruise=750kph, Top=1000kph,
Cruise=1590kph, in vacuum,
Top= 2120kph, in vacuum,
Agility=0
Commo: Radio=System
Sensors: PassiveEMS=Interstellar, ActiveEMS=FarOrbit,
Densitometer=HiPen/1m, Newtrino=1GW
ActObjScan=Rout, ActObjPin=Rout,
PasObjScan=Form, PasObjPin=Form,
PasEngScan=Rout, PasEngPin=Form
Off: Missile Turret x02
Batt 1
Bear 1
Def: DefDM= +2
Control: Computer=1/bis x3, Panel=Dynamic linked x325,
Special=Heads-up HoloDisplay x2,
Environ=Basic Env, Basic LS, Extend LS,
Grav-Plates, Inertial Comp
Accomm: Crew=3 (Bridge=2, Engineer=1),
Staterooms=4
Other: Cargo=none,
Fuel=736kliters, PurificationPlant (24hr),
Scoops, ObjSize=Average, EMLevel=Faint
Comment: Carries fuel for two Jump 3 flights,
Electronic Circuit Protection,

IIRADU SUBSECTOR

[D]




KAKADAN
ARNAKHISH
APGE
KURIISHE
2601 C Im Arna
2602 C Im Aashma
2603 A Im Khi
2604 C Im Irsaar
2605 C Im Shigkhu
2505 B Im Urpa
2506 B Im Shuakhuar
2703 B Im Irdiish
2706 A Im Khiradu
2708 C Im Akher
2709 B Im LARMIGE
2710 B Im Zugaa
2609 B Im Kagur
2801 B Im Gisi
2802 C Im Mikakesh
2803 C Im Jarsae
2807 B Im Piirgu
2904 C Im Oumuu
2908 B Im Lemkhi
3001 C Im Ersharsa
3004 B Im Aadshas
3005 A Im Dana
3006 C Im Kurdeshu
3008 A Im IIRADU
3101 B Im Iimkhir
3103 C Im Karsa
3107 B Im Daas
3110 A Im Anshu
3202 C Im Lir
3205 C Im Duukhaa
3206 C Im Aska
3208 C Im Kassandra
3209 C Im Gishmarkash

Urpayans

Urpa was settled during the Rule of Man by the same genetic engineering company that was responsible for creating the Scanian's. Unlike Akiba/Argi, Urpa was not a secret base and the first Urpayans were created as sterile androids. Before the Compnay pulled out, a decision was made locally to make the final batch (who would be staying behind as caretakers) fertile. No-one expected that the Company would never return. Although the base was not covert, the only knowledge regarding the origin of the race exists in an ancient archive computer disk on Terra and deep within the Urpayan's sacred temple where an ancient genetics lab is sealed behind the altar. Scanians would be able to identify the design as being extremely similar to the creation site on Akiba.

Urpayan characters may be generated as normal, with the following adjustments: -1 strength, +1 dexterity. Their skills include crafts, agriculture and any task requiring manual dexterity.

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Library Data

LAST UPDATED 363-1115

Aadshas/Iiradu

3004 B57187A-C N 200 Im M4 V

Aadshas is a medium sized desert planet relying on nearby Dana for nearly all its food. The relationship is complemented by the production of much of Dana's farming equipment in the Aadshas factories.

The population thrive in the many cities scattered across the planet. All of these are linked by super-fast rail systems making movement around the planet very quick and easy. As a result (and due to the first inhabitants' nomadic tendencies) the population is highly mobile and only relatively few stay in one place for long.

Industry relies on cheap labour, which is plentiful as the nomadic subclass is always willing to work for enough to enable them to fund their next move. Those few who can show intelligence and/or dedication quite often become the commercial elite in places where continuity of existence is essential. All of the senior positions are filled by permanent staff who have settled in one city, yet they hold the lower-paid, transient workers in equal regard.

This nomadic tendency has led to the enforcement of rigid, even draconian laws. Because an offender might move on to another city within a day, the criminal justice system is very quick in its duties. Spot fines and, for serious crimes, mutilation or execution is common. Gaol is usually a punishment frowned upon by all. The civil justice system, however, is more akin to the adage 'ownership is 9/10ths of the law'. Those with property they wish to keep, employ guards; those without - and there are many - don't worry about such matters. This emphasises the divisions within the society between those who 'have' and those who wander.

There is a naval base on Aadshas. This is a major starbase, home to many large craft. Political reasons keep the base on Aadshas instead of nearby Dana. Lacking the latter's twin gas giants, the Aadshas base and orbital facility rely upon fuel 'cracked' from the world's oceans, with transports continually flying fuel up to the orbital port. In past history the industries on Aadshas were considered more important than the agricultural wealth of Dana and were thus blessed with the protection of the base (although the original decision was based upon the economics of building a base around a heavily industrialised planet, which was presented as the overriding factor by various interested parties).

Flora and Fauna on Aadshas are rare - not surprising given its barren nature and lack of water. Creatures similar to any desert world are typical and only the semi-rat/semi-lizard scavenger 'draakling' (now common as an expletive) has found a niche in the cities. Aadshas has no large predators - creatures over 75cm or so are extremely rare.

Travellers outside of the cities are advised to wear suitable clothing and protective face masks to ward off the dust carried by the winds. Within the cities this is not so much of a problem as high walls and/or residential blocks surrounding the town block out the worst of the elements - to such an extent that without the warnings, many visitors fail to realise the substantial difference between the sheltered city and the rest of the planet.

Governmental power is mostly on a city by city basis. Although grouped into greater blocs by district and answering to a particular capital, each city is self-regulating. Taxation, trade systems, even many laws are individual to a city. Certain things are universal however: the political system is a democracy of the rich (only those settled in a city with a senior position for at least 3 years may vote; 10 years residence is required before one can apply for the most important government posts) and universal travel and access rights apply. The cost of shared facilities is borne by private companies that bill each city they have dealings with.

Visitors should note that inhabitants are still surprisingly touchy about the global inter-city war which occurred some five centuries ago. It was this war which first brought a major imperial presence - in the form of the naval base - to the planet. There is still some bad feeling for the break-away Duukhaans (q.v.).

Aashma/Iiradu

2602 C00056A-9 S Ni As 703 Im M1 V G1 D

A small moon-sized asteroid, Aashma is a bureaucratic outpost of Arna though the two could not be more dissimilar. The Aashamae are extremely efficient, hard working and officious in the extreme. This latter is partly to ensure they extract the maximum amount in port taxes from traffic along the X-boat link but mostly because they are underpaid and 'trapped' on an airless rock with nothing better to do. Except for one thing - Sport.

The Aashamae are sports mad to the last woman and child. The only chance they get to relax is watching and gambling on sports. The huge sports domes for low-gravity events dotted all around the spaceport are a testimony to this though even the gambling is totally different to that on neighbouring Arna. The regulations are tight and the officious and logical minded Aashamae spend hours calculating new odds strategies. This is the side the Imperial starport authorities approve of... the flipside of this coin is the constant risk of Seaweed influx from the much more liberal Arna. The families have tried to get the drug legalised on Aashma with no success, for the Imperial statutes for preclude such drugs from the vicinity of an X-boat link starport. However, enterprising souls continue to try and beat the Customs system (with varying degrees of success). The punishment, though harsh, is not as extreme as usual due to the weed's legal nature on Arna and the fact that the two planets often share or exchange governors. However, the fines are usually enough to put any would-be entrepreneur out of business.

Aashma is trying to attract more tourism through its sporting interests and has annual low-g sporting contests which attract entrants from many nearby systems. *[Unfortunately they haven't really got the hang of treating the tourist trade differently from the goods trade. - CJ]* However as Aashma's popularity grows, so the drugs market also grows and the fear in the Imperial-run port is that if they let down their guard there would be a huge influx of Seaweed from Arna (if they could keep up with demand!) so ship-wide searches (with corresponding delays) are commonplace. *[But, hey, perhaps there's a pair of zero-g handball tickets you could interest that jackbooted official in... maybe? - CyJac '13]*

Akher/Iiradu

2708 C420797-7 Na Po De 620 Im G3 IV

Human presence on Akher is primarily due to this system's location. As an integral part of the main J1 trading link between the industrial worlds of Iiradu and Larmige, Akher was settled as a fuelling/staging post early in the first Imperium's expansion through this subsector. Since the system lacks a gas giant and the small planet of Akher contains no standing water, fuel for vessels is brought to the starport at some considerable cost by diverting icy components of the system's distant asteroid belt into low planetary orbit. Once here, these bodies are broken up into 50m chunks, are sprayed with ablative heat shields and then de-orbited through the thin atmosphere to the planetary surface. These chunks are targeted into a concrete lined 1 km crater some 10 km from the starport, and arrive hourly with an energy equal to a small atomic weapon! Between "hits" as the local population call them (and their impact can certainly be disturbing to visitors wary of seismic activity) the fragments are collected, melted and pumped to the C-class starport where further processing takes place.

The planetary atmosphere cannot support life, but does provide enough protection from cosmic and solar radiation for humans to work outside in normal cold weather clothing, using only oxygen tanks connected to simple face masks. Within Akher's cities, a full pressure atmosphere is maintained under several thin but tough transparent tents. All locals carry short duration oxygen masks in the event of a tent blow-out, but are confident that the risks are slim. The tent fabric is held in place by lightweight vacuum-sponged aluminium extrusions; a technology which the locals have developed to a high degree and for which a ready market exists in other low tech, low pressure environments.

It is interesting to note that the large amount of evaporated water caused by "hits" creates a sizeable foggy haze for some km around the crater site. Some algae and simple plant forms, brought here accidentally by the inhabitants, have begun to flourish in this environment.

Anshu/Iiradu

3110 A46769A-B N Ag Ni Ri 224 Im G3V, M4D

Anshu system combines a Naval base, modest shipyard and Class A starport with an R&R facility without par in the subsector - some would say in the whole sector. The climate is pleasant, there are many island chains and small continents offering a variety of conditions and facilities, and the local produce is excellent. Civilian visitors are welcome at all tourist facilities.

For Your Eyes Only

Referee's Information

CyJac

Believed to be a female Lancian Datarunner using the tag 'CyJac', on 211-1113 the perpetrator successfully hacked into the Indiss main dataframe on Medurma and implanted personal comments onto certain library data entries. Unfortunately for Indiss, CyJac used a self-replicating computer virus to implant the data. Although the main dataframe was eventually cleaned and innoculated, several master memclips had already been sent to planetary offices for mass distribution. Given the fairly innocent nature of the comments (and the fact that many tourists have actually stated that the prefer the infected copies of the Encyclopaedia), Indiss has not made the eradication a high priority. In fact, word on the street is that Indiss may even have used the infection as an opportunity to add some comments of their own!

Iiradu/Iiradu

A major smuggling ring operates from Iiradu undermining its efforts to raise its quality of life. The smugglers evade both import and export duties. Customs officials have so far been unable to halt this. Unknown to them, one of the chief trade committee members is receiving substantial bribes from the smugglers in return for assisting them in outwitting the authorities.

Kassandra/Iiradu

There is an Ancient site in the system, but it is buried deep within the star's atmosphere. Recent research has suggested that the star may have two cores, produced by some form of collision far in the past between Sharik and a second, much smaller star. In fact, the mysterious 'second core' is the remains of the Ancients' device used to refuel the star - one of their early attempts at stellar engineering.

Kassandritus

The head researcher from the University of Nimlakim biochemistry department (Ergii Kaskil) is so wrapped up in attempting to solve the puzzle of Kassandritus, that he is turning to immoral (not to mention illegal) means to advance his research. Kaskil has been buying human test subjects from various sources throughout Dagudashaag to help him test experimental vaccines. Exposing the subjects to the disease and trying the vaccines has only resulted in a number of corpses. Kaskil is getting increasingly desperate and so is resorting to even more shady means of acquiring his test subjects.

Shuakhar

A common advertisement that might be found on Shuakhar: *** Razorback Mercenaries *** Want some combat experience? Join the biggest mercenary company on Shuakhaur. Excellent training and fair rates of pay. (Most recruits earn enough with us to buy their own commission with a good company). Off-workders also welcome. Apply to recruitnow@razor.merc.shuak

Soreal Inc.

Hegan Kisniili, although retired to Daas, is still the active chairman of Soreal Inc. Soreal are a legitimate company and have clients throughout Iiradu subsector. However, unknown to those who are not part of the company special division, Soreal has many more clients than the recipients of their service would like. The 'special division' are a band of corsairs operating under the cover of Soreal Inc. Their base of operation is on the far side of Kurdeshu. With its tainted atmosphere and ownership rights by Daas, Kurdeshu provides an ideal base for the corsairs to operate from. They run several jump capable raiders distinct from Soreal's space fleet. This band operate throughout the subsector and have an intelligence network in place thanks to the parent company. As Soreal maintain the facilities on Kurdeshu, they are always looking to recruit new personnel from the dissidents sent there.

Kisniili is fully aware of the corsairs and has authorised token attacks on Soreal Inc. clients and shipping in order to remove the suspicions of Imperial investigators.

Equipment and Resources: Soreal Inc. possess equipment from a variety of tech levels ranging from 12 to 15 although they do not have access to state of the art TL-15 military hardware. Their major ground force assets include 2 companies of TL-13 Grav Tanks. The company possesses 11 starships: 1 Scout ship, 2 Far Traders, 1 Destroyer Escort, 2 Patrol Cruisers, 1 Close Escort, 2 Bastien-class Liners, 1 SDB tender, and heavy lift capacity provided by a 4000-ton Freighter. Additionally, the company owns a number of SDB's.

Urpa/Iiradu

2505 B776565-D Ag Ni 803 Im K4 V

A fascinating world, well worth a visit from anybody interested in the diversity of near-human races within the universe, Urpa is the home to the Urpayans. This race is virtually identical to Humaniti save for their pink pigmentation, purple eyes and hair and their ability to breathe their homeworld's tainted air. Internal anatomy, although simplified, is almost identical to humans except Urpayans have an extremely efficient filter within their large lungs.

Urpa was first surveyed by a ship belonging to the Restryk Corporation, which regards the planet as its own property and treats the Urpayans as slaves, albeit well-treated ones. Urpayans are not permitted to leave the planet or to take employment with anyone other than the Corporation. However, outside visitors are welcomed. The main products of Urpa include sweet vegetables, handicrafts and mechanical locks of great beauty and effectiveness.

An Urpayan leaving Urpa will require dietary supplements and a breathing apparatus to supply trace gases - poisonous to other beings but vital for his survival.

Archaeologists studying the Urpayans have noted the absence of any other similar species, either now or in the past, in the Urpa ecosystem which would appear to contradict the possibility of parallel evolution at work. There had been some debate as to whether or not the Urpayans were in actual fact a highly adapted MHR (Minor Human race) brought to the planet by the Ancients, but the facts do not support this theory. In fact in 899, an archaeologist called Hirum Temple, published a book which revealed that no-one to date had successfully found any trace of the Urpayans existing on the planet much before the Rule of Man. The Urpayans were an extremely primitive race prior to their contact and did not keep any form of records which could explain this mystery.

Zugaa/Iiradu

B96A8AA-A Ri Wa 212 Im M0 VI M1 D

Zugaa is governed by a civil service bureaucracy which evolved out of the increasing links between the seven large corporations which dominated the Zugaan economy, and the official agencies of government. The government is known formally as the Office of Commerce and Government, ComGov for short, and informally as the Kurrubiish, which also happens to be the name of a large and extremely ponderous Zugaan cetacean.

Zugaa's wealth is mainly founded upon the harvesting and export of Millions, a krill-like plankton which has renowned medicinal properties and which is exported for use in pharmaceutical manufacture throughout the sector. The Millions trade is carefully regulated and husbanded by ComGov, which has taken over many of the roles of Zugaan corporations such as Geshemirk and KuyperCorp which built their wealth on the Millions trade. Zugaan government circles are continually buzzing with rumours about how one of the Imperial megacorporations are trying to muscle in on the jealously guarded trade. One of the largest scandals to hit Zugaa in recent years was when a senior economic planner in the Kurrubiish was found to have been leaking details of forward trade planning to a megacorporation.

In addition to the Millions farming industry Zugaa has a reputation for the production of high quality submersibles and diving equipment (exported to Oumuu, for example). There is a very large industry manufacturing food products from kelp and farmed fish for off-world export; on Zugaa this occupation is regarded with some derision.

Many of the population of Zugaa live in arcologies built in the shallow water around the few islands which rise above the Ocean. The islands themselves are generally reserved as playgrounds for the very rich, and the very powerful. There is a strong and growing popular opinion that more of the islands should be opened up for the general public. Many of those involved in the processed food production industry live in arcologies in the deep ocean; there are those who have never seen the surface. The most excitedly discussed public project on Zugaa is the proposed construction of the world's first grav town, which will float in the air rather than on the waves. There is considerable manoeuvring by anyone who is anyone on Zugaa to be included in those who will have the right to live there.

However, the system government acts as if it were a civilian wing of the Fleet, and the high law-level reflects restrictions on civilians: certain areas are restricted to military access, and civilians may not bear arms. Locals do not object as they get rich pickings from running the R&R grounds. Indeed, the high Law Level has let Anshu boast that it is one of the most peaceful worlds in the sector. The government of Anshu is at pains to stress that the system is not under martial law; the Ruling Council merely takes appropriate counselling from the Navy.

Visitors considering skimming at the system gas giants are advised that Anshu III and Anshu IV are under Naval restriction, and that the brown dwarf Anshu V is categorised "Hazardous (Red)". Skimming is permitted at Anshu VII, but as this lies over 1200 AU out, beyond the orbit of the companion red dwarf, it is uneconomical for commercial visitors who should consider purchasing fuel at Anshu Main.

The massive combine-farms which dot the planet's surface are run almost totally automatically and, by tradition, are run quite separately from the main government by the Searn Board (Searn is a seed harvested for its oils, and a major export from Anshu). A wide variety of produce is exported throughout the subsector, with the delicacies (particularly fruits) most often shipped to the rich of Iiradu.

Arna/Iiradu

2601 C8B8574-A S Ni Fl 703 Im M0 V M8 D

Arna is a world of sulphurous seas lashed by irregular sulphuric acid storms. The inhabitants live in a series of huge domed 'towns' each governed by separate families - descendants of the original colonists. Surprisingly, the system is extremely relaxed for such a harsh environment. The planet is relatively wealthy because of Aashma's reliance on it for a number of staples including water, oxygen and minerals extracted from ice layers trapped deep beneath the planet's crust.

This is Arna's reason for being - the Jump Station at Aashma needs its supplies and it knows that. The families also control the running of the Aashma recreation facilities as a single governing body making them more profit from the deal as Aashma attracts more traffic along the X-boat link.

There are two more reasons for Arna's overly relaxed attitude towards life. The surface may be harsh but there is rarely a need to go outside the domes and all the pump workings are automated to a large degree. The people have a lot of spare time and are very recreationally based so a huge gambling sports and drug culture has emerged. This is the second reason for Arna's relaxed 'state of mind' - the Seaweed. The Seaweed is the colloquial term for one of the plants that seems to somehow thrive in the oceans of the planet which when dried and then eaten, acts as a mild euphoric. The drug is less addictive than alcohol and is, in fact, a boon in the enclosed spaces of the domes since it also has the side-effect of reducing claustrophobic emotions caused by long-term living inside. The drug is perfectly legal on Arna and very common.

All this does however have side-effects on the population's general attitude that can annoy visitors hugely. The repairs that would be done tomorrow may be delayed while the work crew go to the Casino or on an all night and day drinking and/or Seaweed session ("Seeing" in local banter). Costs are high but so are the salaries - some visitors come for the gambling, others to earn the high wages but all are surprised by the cost of the journey back to Aashma when the Port taxes are applied. Taxes can rise astronomically if they've been delayed a week by a slack workforce with nothing to do but spend money...

[See Aashma]

Aska/Iiradu

3206 C201752-8 Ic Na Va 603 Im M9VI M7D M1D

The Aska mainworld is the only planetary body in this system. The twin stars of Stumifok and Bedic occupy pride of place with three small gas giants orbiting them. The third star, Trehin, lies in orbit 14 and round this (a large distance out) orbits Aska mainworld.

This vacuum, ice capped world boasts a surprising population of over 60 million people who live in a number of large underground cities. Aska has to rely heavily on technology from other worlds, and regular shipments to keep the large scale life support systems operational. There are daily shipments arriving from Daas, the contract for which lies with the Sharushid megacorporation.

Much of the population spend their time in the sizeable employment complexes that house, feed, entertain and provide jobs for the populace. Space is at a premium in the cities, and as a result it is only the wealthy (or criminal/unlucky element) who live outside of the employment 'communes'.

Each city has its run-down, depressed areas. It is here that most of the action on Aska occurs, however there is the constant threat of the poorly maintained life support system failing. People who live outside of the communes are forced to scratch a living as temporary labourers, or take illegal work for local gang leaders (or perhaps even employment companies).

Life on Aska is complicated by the low level of self-control exercised by the population. Askans are very unstable, with severe mood swings and personality shifts being commonplace. The largest single employer on the planet is, surprisingly for such a low law level planet, the law enforcement agency who is constantly looking for people with more self-control than the average 'Joe Public' to join their ranks. However, their duties are generally quite limited and tend to involve policing residential areas to keep petty squabbles to a minimum.

Within the last year the Askan government initiated a global computer business network designed to link businesses and provide a number of useful services. Enthusiasm for the 'Businet' was far greater than the government imagined (even for the highly unpredictable Askans). Many management level staff wanted terminals installed in their accommodation as well as at the office. As the popularity of the 'Businet' spread, it became a status symbol; people had two, three or even four terminals in one living area.

Many trading houses recognised the sales potential and started to flood the market with a vast range of products. This effectively took the control of the 'Businet' away from the government, a fact they did not like one bit. Initial attempts to curb the flow of terminals and other peripheral devices into Aska failed, resulting in the introduction of a heavy tax on the sale of hardware. The 'Net Tax' was introduced, and over a few months was increased to 150%, such was the governments desire to control the technological imports.

Their tactics finally paid off, many small merchant houses ceased to trade computer goods with Aska, leaving only traders with a large stake in the Businet - most notably Makhidkarun. The last two months have seen an upsurge in the availability of black-market net goods as many usually honest businesses have found the 'Net Tax' too crippling to purchase Businet hardware legally.

Colect (n.)

Sociological grouping on the planet Mikakesh, as well as the name for the building in which the grouping lives. Most colects are a mile or so long. They are single storey buildings usually 3/4 sunk in surface dust and containing 150-600 people. The inhabitants of each colect are divided into interior areas or dormitories according to age (rather than sexual or family divisions). The colects are usually divided length-ways with one half taken up with sifting, refining and packing machines concerned with the extraction of minute gem particles from the planet's dusty surface. The other half of the building is divided up in the following manner: about an eighth of the building is the area where infants live (including facilities for their care), the next eighth is where pre-adults live (including schooling), the next quarter is designated for adults, the next quarter for 'midds' and the final quarter for 'seniors'. Colects often define the exact boundaries of these sections differently (both the physical boundaries in the colect and the actual age boundaries). Sociologists note that during their lives, the inhabitants of Mikakesh 'pass through' their colects in a similar fashion to their gem dust.

Two factors should be noted by visitors to a colect. Firstly, everyone is dressed in a like manner, which can best be described as a set of yellow pyjamas with a floppy pillow-like head-dress. Secondly, because colect inhabitants do not have long-term male-female pair-bonding, sex is regarded as a sort of communal event which some visitors have described as a "primitive orgy". Unlike normal humans, the females of Mikakesh undergo significant hormonal changes during their ovulation period, causing a noticeable change in body scents. At the 'appropriate' time, any such woman is likely to be attended by a number of males. Occasionally, visitors have been known to join in. Perhaps thankfully, off-world females do not exude the appropriate scents to cause this reaction. However, some alien species do produce sufficiently similar scents to cause confusion in the colect!

Daas/Iiradu

B768834-A S 901 Im K1 V1 M1 D

Daas is ruled by the upper class elite of society known as the Sidarous. Entry into this group is restricted to a select group of rich families and nobles, consisting only of those individuals/families shown to have the appropriate manners, breeding and a substantial source of wealth. A few off-worlders have been known to retire to Daas to join the Sidarous and live out their years in a luxuriant manner amongst like thinking individuals.

Shigkhu/Iiradu

2605 C643340-B S Lo Ni Po 820 Im G1 V

"We like to keep things quiet here on Shigkhu" is the official line from Representative House. Representative House is the core of all in-goings and out-goings of the planet. Apart from being the most impressive building on the world it boasts a elevator that joins up with the Orbital Docking Platform "Helena" above. This is made possible by the super strong cords that run from planet to station. The elevator ferries cargo and passengers from Helena to Shigkhu far more efficiently than any shuttle service and is far more breathtaking, especially given its mostly transparent construction!

Originally a colony from nearby planets, the progressive attitude of the inhabitants has not altered the fact that this is a friendly place to visit; even the criminal element have come to respect its "Haven" status in the sector. The famous Oval building has been the site of many Peace Talks over the years, where off-world representatives can come together in a neutral environment to solve inter-system political squabbles under the guidance (if desired) of counsellors from Representative House.

The atmosphere is tainted by the fragrance of Shigkhu's most prominent tree, the Arubu tree. This large black barked tree with white flowers that bloom for most of the year, has become a symbol of the planet and is used as a symbol of peace. Fortunately the fragrance is a pleasant one and has therapeutic properties. However, visitors are warned that some trees on rare occasions have the yellow fungus disease. This can be poisonous to the touch depending on the fungus maturity. A extravagant captain may pay to outfit his quarters with Arubu wood. It has excellent properties (appearance, flexibility and durability) and its pleasant smell has been found to last many years.

[Trouble is unwanted here and anyone who may cause it may find themselves with a large bounty on their head. Alternatively the adventurer who likes to be well paid for his bounty work may find Representative House a handsome employer. - Cylac '13]

Shuakhaur/Iiradu

2506 B2728BD-B N 600 Im M2 V

The companies that operate on this planet date back many hundreds of years. During the planet's past these companies grew so large that it was deemed necessary to maintain their own armies. Some companies upset local countries and even fought wars with them. Currently, a company's history is its pride and a company's strength is its army. Shuakhaur has a bloody past strewn with minor wars over its limited natural resources.

Company generals are regarded as heroes. The soldiers are rewarded with prizes and decorations. These decorations have social status attached to them and are worn with pride by recipients, the decorations for valour being the most prized.

Some companies have allegiance to one or more heads of state of the planet's countries and this can reflect favourably upon its inhabitants. Such links are especially useful for recruiting new army members during Gung Ho celebrations like the anniversary of the Mulkar Desert Campaign.

Shuakhaurians regards off-worlders with some suspicion and don't usually travel away from their home world. This is encouraged by companies as a significant rise in imported goods would effect their trade. Any merchant wanting to buy goods (for export) however, will be pampered and looked after.

A favourite animal on the planet is a large dog like creature that is quite intelligent and is able to understand some complex commands. These dogs (commonly referred to as "Pulch") have been used extensively for combat purposes in the planet's history and have also been awarded decorations. The Pulch handler trade is a highly regarded and respected position in Shuakhaur society. Off-worlders are banned strictly from buying these dogs and/or exporting them.

Soreal Incorporated

Primary product: Security services, mercenaries Headquarters: Daas (3107 Iiradu) Major Shareholder: Hegan Kisnilli, holding 25% of total shares Employees: 7,181

Background: Soreal Inc. specialise in providing all manner of security services ranging from bodyguard teams to planetary security. Only Daas has availed themselves of Soreal to provide planetary security. Soreal maintains a relatively large force of troops which are mostly licensed out to other organisations as security guards and mercenaries.

Over the years it was found that the productivity of Sternmetal's operations was not enough to justify the resource expenditure, and the megacorporation decided to terminate its operations. By this point there had been several generations born on Oumuu from the original Zugaan employees, who considered themselves Oumuun, and who wished to stay. Sternmetal agreed to leave them most of the equipment and resources in return for a percentage cut of any future mineral exports. Business analysts noted that the equipment was largely tending towards the obsolete and agreed that the deal definitely favoured Sternmetal.

The new Oumuun still identified strongly with their parent company ties, and the three original settlements formed the basis for the mini-states that make up present day Oumuu. Relations between the three have often been uneasy, but are particularly troubled at present. The largest settlement, New Shurrupuk is built on an island chain that is particularly threatened by new volcanic activity. The other two settlements, Imirisshiba and Kuyperton are extremely concerned that the Shurrupukians are planning to take over the Imirisshiban settlement which is in one of the most geologically stable areas of the planet.

Kuyperton differs from the other two settlements in that it is not built on an island, but is rather a floating assemblage of many different floating factories, ships and dwellings that have been bolted together over the years, forming a tangled warren of varied designs, which, it is rumoured, not even the inhabitants know their way around completely.

Piirgu/Iiradu

B200530 F Way Station NI Va 600 Im M9VI

This system lies only 36 parsecs from Vland and it was first visited soon after the Vilani invention of jump drive around ten thousand years ago. These early explorers were disappointed with the system's cool, dim, M-class sub dwarf and were quick to name its distant (and only) accompanying planet "Piirgu" after a frozen hell mentioned in Vilani mythology. The surface temperature has been known to reach 33 K during abnormal flare activity, but rarely moves from an average of 31 K, and the slow rotational period of 23 days results in the lit side baking under harsh stellar radiation. Other more choice worlds of the subsector attracted initial colonisation efforts and it wasn't until the development of the X-Boat network through this area and growing trading links between Iiradu and Larmige that further thought was put into developing a human presence here. Today, the population of six hundred thousand are almost all employed within the scout way station and starport facilities and, due to reasons of environmental control, it was deemed to be safer to place these elements in low Piirgu orbit, rather than on the surface of the main world. The current structure has evolved into a roughly cubical six hundred metre assembly of variously shaped components and is capable of handling vessels up to around 5,000 tons in internal hangars. Vacuum docking connections are available for larger ships.

Several thousand people are employed on the surface of Piirgu, however, and are used to mine crystaliron-hard ammonia and methane ices from within sealed and insulated crawler/rigs so that pure hydrogen can be extracted and sent up to orbit by shuttle. Both merchants and the Scout service rely on commercial fuel within the Piirgu system, and the local ice-miners earn high rates of pay in one of the Imperium's most unforgiving environments. As accidents on the surface are frequent (and are invariably fatal), stress levels are high. Since the bars around the starport area are often full of off-duty miners returning from the planetary surface, travellers should be aware of the associated problems that this can entail.

Respirovest (n.)

A type of high-collared strait-jacket wound with multiple wire coils that, when properly energised, creates a magnetic motor-field which pumps oxygen into the wearer. The molecules are impelled into the nostrils and/or mouth and pushed down into the lungs. Carbon dioxide molecules (inversely magnetic) are pushed the other way. The 'vest will maintain breathing functions even for a badly injured person. Uses include victims of cracked ribs or lung diseases and firemen and rescue workers who are investigating its use as a gas mask in smoke and fumes.

Shampka (n.)

Religion found largely on Jarsae and Mikakesh but has adherents on other worlds in the subsector. The followers subscribe to belief in One God, creator of the Universe. They are 'lively' in their worship and produce works of art that are widely admired (mostly wood carvings and tapestry work but other items as well) and often sought after. The religious URP code is 48305 but the religion's exact aims and means vary widely across the subsector, making it difficult to classify precisely. Advocates are not restricted to humans and include a number of alien species.

The ruling government is exclusively drawn from the Sidarous with little regard for the opinions of the lower classes. The lower classes accept the uneven distribution of society and the Sidarous as simply a fact of life. The idea that one day, one could enter this group, is a dream shared by many people. It is a dream subtly compounded by the Sidarous itself in order to help maintain order and dissuade possible dissidents from taking any serious actions.

Daas has achieved tech level A through the importation of technology and through gifts brought by prospective members of the Sidarous. The same applies to the class B starport, Daas Downport, where sufficient 'donations' have significantly raised the capacity for building in-system vessels. Daas has come to rely upon outsiders for advancing technology and bringing interplanetary trade to the planet. Additional profits come from supplying essential equipment and foodstuffs to Aska.

The ISS base here maintains a watch on the incoming goods and persons but has rarely intervened except, for example, when a major off-world criminal attempted to retire into the Sidarous under a false identity.

Daas maintains a small squadron of SDBs to protect planetary interests and the single gas giant present in the system. Daas contracts this squadron from a mercenary group, Soreal Inc. based on Daas. The leader of the group is one Hegan Kisniili, an off-worlder from Iiradu retired to Daas, and now part of the Sidarous.

There have been an increasing number of civil disturbances against the Sidarous over the past 20 years. This is due to the complacency demonstrated by the Sidarous regarding the future of the planet. One group (the "Maaraagik") have pronounced themselves solely responsible for the civil disturbances and have threatened escalating events until the Sidarous provide direct finance to make Daas less reliant on others and begin distributing the planet's income more fairly.

The Sidarous have taken a hard line with the Maaraagik. Several hundred Maaraagik members have been incarcerated at the penal colony on Kurdeshu.

Dana/Iiradu

3005 A689576-F N Ni 122 Im F0 V M9 D

Although not a large exporter of its agricultural products (and thus not rated as an Ag world), Dana enjoys a high turnover of various types of trade and also a thriving tourist industry. The native population is small, only a few hundred thousand, and most of these are nomadic wanderers on the vast oceans. The rest drive the farming machinery on those land areas able to support agriculture, the fishing ships that harvest the rich sea life, and the necessary support for interplanetary trade.

The majority of Dana is taken over by water, some 91% of its surface is ocean and some inhabitants have never even set foot on land. The seas teem with small, edible creatures, and are also host to a few large predators. The land areas are mostly cleared for crop production but a few inaccessible parts still accommodate the sprawling wet-wood forests that were so important to the first inhabitants. The way of life pioneered by these original colonists is still followed in the form of huge floating arcologies, though today these are composed of much higher tech materials. The atmosphere is perfectly breathable to humans though many find the humidity uncomfortable, especially in the hottest months.

The 3 main population groups usually do not mix. The arcology inhabitants prefer a semi-idyllic existence drifting about the planet. They make their incomes by catching the rare 'Quandos', a small fish-like creature noted both for its flavour and its mildly intoxicating effect. Tourist goods and other sea produce make up the rest of their income which is normally spent on equipment.

The land- and sea-based farming communities are very much small groups often located away from others. This has led to a sheltered, independent spirit amongst them. These people meet occasionally but never outside of their farming groups except when their produce is brought to Danorkas, the single city.

Danorkas is the centre of Dana's off-world existence. Built close to the starport it provides markets for Dana's produce and a centre for tourists. A major 'hardware' import is the specialised farming machinery produced by Aadshas, in exchange for foodstuffs from Dana.

The tourist industry caters mainly for hunting expeditions for the large and fearsome 'kulaak', a solitary predator normally quite placid until enraged by electric depth-charges dropped to bring it to the surface.

Dana also hosts a naval training facility. This teaches advanced techniques for marine personnel involving (waterworld) planetary assault and various submarine and survival activities.

Dana is rare in that it holds members of the law professions in high regard. The 'wilderness' communities rely upon travelling lawyers to assist local judges elected by ballot in the progression of justice.

Minor ecological problems have recently come to a head with the creation of a Free Sea Movement (q.v.).

Duukhaa/Iiradu

3205 C000668-B S Na Ni As 114 Im K1 V M6 D

Nearly five centuries ago the balkanised cities of the world of Aadshas were involved in a bitter, pan-global and almost totally devastating war. Peace was eventually enforced by Imperial military forces: a peace which led to the development of a naval base within the system and also to the foundation of a world council as a common forum for the discussion of international grievances. In an attempt to bond the disparate nations together and remove the more extreme elements from the planet, the fledging council (under its first leader Haako Duukhaa) focused on an uninhabited system two parsecs away as prime colonisation territory.

The Duukhaa colony is based within an asteroid belt orbiting twin central stars. Over millennia, gravitational forces and the shepherding nature of four large gas giants have broken up and sorted asteroids within the belt, to provide rich opportunities for miners.

Following Duukhaa's death in 650 the system was renamed in her honour, but today Duukhaa is usually used to refer to a 15 km nickel-iron asteroid situated as the largest member of the "trailing Trojans" of the innermost gas giant. Large parts of this asteroid have been fusion tunnelled by miners and these, combined with natural fissures within the body of the rock, provide extensive and comfortable accommodation for the majority of the one million inhabitants of this system.

Much of the area surrounding the starport is devoted to the "UPB" (the University of Planetary Bodies) with a campus comprising over fifty thousand students and staff drawn from across the subsector. The University has widely renowned research faculties in the fields of asteroid and planetoid creation, mapping and mining with associated courses in geology, metallurgy, astronomy and astrography (run in conjunction with the local scout base). The UPB is a fitting symbol for the peaceful diversity of this system's homeworld, although relations with Aadshas are still occasionally troubled.

Ersharsa/Iiradu

C89A644-B Ni Wa 802 K3V

Ersharsa orbits a gas giant, well outside the habitable zone of the star Ershanuur, but intense tidal friction has melted the rocky core and original icy outer layers turning it into a literal world-of-water under an icy crust and intensely frigid atmosphere.

The Ershanuur system was explored early on by Vilani prospectors but ignored in favour of better prospects elsewhere. Some 600 years ago a Scout Survey made a more complete study, and reported the unusual liquid body of the planet. Establishing a research base showed that the world was truly extraordinary, possessing unusual native life and free oxygen trapped beneath the crust. Many of the native fish-worms are edible to humans: an export trade supports nearby systems, and sends delicacies and exotica far across the sector. Tourists come from far and wide to see the fantastic displays of bio-luminescent life in the dark waters, and the atmosphere geysers where giant air bubbles accumulate sufficient energy to burst through the ice crust.

Electromagnetic and sonar sensors suggest that there is some form of intelligent life around volcano communities deep in the 'oceans' on the core surface. However, all attempts to communicate have failed dismally - with no signs that the signals even reached their targets. Very little is known about the "deep ones" as the pressure 1000 km down is over 30,000 atmospheres and has crushed all probes sent to investigate, long before they near the core.

FracFix

Brand name for stickers, clothing fabric and other fasteners produced on Jarsae (q.v.). Using the same principal as the setae on a gecko's foot (fine flexible hairs) FracFix is covered with a carefully graded mixture of fibres. The coarsest fibres pack as closely as they can; finer fibres fill the gaps between them; between them are finer fibres still - and so on down to fibres of almost molecular fineness. Pushed against a surface, the coarse fibres fit themselves into its large-scale contours; the smaller fibres fit round them to fill smaller irregularities; those smaller still flow into the still tinier gaps, and so on. The FracFix sticker makes intimate contact with any surface; as clothing fabric it gives a positive cling fit (and brings new security to strapless gowns and even more daringly unsupported or fragmentary creations).

The planet Kassandra (q.v.) holds a small research base operated by LIUSS. This base is responsible for the control and data-collection from a series of space-borne telescopes at various points in-system.

The university maintains a class C starport there, mainly for the use of transporting researchers to and from the station and for the delivery of supplies from off-world. All profits from spaceport duties are then fed back into the funding of further research work.

The current Principal, Count Shannash Elhodiri, holds the post not for his research history (impressive though it is), but more for his uncanny ability to drum up research funds. The Vilani megacorporations Naasirka, Sharushid and Makhidkarun all fund research there, together with various chairs. The Vilani are happy to do this as the university's research does not generally lead to anything patentable.

Lir/Iiradu

3202 C476002-A S Lo Ni 401 Im M3 IV M6 V

Lir is something of a mystery world. Since its first discovery by the ISS, it has been quarantined from off-world contact due to the virus-rich atmosphere which is lethal to humans. Colonisation has never been attempted and the only occupants of the system are an ISS base which enforces the quarantine and performs research into the atmospheric viruses.

There is a limited range of flora and fauna on the planet, but study has been limited by the need to use remotely-operated drones and robots to reach the surface safely and few samples have been brought off planet for fear of viral contamination.

In-system travel is permitted but landing on Lir is not. Sceptics, noting the irregular presence of unusually large naval ships in the vicinity, have at times claimed that the virus warning is in fact a cover for some dark secret that the Imperial authorities are hiding on Lir. Naturally, the authorities deny this and the ISS base treat any enquiries into this matter as a joke.

Mikakesh/Iiradu

2802 C300664-B Na Ni Va 304 Im M3v

Mikakesh would ordinarily have been something of a backwater with its airless, waterless wastes. Rocky outcrops of its surface poke through ancient layers of dust that range from several tens of metres in some places to just a few inches in others.

The world was rescued from obscurity by the discovery of tiny gem-like particles spread extremely sparsely through the surface dust. Now the inhabitants of Mikakesh are, for the most part, engaged in recovering this valuable commodity through a time-consuming filtering process. The end product is used widely from high class wall decorations to furniture and clothing; depending upon the fineness and colour, it is sold under a variety of names but is generally known as "star dust".

The population of Mikakesh are almost all descended from the original colonists that arrived from Jarsae (q.v.). Originally from the country of Karnasta, they were religious migrants of the Shampka religion (q.v.) who felt compelled to leave their homes due to clamp downs on their freedoms by the government. Oddly enough they have maintained many of their ties to the homeworld and are still ruled by the government of Karnasta. Some observers have suggested that this is in name only, but the relationship between the two is quite incestuous and the inhabitants of Mikakesh would strongly deny that they are an independent world.

All the inhabitants live in some 10,000 colects (q.v.) scattered across the surface of this planet. Physically, each colect is similar but inside, large differences can be found. Colects have little physical contact with each other except on holidays and 'high days' but communication via holo is extremely common.

Oumuu/Iiradu

C97A575-7 Ni Wa 900 Im M0 VI

There is considerable volcanic activity on Oumuu, which has led to the existing sulphurous taint in the atmosphere which gives the Oumuun ocean its distinctive yellowish hue, and which leads to the spectacular sunsets for which Oumuu is famous, and which many subsector wits describe as the only reason why anyone should wish to travel there.

Oumuu was originally settled by employees of three of the major corporations of Zugaa, who had been brought in by Sternmetal as sub-contractors to exploit the newly discovered mineral resources of Oumuu. The Zugaan corporations were used for their renowned expertise in waterworld operations. The volcanic activity on Oumuu had produced a large number of sea bed 'black smokers', volcanic vents where the innards of Oumuu were vented under conditions of extreme pressure. The Sternmetal mineral operations were begun to exploit these resources.

Enforcers - a sub-class of Priest - act as police, ensuring all laws are followed and criminals are punished. At the bottom are the Citizens. It is usually possible to tell how important a person is by the colour of their clothes: the Larmess wears white, signifying enlightenment, with lower classes wearing progressively darker shades (particularly devout Larmists wear only grey, although many others wear caste-approved colours, particularly greens and blues).

Off-worlders must identify themselves by wearing red armbands, but are otherwise subject to the same laws as the local population. One important fact is that artificial sentients - self-aware computers and uplifted races (including Vargr) - are considered property rather than people. Off-worlders should also be aware that the use of non-medicinal drugs, including alcohol, is prohibited.

Larmism

The official religion of Larmige (q.v.), named after its founder Makkhii Larm. It is unusual - although far from unique - in that it is pro-science. The foundation of the religion is simple: the belief that God and the Universe are one and the same; in every plant, animal, or grain of sand is a fragment of God. It therefore follows that the more one learns about the Universe, the more one learns about God, and the closer one comes to Enlightenment.

The University of Larmigum is highly regarded, and Larmist science textbooks are used throughout the Sector. The religious hierarchy also assumes the functions of government. The ruler of Larmige, the Larmess, is the head of both Church and State; she is High Priestess, and keeper of the Book of Larm - this is a combination of holy book and constitution, and only the current Larmess may alter it.

A strict caste system is observed. Below the Larmess are several grades of Priest, who also function as government officials. Enforcers - a sub-class of Priest - act as the police and beneath them are the Citizens. Caste determines the allowed clothing colour: the Larmess wears white, signifying enlightenment, with lower classes wearing progressively darker shades (particularly devout Larmists wear only grey, although many others wear caste-approved colours, particularly greens and blues). Many interactions - including marriage - are only permitted between people of the same caste.

Lemkhi/Iiradu

2908 B200651-F A Na Ni Va 812 Im M0 II M6 D

The barren world of Lemkhi is more than just a research base - it is a university in its own right, dedicated to the study of the space sciences (see Lemkhi Imperial University of Space Sciences).

The university maintains a class B starport, mainly for the use of transporting researchers to and from the university and for the delivery of supplies from off-world. All profits from spaceport duties are then fed back into the funding of further research work.

Most of the habitable areas on Lemkhi are dug into the surface of the planet, rather than in domes on the surface. There are several buildings on the surface, mainly astronomical observatories and the like used for the direction of space-borne telescopes. The dominating effect of the university means that most of the population are fairly casual and laid-back about life. University members are always ready to welcome outsiders who are interested in their work.

There are five main campuses, each linked to the others by a subrail system. The main spaceport is at Iilusheke, the capital and largest of these, at the rotational north pole. The other four - Rupake, Ionaa, Surashii and Vaaldhiri - are almost equidistant around the equator.

Because of the wide variety of scientific devices in the surrounding space and the need to prevent disruption of observations and measurements, the space lanes around Lemkhi are very strict and must be obeyed. Ships failing to follow these instructions may suffer exceptionally heavy fines or be impounded, hence the amber zone warning for this system.

Lemkhi Imperial University of Space Sciences

The Lemkhi Imperial University of Space Sciences (LIUSS) was granted an Imperial charter in 1013 when the number of academic and related personnel exceeded the non-research personnel on what had once been a small imperial research base. It is known primarily for its studies in astronomy and astrophysics, although there are also groups working on theoretical jump mechanics.

Free Sea Movement

Dana's floating arcologies have given rise in recent years to a faction opposed to the commercial farming of the planet. Nominally titled the 'Dana Free Sea Movement' several terrorist attacks have been carried out on remote fishing vehicles. A major incident involved a bomb exploded near the starport, which claimed 37 lives including 12 tourists. However, the bomb could not be verified to be the work of this group which remains an underground movement despite vocal support from some of the arcology inhabitants.

Gishmarkash/Iiradu

3209 536114-9 Lo Ni 825 A Im K8 V

The Gishmarkash system is owned and ran by GISHMARCo Test & Development (q.v.), a wholly owned subsidiary of GSbAG, who specialise in starship systems testing and development.

The abundance of common planetary bodies in the system (five gas giants and two planetoid belts) make for an ideal testing ground for starship systems and completed starships. Two or three projects are generally ongoing at any one time and so areas of the system are frequently prohibited from unauthorised vessels, particularly the mainworld, gas giants and belts - hence the Amber Zone status.

Gishmarkash is used as the final testing ground for products. Teams come from other research/manufacturing facilities within the GSbAG group with the products ready for test. There are no high tech research or repair facilities in the system so the teams are required to be self-sufficient in terms of specialists, spare parts, etc. GISHMARCo provides accommodation, in-system transport, co-ordination of test areas, administration and other such activities required by the research teams. A large recreation facility is also run on the mainworld, which is frequented by long-standing project members needing well earned R&R.

Early projects suffered from in-system industrial espionage. In order to counter this, GISHMARCo has two separate defence systems: a standard SDB squadron stationed at the mainworld and a unit of high speed, high stealth, non-jump-capable interception craft. These craft patrol the perimeter of the test areas, using high tech passive sensor suites to monitor for intruding craft/drones which may be collecting data on the products under test. Any suspicions result in a rapid interception and impounding of suspect craft.

GISHMARCo Test & Development

A wholly owned subsidiary of GSbAG, GISHMARCo T&D is based on Gishmarkash. Registered in 655, GISHMARCo provides a vital testing service to developers of starship products. Controlling the Gishmarkash system (under Imperial edict 9827-488-AQP2) allows sections to be allocated for extended testing of all manner of starfaring products, including potentially dangerous systems which could not be safely evaluated elsewhere. Such testing is not only necessary in developing new technology, but also required in order to obtain the correct Imperial safety certificates for any new starship or component thereof.

The facilities provided by GISHMARCo are generally only available to companies within the GSbAG Megacorporation. However, it has been known for other companies to hire the facilities for testing and development of their own products, but this is an expensive rarity. Ships transporting new top secret devices for testing at Gishmarkash can be found throughout Iiradu subsector and beyond.

Gisi/Iiradu

2801 B43079B-D Na Po De 704 Im M7 IV

Attached to one of the larger mains in the subsector, Gisi is nevertheless a bit of a backwater for Jump-1 ships, removed from X-Boat communication. It also doesn't have an abundance of natural resources, another reason for the lack of people queuing to live there.

A cold small world with a very thin atmosphere, Gisi is tectonically stable. At some point in the planet's past, volcanic activity formed stratovolcanoes, and crustal rifting led to the formation of massive canyon systems, some of which stretch for 1000 km or more. Most are over two km deep, and it is here that the first cities were constructed. The planetary component of Gisi's spaceport is located in the caldera of one of the larger stratovolcanoes, now thankfully extinct. The peak is high enough to protrude from the planetary atmosphere, protecting the vessels berthed there from the fine grit that plagues everything on the surface.

Movement for the 73 million inhabitants of Gisi is difficult, to say the least. Most centres of population formed around industrial complexes, and the planet is divided into sectors.

The sectors are further divided into Zones. Movement between Zones requires passes and much paperwork/ bribery, and movement between sectors is uncommon. A thriving black market exists for such papers and also for certain goods which may be common in one area but not in another.

The planetary surface is inhospitable to humans without pressure suits, and prone to severe dust-storms. The canyon systems are very extensive, and almost impossible to monitor with any success. At least one terrorist group is believed to be active on the planet, operating out of a remote region. However, unless their activities are scaled up or affect the population at large, they are unlikely to attract enough attention to be eradicated by Imperial authorities.

"Cabin Fever" is a problem for long-term workers, and there are many tales of people walking off into the desert in search of alien artefacts, etc. There have even been rumours of evidence that humans were not the first to live here, though no concrete evidence has as yet been brought forward. Much of the tunnel and canyon system has yet to be thoroughly explored.

Major industry on Gisi is the manufacture of refining equipment and electro-optical gear for starships. Much of this manufacturing is carried out in robotic complexes on the surface.

Gushki Mining Corporation

The Gushki Mining Corporation was founded in 792 by a consortium of independent asteroid miners. Having analysed the situation on Iimkhir (q.v.), the miners had realised that the inefficient 'government' was having substantial difficulties in selling its iridium due to the constant inter-group bickering. Gushki stepped in and began buying iridium and shipping it off-world, gradually developing over the years into the major shipping route for the iridium, using their business skills to find customers and acting as 'insulation' between these customers and the volatile politics of Iimkhir.

Gushki makes a good profit from their work but are not overly greedy. They are well-known for providing their employees with excellent working conditions, pay, health care and other benefits. Jobs with Gushki are much sought after by miners from Iimkhir, who are rarely provided with such good conditions under their company charters.

Iimkhir/Iiradu

3101 B552576-C Ni Po 203 Im M2 V

Iimkhir's atmosphere is unusual in that it appears to have been accumulated after the planet was captured by the gas giant Ullike which orbits the system's primary. It is proposed that Iimkhir was originally covered in ice but that in the capture process the planet burned its way through or close to the atmosphere of Ullike, vaporising the ice and creating a thin but surprisingly breathable atmosphere. A small research base has been established to investigate this process since it offers possibilities for new methods of terraforming other planets.

The planet's population work predominantly on mining iridium, a rare metal on most worlds but found in abundance beneath the planet's dusty surface. However, a lack of management and investment means that the necessary refining equipment has never been brought in and the metal is processed off-world, taking the majority of the potential profit elsewhere.

Although there are some independent miners working on the planet, most have grouped together to form co-operatives and corporations. Overall control of the planet is by means of consensus among these balkanised 'states' and it is the petty feuding between groups which has stalemated any attempts to improve the mining operations.

The starport is operated by the Gushki Mining Corporation (q.v.) which, despite its name, performs little actual mining, but acts as a unified front for off-world groups buying the iridium. Most of the spaceport traffic consists of freighters transporting high tech goods to the planet (which has little industry itself) and then picking up a contract to take the iridium off-world.

Iiradu/Iiradu

3008 A542A9A-F Hi In Po 900 Im M3V

Iiradu is the capital of the Iiradu subsector of Dagudashaag, but beneath its glossy high-tech exterior, it is now crumbling and decaying after the many centuries of growth and prosperity which brought it local renown and respect.

In accordance with its status, Iiradu maintains an 'A' starport in orbit with a shuttle service to the surface. Surrounding the starport is a massive orbital megacity of 20 billion people living in excessively overcrowded conditions. The cost of living is high and the quality of life low, with crime rampant in some areas. Most of the people in the orbital city support the bureaucratic systems that control the population below.

Khiradu/Iiradu

2706 A542886-E Po 314 Im G2V

The domes of Khiradu support 300 million xenophobes who spend much of their economy on the high-tech support needed to sustain them against their environment: cold, dark, thin air and a constant blast from the radiation belt around their gas giant primary.

It is not clear why the settlers founded their colony on this moon well outside the habitable zone - it is thought they were exiled from some other world but they keep that aspect hidden. Their energy and industry have raised their population, and let them spread across their world, but it is an inner drive and outsiders are not welcomed on-planet. They have a gloomy religion which portrays a despotic overlord who frowns upon mortals (and especially those non-believers who fail to appease it).

Far above the surface of Khiradu, Khiradu Orbital offers a class A starport on the X-Boat run through the sector, with excellent orbital facilities: repairs, supplies and stopover facilities. Scouts from the bases in adjacent systems can often be found here swapping tales and livening the atmosphere. Gambling is encouraged along with other pursuits to divert and entertain. The elite bureaucrats from Khiradu may be found here too, distinguished by their formal-cut grey suits and ornate swords, supervising the running of the station. There are specific Members-only clubs and establishments which cater directly to their tastes and into which off-worlders are not allowed.

Kurdeshu/Iiradu

3006 C544265-9 Lo Ni 815 Im M1 V K9 D

Kurdeshu is a world owned by the government of Daas (3107 Iiradu). On acquiring their first Free Trader 120 years ago, Daas began a colonisation effort of the neighbouring system of Kurdeshu. A charted survey discovered a rich deposit of lanthanum ore. A mining colony was set up to extract and process the ore. Daas technology while able to process the ore, was unable to do so safely. There were a number of severe environmental accidents, and combined with extremely eco-unfriendly processing practices a large quantity of photo reactive chemicals were released into the thin atmosphere. The thin atmospheric ozone layer has become degraded and is now only 60% intact. Surface UV exposure is extremely high and highly dangerous to anyone not wearing appropriate protective clothing on all areas of the skin and eyes.

When the lanthanum source was exhausted 25 years ago and no other deposits had been discovered. Daas closed down the mining facility save for a skeleton crew to mind the facility. Five years later Daas decided to reopen the class C starport and the mining facility as a penal colony for political dissidents. The company Soreal Inc. were contracted to run the prison and provide system security in the form of 3 SDBs to watch over hydrogen fuel sources and any ships that might attempt to land in a restricted area of the colony. There are currently 327 prisoners being held in the colony.

Larmige/Iiradu

2709 B7759DD-C A Hi In 610 M0 V

Orbiting close in to the star Essen, Larmige's short (11 hour) days are one of the most difficult factors for visitors to acclimatise to. Larmige has two satellites: Ramada, the site of the system's naval base, and the smaller Xloni, home to a small Scout installation. Both moons are rented to the Imperial government, who in return provide the armed forces for the system under a 100 year contract to the Larmige government. As such, these are not deemed standard Imperial bases.

There has been significant terraforming - including weather control - over the last few centuries, mostly directed towards bringing down the surface temperature (originally close to 50 degrees C). This is now coming to an end, and purification of the atmosphere (excessively rich in nitrogen and some minor contaminants) is the next goal.

Rich in natural resources, Larmige - formally known as Rotmi'ith - was a factory world of the First and Second Imperia. When the Second Imperium collapsed, and the Long Night began, the world was cut off from the interstellar community. Society collapsed, and for many years the world was wracked by civil war, until -951, when it was finally united by Makkhii Larmi, a wandering priest, and founder of the religion of Larmism. In -890, the year after Larmi died, the world was renamed Larmige in his honour, with a university dedicated to continuing his work.

The planetary ruler, the Larmess, is the head of both Church and State; she is High Priestess, and keeper of the Book of Larmi - this is a combination of holy book and constitution, and only the current Larmess may alter it. Below her are several grades of Priest, who also function as government officials.

Irsaar/Iiradu

2604 C884869-9 S Ri 102 Im M4 V

Irsaar is believed to have been originally colonised by a generation ship from Terra, back before the days of true galactic exploration - although this is a matter for myth rather than historical record. As far as can be determined, the planet suffered a decline, a dark age, and has developed once more until fusion power was independently developed. A few 'primitive' spacecraft had been built, and the home system explored, before contact was made by Imperial forces.

Of interest is the governmental system which has evolved over many centuries - a form of feudalism, in which each Irsaarite on reaching his or her majority (20 standard years) is required to choose an overlord and declare lifelong allegiance. The choice is made freely - it is a crime punishable by death to seek to influence someone's choice - but once it has been made it is irrevocable. Breach of allegiance also attracts a death sentence; however there are wide interpretations of what a breach in allegiance actually entails - you often find individuals working for a different overlord from their own. Taxation is, however, paid half to the overlord where you live and half to your personal overlord.

Visitors are welcomed, but those who wish to settle are obliged to choose an overlord within 150 days of arrival. Weapons are not permitted outside of private property unless a permit from one's overlord is held. These are difficult to get, and rarely if ever granted to off-worlders. Law enforcement officers, in the service of the local overlord, are normally armed; and will not hesitate to shoot transgressors (usually with the intent to disable and bring to trial rather than to kill, unless unavoidable).

Jarsae/Iiradu

2803 C-569776-A S Ri 913 G0v M4d

Jarsae is one of six balkanised worlds in Iiradu sub-sector but the only that qualifies as a 'rich' planet. This is not surprising considering the abundance of resources easily available in the system. Ores, radioactive materials, crystals, compounds and agricultural resources are all easily obtainable; agroproducts and metals account for most of Jarsae's processed resources.

Geographically the planet has two areas worthy of note. Firstly, the only major land mass (of about 6.5 million square miles) situated in the northern hemisphere and roughly diamond shaped. Secondly, a series of islands scattered around the equatorial regions of the world with none to be found outside the tropics (the axial tilt of Jarsae is 19 degrees). Some ten island groups make up the remaining 300,000 square miles of surface area on the planet.

Politically the planet has three distinct governments. Because of the significant differences in type and law level, it is worthwhile for visitors to know where they will be travelling and whether they must cross any borders. Almost all the population is located on the main land mass which is divided very roughly in half. Karnasta is the eastern portion with a population of 30 million run by a charismatic oligarchy with a detailed law level of 6-A96A5. Axc is the western portion, containing 60 million people in a feudal technocracy similar to that practised on Irsaar (q.v.), though less extreme. The Axc detailed law level is 6-44A96. The third political entity is called Diflannu and comprises all the island groups with 990,000 people in a self-perpetuating oligarchy (detailed law level 6-5645C) - an off-shoot of the Karnasta government and now considered a 'minor player' by the two more northerly countries.

Karnasta and Axc are old enemies but avoid outright conflict at present. Instead they settle disputes (mostly border disputes) with an interesting form of armed battle where no weapons or armour over tech level 2 are allowed. The resulting pitched battles are the real thing and not 'mocked' up in any way. It is useful that the countries have developed a medical technology in advance (level C) of their 'high common' figure to deal with some of the injuries sustained, such that it is unusual for very many to die in these battles. It is considered an honour in either society to carry scars from such battles.

The two countries also compete in developing technology that can be exported to other worlds of the Iiradu sub-sector. For example Karnasta recently introduced FracFix (q.v.) and Axc introduced their recently invented Respirovest (q.v.) in efforts to demonstrate that their technology and production was superior.

Diflannu stays well out of the arguments of their neighbours and instead have a very relaxed and sub-tropical type of laid back culture. They are only interested in technology for example when it relates to yachting and yacht design. Each year the top boats and crew hold a race around the equator which attracts spectators from all over the sub-sector. Using the latest (TL A) technology some of the yachts used are almost works of art. The highly automated craft only require a crew of one and the endurance needed to compete (respectably) in the 60 day race is phenomenal; many start, few finish.

Kagur/Iiradu

2609 B628567-C Ni 803 Im G3 V M1 D

Although Kagur is noted as being a fairly well-populated planet, the majority of its inhabitants would happily swap their current abode for somewhere off-world. In fact, anywhere off-world. Of the few worlds in the system, three are baked by close proximity to the main sun Tamaran, while Kagur sits far out in the system toward the second sun Ynitar. The planet's frozen surface is composed mostly of methane ice containing large amounts of cyanide compounds and typically has a dull bloody hue from the sun's weak rays. As a result, few inhabitants venture onto the surface and all of the habitation domes have extremely tight decontamination regimes.

However, Kagur's orbit is sufficiently elliptical that every 37.4 years it passes close enough to Tamaran to heat up its surface, causing geysers of methane and cyanide to erupt. This period lasts for 2.6 years and is known as the Misting because of the clouds of gas that briefly give the planet a thin toxic atmosphere and then gradually escape the planet or freeze again.

During the Misting the planet gets its only tourism - generally the rich or the foolish who want to see the eruption of one of the geysers. As the surface is under a great deal of seismic stress at these times there have been many instances where individuals or entire parties have been lost when a geyser erupted underneath them. This just seems to add to the experience, as it hasn't stopped the tourist trade.

Karsa/Iiradu

3103 C7AA8A8-8 Fl Wa 302 Im K6 IV

Karsa is fondly known throughout the subsector as the Planet of Dreams. The exotic composition of chemicals in the world's atmosphere is breathable by human beings, although many may find themselves short of breath if attempting any physical activity. After about two hours however, any off-worlder breathing the air without some form of protection will find themselves beginning to get very light-headed and giggly. After about another hour they will start to experience striking aural and visual hallucinations, which will last for approximately another hour. Exposure after this time starts to inflict serious damage to the lungs, and any off-worlder exposed to the atmosphere without protection for more than eight hours will begin haemorrhaging inside their lungs, leading to a swift if messy death.

The exact cause of these effects is not widely understood off Karsa, and the Karsans are very keen to keep it this way, for reasons of defence and of the burgeoning tourist trade. Karsa is a popular stop-off point for jaded tourists who wish to seek a new thrill, and religious disciples who feel that a few hours taking in the air will help them communicate with their Higher Being. There are a number of tourists killed every year - when they begin to hallucinate wildly, remembering to mask up after four hours is not always top of the list of priorities. This element of risk does not deter the visitors, and many would speculate that it perhaps encourages them.

Native Karsans do not suffer these ill-effects. Speculation is that some kind of scientific procedure takes place during the Ceremony of the Holy Breath that all Karsans undergo three days after birth. All Karsan births take place in a sealed and purified environment.

Karsa is governed by First Person Jumar Haoo, a former priest of the Church of the Holy Breath who lead a coup against the ruling Deni family some 50 years ago, and declared himself First Person Among Many rather than Ruler of All. Under Haoo, Karsa has begun to prosper, and he is well loved by the majority of the population. Haoo would dearly love to preserve the secret of the Planet of Dreams, whilst spreading its fame amongst the thrill seekers of the sector.

Kassandra/Iiradu

3208 C898000-A Lo Ni Ba 612 Im K7 III

The low population rating for the world is based upon the true resident population - a few scientists based at a mostly automatic D-class starport on the surface. The planet itself supports a wide variety of flora and fauna and, until a few decades ago, a significant human population. Various diseases (some airborne) among the native animals, though originally countered by the human immune system, became increasingly virulent and harmful until the Kassandrans were required to evacuate the planet. The remaining scientists are part of a large research project initiated by the biochemistry department of the University of Nimlakim, in an attempt to identify the cause of the sudden changes in the diseases, the most potent of which is known as "Kassandritus" (c.f.).

Kassandra occasionally finds itself a target for news crews from nearby planets, concentrating on the emotional human side of the Kassandritus mutation but asking awkward questions: "Why, in the high tech Imperium, can't seemingly routine virus and micro-organism mutations be controlled and cured?". This is a question that leading biomedical researchers appear

Despite the hazardous nature of the planet, Kassandra is orbited by a research base operated by the Lemkhi Imperial University of Space Sciences (q.v.) which has grown to include some hundred or so academic and support personnel. The base was set up in 956 to study the system's rather unusual primary star (see Kassandra Imperial University of Space Sciences).

Kassandra's primary star - named Sharik after the captain of the Vilani ship that first discovered the planet - is a K7 subgiant, a large but fairly cool star with a rather unusual spectrum. Anomalies in the spectrum - a very low metal to hydrogen ration - suggest that this star is far older than it seems, and may have been refuelled at some time in the past. No Ancient sites have been found in the system, even though it is the only large body remaining, the only other bodies being a large asteroid ring within Kassandra's orbit.

Astronomical observatories and the like are situated both on and off the station, with sensor-packed satellites at various points around the sun. A single observatory used to be located near the planet's rotational north pole but is now unmanned and is rarely used since it can only be serviced by personnel in full environmental suits, due to the atmospheric contaminants.

Kassandritus

Kassandritus is the name given to the disease caused by micro-organisms found airborne on the planet Kassandra. The micro-organisms attack the human respiratory system, attaching themselves to the lung tissue and extracting oxygen from the breathed air. The disease spreads throughout the human body, depriving the blood of oxygen, resulting in a slow death as the victim's brain cells begin to die off.

The first symptoms of Kassandritus are lack of energy and forgetfulness, leading to complete lack of mobility and eventual senility, before the unfortunate individual slowly slips into unconsciousness and then death. The whole process from initial exposure to death takes between two and ten days, depending on the amount of Kassandran air breathed and the overall fitness of the inhaler.

Currently there is no universal treatment for Kassandritus. Once it is in the individual's respiratory system it is the beginning of the end, as the micro-organisms spread at an alarming rate throughout the body, carried by the bloodstream. Various cures have been formulated, however only limited success has resulted from experiments and terminal case usage. One problem is that the Kassandran micro-organisms seem to be undergoing an extraordinary metamorphosis period. This appears to have been going on for the past 150 years, which finally resulted in its lethal current state and the evacuation of the native Kassandran population.

There is a full time genetic science team based on Kassandra from the University of Nimlakim that is constantly working on a vaccine for Kassandritus. Recent findings have been promising, but further long term work is needed before a prototype antidote is ready for trials. The most pessimistic of the researchers believe that no cure can match the constantly mutating micro-organisms - another plague more deadly than Kassandritus might spring up at any subsequent point. However, there is great political pressure to get the planet recolonised in the near future.

Khi/Iiradu

2603 A685202-F Lo Ni Im 804 M6 D

This is an Imperial Research planet having several labs studying advanced sensor systems.

There are 2 orbital stations conducting research into the effects of a fairly generic system (i.e. Khi) on sensor operation - for which they are collecting extensive amounts of stellar data and such like. They are also studying the effects of high power sensors on space phenomenon and on the flora and fauna of the planet of Khi itself. The base's results are used for setting safety levels throughout the Gushemege sector and for verifying the safety of new sensor systems.

Two further stations are located on the planet, one surface installation associated with the sensor work, the other a subsurface unit dealing with some form of archaeological and/or geological survey. Exact details of this latter station are restricted. The surface station has service and supply domes and low quality landing facilities for ships up to 400 tons; anything larger than this has to dock at the larger of the orbital stations which provides high quality services (but can only handle a few craft at any time).

Between the port and the surface however are floating pleasure domes and private orbital port facilities which provide a stopover point for the rich, who can mingle with the ruling elite. Beneath their feet, the surface of Iiradu is heavily over-populated with a further 35 billion inhabitants according to the last census, though this is woefully out of date.

The poor of the planet struggle to keep the planet running, working in sweatshops or in the heavy mining operations on the surface of the world. Centuries of manufacturing operations on a huge scale and the impersonal bureaucratic government have gradually led to the current deplorable situation on Iiradu.

Much of the surface of the world suffers with the remnants of run-down industrial sites or non-biodegradable rubbish. The thin atmosphere has been polluted to the extent of contamination, requiring all citizens to wear filter masks when venturing out of doors. The small seas, once a bountiful reservoir of food, have been tainted with pollution and now give rise to a variety of mutated inedible life forms. Weather control is practised to reduce the effect of acid rains.

Outsiders might suggest robotics to help out with hard labour, and control the planet's tainted atmosphere, but there is a strong anti-robot sentiment throughout the population - many say they would be left with nothing if their jobs were stolen by machines. There have been riots where attempts were made to introduce significant amounts of automation; instead the manufacturing centres have ultra-complex machinery supervised and tended by large numbers of humans...

Life is rendered more pleasant for rich Iiraduans by the flow of imported produce from Anshu, which exports substantial quantities of delicacies, and offers a peaceful pleasure world for those who wish to leave Iiradu for a while.

Iiradu's whole populace depends on vast food imports for survival. In return it exports much of its manufactured and raw materials, especially minerals, software, vehicles and robotics. There is now little profit in many of its trades, leading to little re-investment in research or development. Taxation is indirect and is levied on all imports and exports.

The government consists of several large committees. The members of each committee are career bureaucrats who have risen to the top through administrative skill, leadership potential or (more commonly) bribery and corruption. The ordinary population is largely apathetic and disinterested, struggling to survive in their overcrowded and complex technological society. Communal living is the norm.

Irdiish/Iiradu

2703 B649446A Ni Im 903 M1 V

This world is aquatic with all major cities based on floating pontoons or underwater. The floating cities move freely around the planet on the tides, but are powered to avoid grounding on shoals/land. Most of the world flooded when the ice caps melted due to an increase in the sun's average temperature. Irdiish is unusually close to its sun (0.2Au) and suffers quite variable weather; during the 28-hour day the surface of the sea steams, at night there is a continual downpour. At dawn and dusk there are fierce storms that last about an hour, often with typhoon-like violence.

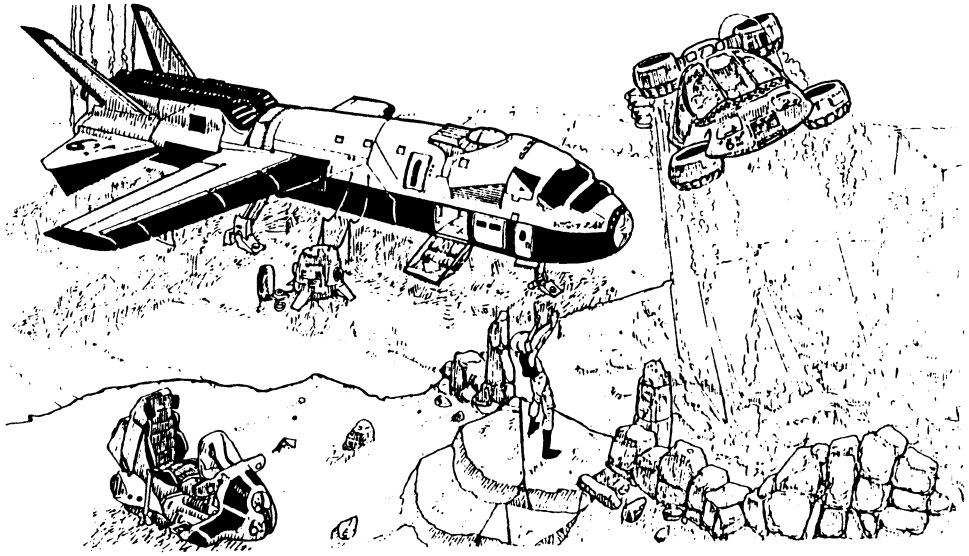
As a result of the freak weather conditions, much of the planetary transport is by submersible but even surface craft are required to be capable of submersing in case of trouble.

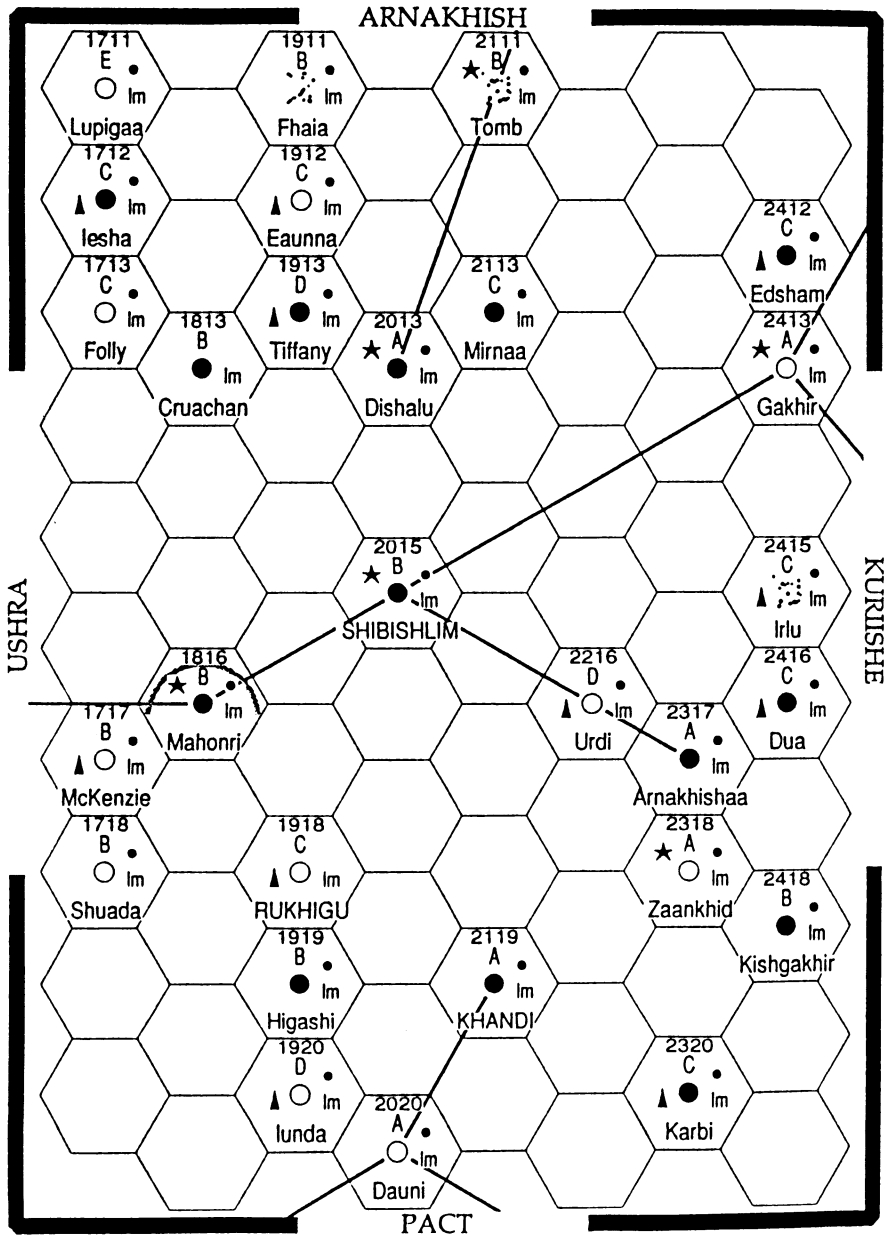
The space port is in geostationary orbit about the planet, associated with a dirt-side station in the sea below. This sea port is mostly on the sea bed about 200 m down, but has a huge sealed hangar on a hydraulic platform which transports ships between the surface and the sea port. The platform can only accommodate 2,000 tons of ships at any one time, and moving from sea to surface and vice-versa is a slow operation, thus severely limiting the port's usage. Ideally the majority of goods would be shipped direct from the orbital port by shuttle, however the weather makes atmospheric travel hazardous and thus most goods have to pass through the sea port and use the safer underwater transport. Scheduling is thus very important.

The main exports of the planet are fish and algae which are used as live stock protein supplements. The sea water has a relatively high sulphur content (from sea-bottom volcanic activity) which, although not dangerous, results in a powerful atmospheric taint. *[ie, there's a strong smell of rotten eggs permeating the whole planet! - Cylac '13]*

Khandi Subsector

[G]





For Your Eyes Only

Referee's Information

Dua & Folly/Khandi

Dua and Folly were both visited by the Ancients bringing to each world a small group of humans. The inhabitants on Folly died out, those on Dua survived long enough to interbreed with survivors of a crashed starship during the First Imperium.

Elan, Abram

Abram Elan had a latent psionic talent, clairvoyance. His 'vision' was in fact an extension of this enhanced by the coincidental presence of an Ancient artefact at the nearby HSS station. The device was undergoing preliminary examination. The artefact was a psionically controlled densitometer-come-scanner that had a mineralogical map of Folly stored within. The map shows one area, in the southern mid-latitudes, with vast deposits of rare-earths. Shielded by an unusual combination of local rocks, the deposit is concealed and effectively invisible to conventional surveying techniques and equipment. The mineral layer lies at a depth beyond most conventional drilling rigs.

Urdi/Khandi

The oligarchy, in exile on Khandi, is recruiting mercenaries to attempt a second (and given their dwindling resources, last) try at restoring their regime. The senior member, the Baron of Urdi, is hurrying them along, since the Duke of Khandi, who considers that it was the Baron's maladministration which caused the rebellion, is to petition the Emperor to revoke his patent of nobility on grounds of incompetence. The Baron, however, continues to receive the support of relatives within Khandi's minor nobility.

In 202, Mendadii Port was visited by the IISS. The scouts discovered that exposure to vacuum had 'freeze dried' the corpses. The bodies were as fresh as the day they had died, the terror of their slow, agonising death still frozen on their faces. The scouts renamed the system 'Tomb' and gave it an amber classification out of respect for the dead.

Then in 988, Simeon McKhan of McKhan Entertainments LIC, arranged to buy the system from the Imperium. The official responsible for the sale was later charged with corruption. McKhan, however had already obtained the system and had immediately began work on changing the Port into a massive theme park. The corpses were sealed in plastic and put on display. Entire buildings were composed of human remains. The whole world became a giant horror tri-vee studio, filled with real corpses.

Since its official opening in 997, almost a billion tourists have visited the theme world which is jointly run by a conglomerate of businesses who have bought the franchise rights to various of the 'entertainments'. Descendants of the original settlers as well as Makhidkarun are currently suing McKhan Entertainments for desecration but are unlikely to succeed since McKhan and the business conglomerate are recognised as the current planetary government.

Urdi/Khandi

2216 D2106A9-8 S Na Ni 602 Im K0V M4D M6D

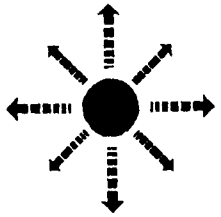
Urdi is the location of an IISS seismological research establishment. The majority of the population are descended from bonded labourers brought from Khandi to build the Scout facility, whom the contracting companies considered to be not worth shipping home when construction was finished. They live in the caverns beneath the research base, which is sited on one of the few seismically stable locations on the planet. The world was governed for centuries by an oligarchy comprised of descendants of the original construction site foremen. Their rule was often harsh, and there were frequent disputes with the Scout administrators over sophont rights issues. In 1079 an uprising led by Lai Astervada, a corporal in the Civic Guard overthrew the oligarchy, which made an unsuccessful attempt to restore its rule by military force in 1095. Astervada and the other heroes of the revolution are now growing old, and the new generation of leaders has been tainted by corruption scandals. Meanwhile, the population is growing disenchanted with the inability of their new leaders to deliver the promised improvements to their quality of life.

Zaankhid/Khandi

2318 A300533-F N Ni Va 611 Im M1 V M3 D

Zaankhid houses the subsector's main naval base. It is a training and reserve centre, keeping many mothballed vessels on Tanner-IX, the outermost moon of the system's only gas giant. The main naval base is on Jenner, the sixth moon of Tanner.

There are a small number of prospectors working the asteroid belt mid-system. Many naval personnel can be found here on leave taking in some entertainment at one of the small, independent spaceports. Even though the civilian population within Zaankhid is small, the presence of the Navy has ensured good supplies of the necessities, and even cheap second-hand ex-naval equipment.



Library Data

LAST UPDATED 363-1115

Abram's Folly

1) Old name of Folly (Khandi 1713)

2) Local [to Khandi subsector], mildly derogatory term meaning 'to embark on a hopeless course of action'. Named after Abram Elan, who set off on a fruitless search of Folly after having a vision of vast mineral wealth on the world.

Arnakhish/Khandi

2317 A75A552-D Ni Wa 104 Im G3V M0D

The government of the water world of Arnakhish licenses several off-world food corporations to harvest marine life to provide protein supplements for the densely populated world of Khandi. In addition, the giant hoopfish native to this world, and in particular hoopfish eggs, have long been considered delicacies by the people of that system. However, local scientists maintain that the harvesting has done great damage to the planetary ecosystem, and that the hoopfish is nearing extinction. The extremist Free Seas League has been carrying out a campaign of violence against the corporations, who, in response, have hired to protect their operations a number of aqua-mercenary units, among them The Family of Flesh, which is made up of members of the more militant Khandan meat cults. However, despite the mercenary forces, the League, whose primary source of funding is unknown, has over the last fifty years steadily increased the scope and sophistication of its activities.

[see Khandi]

Clan McKenzie Enterprises

<C-McE>

Clan McKenzie Enterprises was set up in 855, primarily to provide MacEx with its more specialised tools and equipment. The company was the brain child of Malcolm Xavier McKenzie, who was responsible for inventing the grav filter reclamation system, which is still used by MacEx to extract minerals from fluid or gas. While the company refuses to sell its specialised equipment, it has gained a reputation for building extremely high quality conventional mining equipment, life support systems and security locks. All C-McE equipment carry the Clan McKenzie seal embedded over the control panels to prevent any unauthorised tampering. The company is currently controlled by Malcolm's grand-daughter, Lady Ffyonna Mikaela who rules over all aspects of the company with an iron fist.

Cruachan/Khandi

1813 B7AA235-E Lo Ni Fl Wa 520 Im M9 V M2 D

This beautiful water-world, with its twin red suns, has now become a popular tourist destination for the rich of Khandi. There are half a dozen new hotels scattered on the small island chains across the planet. Most are perched on top of high mountains or extinct volcanoes, above the choking dense lower atmosphere (although one is located below the surface). Aerial flights and submersible cruises are popular means of taking in the sights of Cruachan. The starport has recently been upgraded to cope with the increase in visitors, and the influx of mineral processing companies who are beginning to survey the rich oceans. Cruachan is often described as Iesha's twin.

Dauni/Khandi

2020 A310554-F Ni 923 Im K4V

The title of Marquis of Dauni has, for the last five centuries, been held by the oldest offspring of the Duke of Khandi, with the most important employer in the system being the starship repair yards owned by the ducal family.

The Church of the Brethren have established a monastery atop The Rock of Souls, the highest extinct volcano on the world. Attached to the monastery is a large and well equipped hospital, which caters for a wide range of species. The sick and injured come from across the subsector, and beyond, to take advantage of the free medical treatment provided by the monks. The Rock of Souls is also a favourite climb of low-G mountaineers.

Dehkaim/Khandi

1919 BA75149-8 Lo Ni 603 Im K5 III

This world has recently been claimed by the Henagal and Ias states of Rukhigu (1918) who are looking for room to expand as both their respective countries are suffering from chronic overcrowding problems. The small but excellent starport was built in orbit in 1112 from pre-fabricated parts brought from Rukhigu. It is from this orbital facility that the two Rukhigu representative research teams are conducting extensive planetary surveys. There are several sites on Dehkaim earmarked for the initial colonisation, although the teams have yet to complete on-site investigations. Henagal and Ias are currently lobbying Imperial offices for additional funding for atmospheric terraforming. A number of the other states from Rukhigu, backed by a consortium of businesses, are challenging the legality of the claim by Henagal and Ias. There has been one attempted hijacking of the orbital station of Dehkaim attributed to elements from Rukhigu.

Dishalu/Khandi

2013 A453764-B N Po 524 Im M5 V1 M4 D

Dishalu is a small planet with a thin atmosphere that is only breathable unassisted half a kilometre below sea level. This has resulted in all the settlements on the planet being built deep within the Gejiu F'har Trench. The trench is a massive ten kilometre-wide scar that circumnavigates the planet's Northern hemisphere. In places the trench is over twenty five kilometres deep and the settlers have carved their cities out of the walls.

The primary settlement is Shabhai Ryi, situated three quarters of a kilometre below the surface. The city which houses over twenty million people, is carved deep into the blood-red stone. The port extends out from the trench walls on several platforms known locally as Wind Bays. Elevators run on the outside of the city giving a spectacular view of the trench floor twenty kilometres below.

Dishalu's major export is its young people who are 'sold' off-planet as courtesans on ten year indentures. Once the indenture is completed, they are allowed to return to the planet and marry. Dishalun Houri's are in great demand and are much sought after as companions. The training houses, which all Dishalun's must attend from the age of three until their indenture, teach a wide variety of skills and disciplines so that the Houri are able to act as companions, teachers, bodyguards and advisors to their contractors. Houri are forbidden by their contracts and by their culture, from marrying non-Dishalun's, though many contractors do try and retain their companions for life.

While Dishalu is a relatively barren planet with only lichen and mosses living on the surface, the trench supports an extensive eco-system, primarily composed of fliers.

Dua/Khandi

2416 C33147A-A S Ni Po 702 Im M6 IV

Dua is a cold desert world, home to a scattered nomadic people known as the 'Separationists'. They move from oasis to oasis that dot the planet, seeking food and water, trading small items of need with each other. Their exact origin is shrouded in mystery. They appear to be of mixed Sylean-Vilani descent, but of their arrival on Dua the Separationists do not know or do not wish to tell. They have a very distinct language and culture. A small IISS team are now resident on the world, trying to unravel the history of the Separationists.

Eaunna/Khandi

1912 C300667-C S Na Ni Va 221 Im M0 V

Eaunna is a planet under exploitation. The system had been uninhabited until 888, when large deposits of heavy metals were found. Several corporations tried to buy the planet but the Imperium refused to sell. Today the planet is divided into over 380,000 individual claims with each claim owner imposing their own laws and judicial system over their territory.

The planet has a reputation for spectacular scenery. Majestic mountains tower over massive craters, filled with extremely fine dust forming rainbow coloured 'seas' of quicksand consistency. The local inhabitants use modified Transtel Mudskippers to 'sail' the seas, leaving a luminescent trail behind them caused by constant static discharge from the ship's outboard stabilisers.

The largest of the dust bowls is Clarke's Sea, which is 2,000 km long, surrounded on three sides by volcanoes. Large mineral deposits have been located deep underneath the seas but, as yet, no-one has discovered how to mine it safely.

It is believed that many of the numerous colonies in the system (other worlds and space stations) are on the brink of declaring independence from their parent states. The IISS station on the world is actively trying to diffuse the situation by acting as peace brokers.

If one can ignore the current troubles on the Rukhigu, the visitor will find the world has plenty to offer in trade opportunities. The competition between the countries has given rise to production of quality, and low-priced, industrial and consumer commodities. Prices tend to run at ten percent less than the Imperial average; greater discounts can be obtained if one is prepared to bargain.

SHIBISHLIM/Khandi

2015 B466A55-D N Hi 801 Im

Shibishlim society is traditionally insular and reserved. Its citizens are content to go about their day-to-day business and let the swirling currents of Imperial history sort themselves out. Off-worlders are welcomed politely but without great warmth.

In contrast to these attitudes of benign disinterest, the government and media of Shibishlim loudly trumpet that the subsector government is biased in favour of other systems, that the aggressive trade policies of Khandi are harming Shibishlim's economy, and that the Dagudashaag gravball league is working to prevent its franchise - the Blokaders - from ever winning the championship. The truth of these allegations is difficult to assess, although it is a fact that of 1115 the Shibishlim Blokaders have not won a trophy in sixty years. Consequently, other inhabitants of Khandi subsector sometimes use the term "whining Shibishlim" to derogatorily refer to an individual who complains ceaselessly for no good reason.

Shuada/Khandi

1718 B100634-F Na Ni Va 401 Im K9 IV M9 V

A recent zuchai crystal find has catapulted Shuada from an uninhabited rock into a bustling, thriving mining centre. The majority of the mining rights are now held by Sternmetal, with smaller stakes held by GenMett and independents. The aggressive tactics used by Sternmetal to buy out the lesser stockholders and deny other players gaining a larger share of the market has led to increasingly more violent acts of sabotage against the megacorporation. As a consequence there is now a heavy Sternmetal security presence, which operates under the pretense of being the 'official' planetary police force. Sternmetal has installed a sympathetic puppet government which almost always bows to the needs and whims of the megacorp. There is always an opening for mercenaries, to work for Sternmetal, GenMett or independent co-operatives. Shuada has a boom-town frontier feel. You can taste the tension.

Tiffany/Khandi

1913 D458520-A S Ag Ni 322 Im K4 V

Tiffany is a lush garden world teeming with native life. The planet is primarily a water world with literally millions of tiny island archipelagos festooned around, teeming with native flora. Almost all the animal life is aquatic though a wide variety of flying insects abound on the surface. Due to the metallic taint in the air, few humans are comfortable for any length of period without a filter mask. As a result, Tiffany has been primarily colonised by Hamaran who are unaffected by the taint. Set up in the early 200's, the planet has a small but stable population. Most islands hold a single family unit, often living in the forest tops and communicating with others for most of the time only by Communet. The planet currently exports over 200 different types of fruit which are in wide demand despite their slight metallic tang.

Tomb/Khandi

2111 B000575-F N Ni As 504 Im K0 V

Tomb is a hollowed out asteroid on the edge of the Meshurish Belt. Colonised sometime near the end of the Ziru Sirka, the asteroid, then known as Mendadii, was the major settlement and supply depot for the miners of the belt.

History shows that a dispute arose between the miners and Makhidkarun over working conditions that ended with the miners declaring themselves independent and Mendadii an open market. Within a week the entire resident population was dead. An unknown toxic gas had been released into the life support system. 205,332 people, mostly women and children, died in prolonged agony as their lungs melted. The miners that had been off-station at the time of the attack blamed Makhidkarun. Makhidkarun claimed to have found evidence that the attack had actually been carried out by Makhadu, a miners separatist movement prevalent at that time, with the intention of laying the blame for their actions at the Megacorporation's door. Whatever the truth, Mendadii was finished. On the express instructions of the surviving miners, the settlement was sealed. The bodies left where they had fallen.

McKenzie/Khandi

1717 B200223-B S Lo Ni Va 304 Im G2 VI

McKenzie is a moon circling the gas giant, Candy. Originally established as a miners colony, the world was abandoned during the Second Imperium after its mineral wealth had been extracted. The world was bought by Jaymi Gregorach McKenzie in 765 as a headquarters for McKenzie Extractions Plc. and home for the clan McKenzie.

Today, only family members are allowed to stay in the system for more than 6 months. The Port, Foxtrot Oscar (a phonetic radio insult intended to tell visitors to go away), is constructed from the remnants of ancient spaceships attached together by walkways. The main port complex is the hull of The Maverick, a decommissioned Imperial Voroshilef-class battleship. The Maverick also houses the ports' main defense facilities. Three ex-Imperial Transports connected together, form the warehouse section of the port. The only civilian settlement in the system is the clan home, deep underneath the port, known only as Caern Sidhe.

McKenzie, Sir Kenneth Laughlin

b. 1000 -

Sir Kenneth McKenzie is the major shareholder in McKenzie Extractions Plc., Clan McKenzie Enterprises and the current patriarch of Clan McKenzie. In 1022 Sir Kenneth ascended to the patriarchal position with the death of his father. His first task was an attempted hostile take-over of CalMac Interface Lines which, while not totally successful, resulted in his acquiring 34% of the shares. He has an unrivalled reputation as a diplomat and has developed close relations not only with GenMett, ICE and the Megacorporations but has still managed to retain close ties with the UBD independent mining consortium.

Sir Kenneth is described as an extremely tall, well built man with maori features, fiery red hair and bushy beard and a temper to match. He has one son, Donald Wallace, and three grandchildren, Duncan Robert, Jaymi BenStruan and Shona Portree.

UBD - Unabhängig Bergbaubund aus Dagudashaag.

McKenzie Extractions Plc.

<MacEx>

MacEx is a sector-wide mining company specialising in extracting minerals from commercially exhausted planets and asteroids. MacEx buys the mining rights to planets that the larger companies have deemed no longer commercially viable and using specialised equipment developed by Clan McKenzie Enterprises, the company extracts the remaining mineral wealth.

The company has managed to develop and maintain a good working relationship with environmental groups, primarily because it only works on planets already heavily exploited by other companies and because some of its unique mining methods also extract and reclaim pollutants in the ecosystem left by the previous mining consortium's. So successful has MacEx been at reducing the damage done to ecosystems, they have recently and rather successfully begun to branch out into ecological damage control business and have already made quite a name for themselves.

Mirnaa/Khandi

2113 C443578-B Ni Po 324 Im M2V

A series of colonies were established by Khandi on this world between 624 and 783. Since their independence in 1000, the relationships between the individual colonies have become very strained. The most divisive issue is control of the main starport. The colonies' inability to agree has prevented work to upgrade the port facilities, and even though this has damaged the economic development of the entire system, compromise and good sense seem unlikely to prevail.

Rukhigu/Khandi

1918 C410976-E S Hi Wa In 710 Im F4 V M7 D

Split into a dozen overcrowded independent states, Rukhigu has an atmosphere as tense as that found on any world on the brink of war. Population and resource pressures have forced a number of the states to start looking off-world for a means of relief. The states of Henagal and Ias (located on the southern continent of Berakhlistuga) have co-operated to begin surveying the neighbouring system of Dehkaim, with a view to colonise. Their annexation of the mainworld has brought an aggressive response from the others countries on Rukhigu. Many of the states are gearing their industries up for conflict as they see war as the probable arbiter of the dispute.

Edsham/Khandi

2412 C226520-9 Sc Ni 503 Im

The mainstay of this system's economy is a large IISS base. Native Edshamites have a relaxed view towards the use of alcohol and recreational drugs, the planet being one of several cited as the home of the notorious "Scout Brew" drink. The complete lack of regulation means that there are areas of the city surrounding the Scout base that are perpetually off-limits to serving personnel. There have been many reports over the years of civilian off-workers visiting these areas being mistaken for Scouts by the base's shore patrols, and subsequently being roughly incarcerated. Travellers are advised to keep their means of identification readily to hand.

Elan, Abram

(b.591 - d.667)

A would-be adventurer and explorer, who died in search of riches on the neighbouring world of Folly. Elan was born on Iesha to an ordinary family, where he developed into a brighter than average child with a skill for manipulating figures. After high school, Elan moved to Khandi to complete a degree in Statistical Modeling. On finishing his course he returned to his home world to take up a senior post in the Corporate Planning department of Talas-Iesha Extractions, a subsidiary of GenMett.

In 632, Abram Elan set out from Iesha to explore the impoverished world that was later to be named Folly, following a vision he claimed to have experienced showing him vast deposits of valuable minerals. He spent the rest of his life trying to make his vision a reality, but without success.

Fhaia/Khandi

1911 B000500-D Ni As 913 Im G1 VI

Fhaia is a collection of over a hundred inhabited asteroids in the Fhaia belt located in orbit three. The system was owned by GenMett who leased out sectors of the Belt to independent miners. In 999, GenMett was approached by MacEx as it appeared that the system was finally mined out of its more valuable metals. A deal was agreed and the final hand-over set for 1102. Many of the miners, whose families had lived there for several generations, were extremely unhappy about moving away. Then, in 1101 a large deposit of platinum was discovered by an independent miner and, within days, GenMett had pulled out of the deal. Within weeks the system was swamped by miners hoping to find the 'big one'. While there has been some discoveries, most of the miners have met with only limited success. It is interesting to note that the miner who discovered the original platinum deposit invested her money in an entertainments module which she had brought to the Belt. Since 1102 she has made eight times the value of her platinum deposit from selling imported entertainment to the mining community.

Folly/Khandi

1713 C300459-A Ni Va 623 Im M1 V

In 632, Abram Elan set out from Iesha to explore this impoverished world following a vision he claimed to have experienced showing him vast deposits of valuable minerals. He sold up all his possessions and property, bought a small ship and survey equipment and went to find his fortune. News of his plan made its way to the media and quickly Elan's adventure (and also the world) nicknamed Abram's Folly - several previous surveys had found nothing of value whatsoever on the planet. For three decades Elan scoured the planet without a trace of the riches he dreamed of. He died a bitter, broken, defeated and impoverished man in 667. The current population is made up of independent, itinerant prospectors following in the footsteps of Elan, some of whom have also claimed that they have had visions.

Gakhir/Khandi

2413 A4007B9-F N Na Va 704 Im

In 447 this otherwise unremarkable planet was the site of a major lanthanum strike. Although most of the ore was quickly worked out, political power still remains with the dozen, family-owned mining houses through their domination of the Prospectors League, the system's only legal political party. Disputes between the houses are normally settled peacefully, but they constantly jockey for commercial advantage. The greatest part of the houses' prospecting and exploitation activity has shifted to the colony system of Irlu. The brightest and the best of Gakhir vie to be appointed administrators of Irlu's vast planetoid belts.

Although life for most citizens is sedate and comfortable, the Prospectors League perpetuates the myth of Gakhir as a world of hardy, roving space-miners. Certainly, its people take readily to space travel. Their planetary navy is unusually large for a system with a population of only 70 million, and is one of the few in peaceful Khandi subsector that maintains a high state of readiness. Gakhir patrol cruisers can often be found operating alongside Imperial craft in anti-corsair exercises across the subsector.

[see Irlu]

Iesha/Khandi

1712 C7AA886-C S Fl Wa 213 Im M1 D

Iesha is almost identical in its physical characteristics with Cruachan. Diameter, density, atmospheric pressure and composition, geological and hydrological composition are all within one per cent. This difference is gradually widening for Cruachan is in orbit around a pair of stars one of which is a warmer main-sequence M-class body. The rate of divergence indicates that the planets were identical a little over a quarter of a million years ago.

In the early 600's a small number of Ancient artefacts were found that were examined at the local IISS base before being shipped to the Scout Research Centre on Medurma.

Iesha now supports a large population involved in some degree with the mineral extraction from the seas and the atmosphere, and has now become an exciting thriving world.

Irlu/Khandi

2415 C000565-C Sc Ni As 624 Im

The system is owned by a cartel of mining houses based at Gakhir, with all decisions taken by administrators appointed from that world. Over the last fifty years native-born Irlu have been pressing for a degree of self-government, but the reactionary mining houses have resisted all demands. So far protests have been peaceful, but in 1109 a leaked IISS intelligence report expressed concern at the possibility of violence breaking out. Unsubstantiated media reports have also suggested megacorporation support for the Irlu home-rule movement, in return for a promise of future exploitation rights.

The Gakhir mining houses are jealous in their ownership of the Irlu belts. Independent prospecting craft - or any ships wandering into the wrong parts of the system - are likely to be harassed by patrol cruisers of the Gakhir planetary navy. Irlu's belts possess an above average number of asteroids, but have witnessed few rich finds in the last hundred years.

[see Gakhir]

Iunda/Khandi

1920 D8B0535-5 S Ni De 503 Im K1 V M5 D

A small colony on Iunda exists to support the refining industry that has sprung up extracting valuable complex gases from the planet's exotic atmosphere. Each refinery is very much independent from the rest of the world, ruled by a non-elected 'board of directors' who are deaf to the voice of the ordinary worker. Little investment has been forthcoming with the planet's infrastructure suffering as a result. The starport is in desperate need of a major overhaul and upgrade. As a consequence fewer and fewer vessels are calling at Iunda.

Karbi/Khandi

2320 C8D3663-A S Ni Fl 325 Im M1 V M3 D

Karbi is a hot, inhospitable planet colonised late in the Rule of Man. Unique chemicals which exist openly on the surface formed an extremely flexible but hard-wearing natural polymer. In order to have sole rights to the material, ReClaim-Tec, a Solomani plastic manufacturers entered into partnership with the Sector Duke to establish an underground colony on the planet. The polymer is manufactured on the planet into a vast number of everyday products but is perhaps best known for its production of self-heating food packs and its use in filter masks, aqua equipment and space suits. Karbi has remained little more than a worker's dormitory and factory site with only a small percentage of its population being permanent residents. Under the planet's charter, this group is the only segment of society that can either vote in company elections or stand for office within their manufacturing region. Competition between factories is extremely fierce and can lead to extreme violence on occasions.

KHANDI/Khandi

2119 A222A87-F Hi In Na Po 312 Im M3V

Khandi's strong growth in population since 600, combined with its total lack of agricultural capacity, has created a need for imported agroproduce which the neighbouring systems are simply unable to fulfill. Although the world is presently able to feed its populace through the use of hydroponic facilities, quality foodstuffs still command premium prices.

The most important festival on Khandi is Yastyr, when people exchange food delicacies with family and friends, traditionally the egg of the giant hoopfish of Arnakhish. Although many Khandans are vegetarian, a significant minority of the population belong to so called meat cults, which gather at elaborate ceremonies to taste strange and exotic meat dishes. The TAS advises travellers to Khandi to keep any pets confined to their starships or a special secure area at the TAS hostel.

Kishgakhir/Khandi

2418 B454402-F Ni 714 Im M2 V M7 D

Kishgakhir, like Gakhir, is named after the two sons of the minor god Angakh of Vilani mythology. Although similar in size the resemblance ends there. The world is a pleasant farming colony that is shaping up to be a major agricultural producer of the future. Much of this is due to the arrival of Vhi Dytru Inc. and its agricultural machinery production plant. The prospect of jobs is bringing an influx of new blood from Khandi and Shibishlim. The Imperial Bureau of Colonisation is offering land grants and free passage for people to move to Kishgakhir. Local life is primitive, most crops and livestock has been introduced from other worlds. many novel food plants and animals are being added to kishgakhir's biosphere to tempt Dagudashaag's eager palette.

Kra

A carnivorous flier native to Dishalu (2013 Khandi), the Kra is considered the most dangerous of all native life forms. Adult Kra are 30cm long fliers whose bodies are completely covered in thousands of sharp spines. the 'wings' are formed from a mat of hollow spines that extend out from the upper body like circular rotary blades. Kra take off by means of a natural jet propulsion. The creature builds up gas from its food which it stores in inflatable gas sacs under the belly. When it requires lift it expels this in controlled bursts out through the hollow tubes that form the 'wings'. This causes it to rise until it reaches the powerful thermal currents of the trench where it can rest and allow itself to glide.

Kra live in large flocks, of approximately twenty thousand adults. When hungry or frightened, the flock swarm all over any animal found outside, ripping and tearing at the skin. They live on the blood which they lap up with their 20cm long tongues that are coated in a highly effective anti-coagulant to ensure the blood keeps flowing. The few victims that haven't died from the cuts and blood loss, have ended up haemophiliacs.

Lupigaa/Khandi

1711 E350421-5 Ni Po De 404 Im M3 D M0 D

This impoverished, desert world has almost nothing to offer, but once this was not so. In the early years of the Third Imperium it was a small successful, if somewhat fragile, farming colony. The inhabitants cultivated local moss-like plants for their pharmaceutical value. Power was supplied by a fusion reactor on the shores of a small sea. In 134 a large freighter mis-jumped into the Lupigaa system, within the planet's gravity and collided with one of the many small chunks of rock that orbit the world. The ship moved into the upper reaches of the atmosphere to get below further trouble but its drives failed at a critical moment and it plunged planetwards into the power station. The resulting explosion devastated a huge area around the crash site, vapourising the small sea and contaminating the land and air for a radius of over a thousand kilometres. This incredible sequence of improbable events persuaded many of the inhabitants that it was time to leave, and since Lupigaa has slowly, inexorably diminished.

Mahouri/Khandi

1816 B411548-E N Ni Ic A 501 Im M2 V M6 D

Mahouri houses the Imperial Navy's Dagudashaag Experimental Systems and Test Establishment. The exact nature of the Navy's work here is shrouded in secrecy. The Navy keep it that way by imposing a system-wide amber zone classification, and a red zone within one AU of the mainworld. All non-naval traffic must use the small spaceport in orbit around the system's gas giant Coulos.