# TRAVELLER

## NAVAL CAMPAIGN SOURCEBOOK

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## MONGOOSE TRAVELLER

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# INTRODUCTION

Whether sailing the seas or among the stars, a ship is a self-contained world; mighty yet vulnerable.

This is never more so than aboard a naval starship. Her officers and crew make decisions that can change the course of history and decide the fate of worlds. They face terrible dangers and see wondrous events unfold around them. Of course, they also spend a lot of time cleaning decks and doing paperwork.

This book concentrates more on adventures and disasters than admin and maintenance, but it does present a framework for running a naval campaign in which a misfiled report can have unexpected consequences. You will find guidance on how to set up and run a naval campaign, with rules to cover every eventuality. We present rules for creating Travellers tailored to their role aboard a starship or naval station, for resolving routine situations that might just turn out to be more complex than expected, and for generating random mishaps along the way.

A key concept in the naval campaign is the difference between a mission and an adventure. An adventure in this context is a self-contained incident that is interesting, challenging, threatening and rewarding. Multiple adventures can occur during the course of a mission, and parts of the mission can go off well or badly without being played out as an adventure. To put that another way: a mission is what the ship and her crew set out to do; adventures are the interesting bits of what happens along the way.

The rules in this book will allow the referee to resolve the routine parts of the mission and determine whether they generate incidents that might be worthy of an adventure. This could be something big, like an unexpected alien invasion, but a complex problem involving disaffected crewmembers could also provide a great many role-playing opportunities.

Naval adventures are not all about spinal weapons fire and damage control operations!

## Key Concepts

The mechanics presented in this book make use of a number of key concepts which are introduced here and fully explained later.

**Crew Efficiency Index (CEI):** This is an indicator of the overall ability of a ship and crew to deal with situations. It is used when abstracting events that affect the ship as a whole.

**Detachment Efficiency Index (DEI):** This is an indicator of the overall ability of a group of crewmembers or division of a ship's company (such as the Gunnery division or a damage-control party dispatched to carry out a major repair). It is used when abstracting the results of smaller events.

**Mission Success Index (MSI):** This is an indicator of how well the mission has gone. It reflects whether the Travellers achieve their mission objectives, and how well those objectives are accomplished.

**Morale (MOR):** This is an indicator of how content and confident the crew are. A crew with a low Morale score will not be steady in action, and a Morale score of 0 will likely result in mutiny.

**Mission:** A self-contained set of tasks and orders the vessel is sent to carry out.

**Mission Segment:** A subdivision of the mission, usually focusing on one task or a single location.

**Operation:** A task carried out by the crew or a detachment of it. There are usually several Operations in any given Mission Segment.

**Adventure:** Something unusual that happens during a mission, requiring the focus to shift from abstracted resolution to conventional roleplaying.

# TRAVELLERS IN A NAVAL CAMPAIGN

The naval campaign concept assumes that the Travellers are naval personnel. In other Traveller campaigns, the assumption is that the Travellers have left their previous service, but this is not the case in a naval campaign. If the referee wishes to use these rules to play a campaign where the Travellers are mercenaries crewing a warship for a patron, or where the navy has decided to recall the-best-of-the-best out of retirement, then the standard career creation system in the *Traveller Core Rulebook* can be used. However, in most cases it is necessary to create Travellers who are still in the employment of their home navy.

The Travellers will be the most important crewmembers of a ship and all must accept the nature of the campaign. They will be given instructions and expected to carry them out. There will be no bargaining for more Credits; the navy gets its orders and does the job. Maverick Travellers can be accommodated up to a point, but there are limits and they must be accepted.

To sum this up:

*'Can you…'*

*'Yes, sir we can! Now, what's the job?'*

No quibbles, no arguments about payment. We'll get this done because we're The Navy. If you wanted to complain about the pay or the food or the uncomfortable bunks you should have joined the Scouts.

## ASSIGNING ROLES

Normally the Travellers will be the most important people on a naval mission, which usually means the most senior officers of the ship carrying out that mission. However, not all Travellers want to be officers or have responsibility. Some prefer to be a talented crewmember and others are simply not suited to a command role even if they want it. Experience has shown that assigning very senior positions to Travellers who are unsuitable can bring the whole campaign to a halt whilst everyone else waits for orders.

### The Travellers Should be Decision-Makers

The Travellers should be important to the mission and the running of their ship, but that does not always translate to high rank or a position on the bridge. Many of the ship's most important functions take place away from the bridge and may be carried out by relatively low-ranking personnel.

As a general rule, the Travellers should be the people who solve problems for the ship; the ship's chief engineer might never set foot on the bridge, but she is consulted when there is a technical problem. The master-at-arms is not an officer, but the captain relies on him for specialist advice. On the other hand, it may be that some of the bridge officers are always in the presence of people who outrank them and never get to exercise their own initiative.

Thus Travellers should be assigned roles where they get to make decisions rather than simply being given the highest-ranking positions aboard a vessel.

The captain of a ship must be a Traveller. This is a demanding role and should not be taken on lightly; the captain will ultimately answer for everything the Travellers and their ship do. After the role of captain is assigned, Travellers have more leeway in the roles they wish to take. However, roles should be assigned in order of how much decision-making the Traveller will get to make.

The Naval Ship Roles table presents a selection of the most interesting positions to play, along with minimum rank requirements to hold that position. Larger ships will have higher-ranking officers and petty officers in important roles, whereas smaller vessels may substitute a lower rank in some cases. The table assigns positions aboard the ship in tiers based upon the importance (not necessarily seniority) of the position. All positions of a given tier should be filled by Travellers before moving down to the next.

If more than one Traveller wants a particular job, simply have both roll 2D; the highest total gets the position they want. Alternatively, everyone can roll dice and choose the position they want in order of highest to lowest score.

**NAVAL SHIP ROLES**

| Tier | Position | Minimum Rank | Notes |
|------|----------|--------------|-------|
| 0 | Commanding Officer (Captain) | Lieutenant-Commander | Some small ships could be commanded by a Lieutenant, while major warships will have a Captain |
| 1 | Executive Officer | Lieutenant | Usually one rank below the Captain |
| 2 | Gunnery Officer | Lieutenant | |
| 2 | Chief Engineer | Lieutenant | |
| 2 | Marine Commander | Lieutenant | |
| 3 | Bridge Engineering Officer | Lieutenant | An engineering specialist assigned to the bridge crew as an advisor and damage control expert |
| 3 | Astrogator | Sublieutenant | |
| 3 | Chief Pilot | Sublieutenant | May be a Chief Petty Officer on smaller ships |
| 3 | Medical Officer | Sublieutenant | |
| 3 | Small Craft Operations Commander | Lieutenant | |
| 3 | Master-At-Arms | Chief Petty Officer | |

**EXAMPLE:**

| PROCEEED TO TIER 0 | **If requirements are met** Travellers roll 2D | Highest score gets the Commanding Officer (Captain) position |

| TIER 0 POSITION FILLED: PROCEEED TO TIER 1 | **If requirements are met** Remaining Travellers roll 2D. | Traveller with the highest score gets the Executive Officer position. |

| TIER 1 POSITION FILLED: PROCEEED TO TIER 2 | **If requirements are met** Remaining Travellers roll 2D. | Traveller with the highest score choose one of the three available positions. Second highest score choose one of the remaining positions. Lowest score choose the last position. |

| TIER 2 POSITION FILLED: PROCEEED TO TIER 3 IF ANY TRAVELLER LEFT | **If requirements are met** Remaining Travellers roll 2D. | Travellers choose one of the six positions in order of highest to lowest score. |

# CREATING TRAVELLERS

Once the Travellers know which role they will be taking aboard their vessel, their skill levels are determined. It is assumed that advancement occurs in two out of every three terms of service. This indicates how old the Traveller will be and how many terms they have served, which in turn can be used to determine skill levels, as shown on the Naval Traveller Creation table.

Travellers are still in the service so do not receive mustering out benefits. They are assumed to be D3 years into their current term. So a Traveller who needs to have served three terms to hold their current rank will be 30+D3 years old and be somewhere in their fourth term of service.

## NAVAL TRAVELLER CREATION

| Rank | Terms Completed | Age | Automatic Skills | Skills |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Captain | 7 | 46 | Melee (blade) 1<br>Leadership 1<br>Tactics (naval) 1<br>SOC+1 or SOC 10 | 4 Specialist,<br>4 Command |
| Commander | 6 | 42 | Melee (blade) 1<br>Leadership 1<br>Tactics (naval) 1 | 4 Specialist,<br>3 Command |
| Lieutenant-Commander | 5 | 38 | Melee (blade) 1<br>Leadership 1 | 3 Specialist,<br>3 Command |
| Lieutenant | 4 | 34 | Melee (blade) 1<br>Leadership 1 | 3 Specialist,<br>2 Command |
| Sublieutenant | 2 | 26 | Melee (blade) 1<br>Leadership 1 | 2 Specialist,<br>1 Command |
| Ensign | 1 | 22 | Melee (blade) 1 | 1 Specialist,<br>1 Command |
| Master Chief Petty Officer | 8 | 50 | | 3 Navy,<br>3 Specialist,<br>2 Command |
| Chief Petty Officer | 7 | 46 | | 2 Navy,<br>3 Specialist,<br>2 Command |
| Petty Officer 1st Class | 5 | 38 | END+1 | 2 Navy,<br>3 Specialist,<br>1 Command |

# BASIC TRAINING

All enlisted navy personnel receive the following skills at level 0: Athletics, Gun Combat, Mechanic, Medic, Steward, Vacc Suit

All naval officers receive the following skills at level 0: Admin, Astrogation, Gun Combat, Leader, Melee, Tactics, Vacc Suit

Skills are selected from the Naval Service Skills table rather than rolled randomly. Each time a skill is chosen, add +1 to its level, to a maximum of 4.

**NAVAL SERVICE SKILLS**

| Navy Skills | Specialist Skills | Command Skills |
|---|---|---|
| +1 to any Characteristic | Astrogation | Admin |
| Athletics | Electronics | Advocate |
| Gun Combat | Engineer | Diplomat |
| Mechanic | Gunner | Investigate |
| Melee | Pilot | Leadership |
| Steward | Flyer | |
| Vacc Suit | Medic | |
| | Explosives | |

Events are rolled as normal, one per completed term, but the Traveller obviously cannot have suffered a Mishap that would result in being forced out of the service. Instead, a Survival roll is made each term as normal, and Mishaps are applied if necessary. If the result requires the Traveller to leave the service, he is instead aged D3+3 years, representing a stalled career whilst recovering from injury or a late promotion due to controversy.

Finally, all Travellers receive two discretionary skill levels which can be added to any skill already possessed or which the Traveller could reasonably have gained. The Traveller is now ready to begin play.

# RUNNING A
# NAVAL CAMPAIGN

A naval campaign could be open-ended, running for years, or might be a specific story the referee wants to tell such as an exploration voyage to a star cluster.

The easiest way to play a naval campaign is to have the Travellers all serving aboard a particular vessel, station or base. The story is, to a great extent, about the ship and her company. This is the most common style of campaign and also a staple of sci-fi TV shows. Personnel might come and go but the ship goes on with her missions.

One problem the referee should be aware of is the logic of officer promotions; if senior crewmembers are promoted they would realistically leave the ship for a while to undergo training, and might well be posted to another vessel in a more important position. Taken to an extreme, a ship campaign could eventually end up with an officer qualified to command a cruiser still serving as second-in-command of the engineering department.

The obvious answer is to keep promotions to a minimum. This is realistic and also avoids the sort of bloat that occurs in some novel series, where the protagonist ends up commander-in-chief of half the known universe and has to come up with ever-more-spurious reasons to be flying around having adventures. However, Travellers may receive promotion from time to time. It is possible to come up with reasonably plausible reasons why some officers resist reassignment out of loyalty to their ship or crew, or to transfer senior officers to a more capable vessel along with a selected group of crewmembers.

Giving the Travellers a bigger and better ship can be a reward for success, but should be treated with caution. Destroyers and cruisers are the best ships for a naval campaign as they are likely to be given detached missions and are powerful enough to make a difference wherever they go. On the other hand, it is difficult to come up with reasons why a super-dreadnought has been sent off to check out interstellar anomalies, unless this is the focus of the campaign… in which case there is probably something very serious going on which will lead to major adventures.

## CAMPAIGN THEME

Most campaigns have a primary theme, though other themes will likely be present in some form or other. It is possible to use the apparent campaign theme to set up a sudden change of direction for dramatic effect, such as when a routine-patrol-and-diplomacy style campaign suddenly takes a sharp left turn into the supernatural, or where a ship on a 'warfighting' mission is suddenly confronted by a situation its crew are not equipped for. This approach is risky but can have excellent dramatic effects.

More commonly, the campaign theme will indicate the sort of events and missions that will unfold. Some themes are better suited to particular types of adventure, and some Travellers may respond better to the greater or lesser accountability that goes with certain campaigns.

### Distant Worlds

Exploration involves long-ranged missions beyond the frontiers of civilised space. The ship is likely to be on its own most of the time, with the occasional allied vessel or scheduled resupply rendezvous being the only contact with home for months or years on end. A campaign of this kind gives the Travellers a huge amount of autonomy but also limits resources to whatever they have aboard their ship. If an explosion in the focussing chamber takes the spinal weapon out of action, the Travellers will have to do without it until they can find a suitably equipped and trustworthy shipyard.

The Distant Worlds campaign can be extremely varied, with Travellers exploring systems, conducting diplomacy with newly discovered cultures, and dealing with whatever problems arise aboard the ship. The focus of the campaign might be a mission to investigate a particular phenomenon or meet a new culture rumoured to be 'out there somewhere', or it might be more general. A variant of this style is the 'get home somehow' campaign where a ship is lost after a misjump or an exploration mission has gone wrong and must crawl home to safety.

**Example:** The campaign opens with an Element family cruiser taking a pounding. Her captain orders an emergency jump, and after a fraught week making emergency repairs the ship emerges from an obvious misjump. The spinal mount is crippled and the drives are erratic. One of the pods is gutted and a lot of air and water has been lost. Scans indicate the ship is hundreds of parsecs from friendly space. What now?

## Warfighting

A warfighting campaign does not have to be set amid major battles. Operations against pirates and rogue world governments can provide plenty of conflict and allow opportunities for diplomatic solutions or more subtle ways of dealing with an enemy, such as using the ship's marines to make a 'decapitation strike' on the hostile government.

A Warfighting campaign will usually involve a crew being given very specific missions, with serious consequences if they are not carried out. There is always the possibility of being caught in the wrong place at the wrong time, or being the only naval asset available to deal with a sudden crisis. The Travellers will have more oversight but also greater guidance and support when needed, unless they are given a very long-range mission such as a deep raid into enemy territory.

**Example:** As tensions rise with the Zhodani Consulate, a cruiser is sent to a friendly power far from Imperial borders. Her captain is ordered to support the friendlies against their enemies and secure their position in the hope they will provide forward bases to raid Zhodani space if war does break out. The cruiser is forbidden to engage in combat against Zhodani ships unless fired upon, but the Zhodani have also sent vessels to support local powers friendly to them. The Travellers must find a way to deal with their allies' enemies without triggering another Frontier War.

## Patrol and Diplomacy

A naval campaign in peacetime can still be dangerous and exciting. The cruiser is sent to 'show the flag' and resolve local problems one way or another. Almost anything can happen, from grand receptions thrown by a world government which has an agenda hidden behind polite conversation to a disaster or mass pirate attack. In this sort of campaign, the ship is often used as a 'fire brigade', dashing from one trouble spot to another, then waiting for new orders as the Admiralty tries to catch up with the situation.

A Patrol & Diplomacy campaign can be very varied, with many different types of mission. It may be impossible for the crew to predict whether anything of note will happen during the three months they are patrolling a cluster of worlds or acting as guardship in a particular system. Dramatic events may unfold suddenly and unexpectedly, and the crew will have to be ready for anything.

**Example:** A cruiser is sent out on a routine patrol and flag-showing tour of several worlds. Along the way its crew must deal with a natural disaster on one world, a spate of pirate attacks on local shipping, and a demand by an important noble that the cruiser convey him to a nearby system to mediate a dispute. Whilst not officially part of the mission, the latter seems like a legitimate request and declining it could have consequences for everyone involved. Meanwhile, war is brewing between two world governments, accusations are flying, and it is clear that without immediate intervention the situation will spiral out of control. But it is not clear which side is in the wrong…

# MONEY AND RESOURCES IN A NAVAL CAMPAIGN

The Travellers do not own their ship or equipment, other than a few personal items. Nor can they use their naval assets to make money. Instead, they receive a salary to carry out orders that come down the chain of command. Similarly, the Travellers cannot book their vessel into a dockyard to be upgraded or rewrite the gunnery software to improve their weapons' accuracy. They are stuck with what the navy gives them, and personal money is used mainly during liberty time spent planetside.

There are also regulations about pretty much everything, including what can be brought on board a warship and how it is stowed. If the Travellers decide to buy an arsenal of guns and a collection of exotic animals, they may not be permitted to bring it aboard. The captain can get around the rules or suspend them, but this will have consequences later. At the very least a captain who ignores the rules for his buddies will see morale drop aboard his ship and may be investigated after the mission when the crew make their reports.

Unless there is some very good reason, Travellers will not be permitted to purchase weaponry and keep it in their quarters (a highly decorated version of a personal sidearm might be an exception for a senior officer). The ship's security team might also wonder what the Travellers are plotting that they need so many guns when the navy already provides all the ship requires…

Most resources a vessel receives are mandated by the supply staff at base. This does not, of course, mean that they all arrive at the right time, if at all. Administrative mistakes are made, logistics chains get snarled and occasionally someone diverts a shipment for profit. Thus a ship *should* receive a full set of spares, stores and supplies before a mission but that is not always the case.

Additional supplies and stores are usually obtained by a process known unofficially as 'requisition and plead' whereby the ship's command and logistics staff try to obtain additional supplies – or top up what they are supposed to have – through normal channels. Requisitions are sometimes approved, though it is not uncommon for only part of a requisition to be fulfilled… and it is rarely the most critical part.

If requisition fails, the crew can try other means. This can mean applying pressure on the right people to free up stores earmarked for another vessel, or scrounging for them. 'Scrounging' covers a multitude of sins from creative repositioning to outright theft, and is an activity some captains actively promote (never wanting to know the details), whilst others despise the practice.

En route, supplies are normally obtained by prearrangement. A naval ship entering a friendly port will normally be resupplied and given any necessary maintenance, which is paid for by the navy. Of course, some port authorities will try to cheat the navy by providing less than they are supposed to and charging far more, and the crew might find themselves struggling to make up a shortfall in supplies by whatever means are necessary.

Payment for supplies and services of an incidental nature is normally by naval letter of credit. Most friendly ports are quite willing to take navy credit as it is backed by the resources of the entire Imperium. Captains sometimes make multi-million credit purchases without even considering the vast sums that are about to change hands. Theirs is a different focus; they ask for what is needed and make sure they get it. The navy's financial department handles the details.

Most ships carry a contingency fund in cash or other valuables such as gold or platinum. A small ship such as an escort might have MCr1 in the ship's safe. A destroyer likely carries three times that, and a cruiser might be carrying far more. All this money must be carefully accounted for, and the ship's officers tend to view it as a piece of equipment rather than anything valuable. The ship's contingency fund is a tool for buying cooperation and necessary items, nothing more. Stealing it would be much the same as taking a gun from the armoury or hijacking the ship itself; it would be a betrayal of the navy's trust and harshly punished.

Navigating the maze of requisition, scrounging and underhand dealing that characterises naval logistics can be the source of many adventures, and the consequences of failure can leave a career or even a ship wrecked.
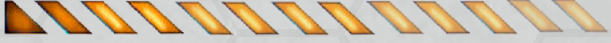
## Keeping the Travellers Hungry

Giving the Travellers everything they want is rarely a good idea. Rapid promotions can lead to an increase in the scale of the campaign far beyond what the referee can keep track of, whilst enormous resources make it difficult to give the Travellers a suitable challenge. That in turn can lead to 'campaign bloat' whereby Travellers who started out crewing a little gunboat and thought a fight with a pirate vessel was a tough challenge end up wondering if it is worth getting out of their bunks for a mere thousand-ship alien invasion fleet.

The solution is to keep the Travellers hungry-but-keen, by giving them some of what they want but making them work for it. This is accepted wisdom among referees, but has additional implications in this sort of campaign. The struggle to get a full set of spares and supplies becomes a lot more pressing when an inspection is due. Should the Travellers fake their ship's inventory? Steal from other vessels? Call in favours to get what they need? Distract the inspection staff and hope for the best? There are many opportunities for roleplaying here, and for challenges that make a nice change of pace after blasting pirates all week.

It might be that the mission itself is not the adventure. The scrounge-fest that takes place before it is the focus and the reward is being able to go out on patrol with a full set of supply lockers. If the referee does a good job, the Travellers may come to regard this as at least as great a reward as a boatload of Credits or a set of battle dress.

# THE SHIP AND CREW AS CHARACTERS

A starship can be a character in a naval campaign without having an artificial intelligence computer aboard – though that is certainly an option. A vessel that has been through a few serious fights and always kept her crew safe may develop a personality of sorts in the minds of the Travellers, which may or may not have some basis in reality.

A starship is a complex system made up of mechanical, electronic, gravitic and organic components, and represents more than the sum of those parts. The way the components interact will tend to produce quirks such as a faint shudder under a given level of thrust ('the old girl doesn't like 3g. Take her up to 3.2 and she'll settle down') or a tendency to be wayward on the helm during docking ('she doesn't like destroyers. Keep her clear or she'll give them a bump'). These tendencies might be largely imaginary, but at the referee's option a ship can be given one or more quirks and traits.

## SHIP QUIRKS

Quirks are minor characteristics which have a small effect on the vessel. They can be applied to a small craft as well, perhaps making one of the vessel's shuttles an unpopular choice for crews due to a persistent fault or bad reputation.

## SHIP TRAITS

Traits are more serious (or more beneficial) than quirks. They usually have some basis in physical reality but in some cases are a psychological effect upon the vessel's crew resulting from the vessel's history or that of its predecessors.

## SHIP QUIRKS

| 2D | Quirk |
|---|---|
| 2 | **Bad Rep:** Deservedly or otherwise, the vessel has a reputation as the graveyard of promising careers. Crew Morale is reduced by -1 and all checks to obtain replacement personnel suffer DM-2. |
| 3 | **User Unfriendly:** As a result of modifications or repairs the vessel has many uneven floors and projections sticking out from awkward places. Over time these can cause a loss of efficiency. All checks to determine if Crew Efficiency Index (CEI) is reduced suffer DM-1. |
| 4 | **Persistent Minor Fault:** The vessel has a persistent fault that swapping components only fixes for a short time. It is not dangerous but can be annoying or embarrassing, such as changing pressure in the water supply that might cause a visiting admiral to be sprayed, or lights that mysteriously go out in some compartments. |
| 5 | **Hesitant:** Occasionally the ship does not respond to or acknowledge verbal commands, requiring a repeat, or complying after a delay just long enough to cause unease. All checks to determine if Morale is lost by the crew suffer DM-1. |
| 6 | **Lazy:** Whenever the ship is under more than 75% thrust her gauges read a bit too high to be normal and there is a subliminal shudder that gives the impression the ship is unhappy about being asked to make an effort. |
| 7 | **Unsupported Reputation:** The vessel has a reputation for some characteristic (roll again or decide on something suitable) which is not backed up by physical evidence. |
| 8 | **Sharp-Eyed:** The vessel seems to always be the first to spot a fleeting sensor contact or keep track of the missile no-one else can find. Once per mission any crewmember can claim DM+2 on any one Electronics (sensors) check. |
| 9 | **Greyhound:** Thrust seems to increase just a little bit quicker than expected, as if the vessel was eager to be off. Once per mission a pilot may claim DM+2 on any one Pilot check. |
| 10 | **Warrior:** Sometimes the weapons seem to aim themselves. Once per mission a gunner can claim DM+2 on any Gunner check. |
| 11 | **Defender:** This trait may well exist only in the minds of the crew, but they 'know' their ship will take care of them. Crew Morale checks are made with DM+1. |
| 12 | **Redoubtable:** The vessel has taken a pounding before but always survived. All skill checks connected with damage control operations are made with DM+1. |

## SHIP TRAITS

| 2D | Trait |
|----|-------|
| 2 | **Unhappy Ship:** The ship has a grim history of bad decisions, serious incidents and perhaps even mutiny. Crew Morale is reduced by -2 and all checks to avoid Morale loss suffer DM-2. |
| 3 | **Unreliable:** At the start of each Mission Segment, the referee should roll 2D. On a score of 10+ the ship's systems begin playing up... again. A series of random intermittent faults impose DM-1 on all tasks carried out by a random department. Roll 1D. 1: Flight, 2: Gunnery, 3: Engineering, 4-6: General crew and command officers. |
| 4 | **Messy Refit:** As a result of a badly implemented refit or repair, the ship has far too many pieces of equipment in awkward corners, trip hazards and labour-intensive workarounds. Effective CEI is reduced by D3, re-determined at the beginning of every mission. |
| 5 | **Wayward:** At the start of each Mission Segment the referee rolls 2D. On a 10+ the ship's wayward nature reasserts itself. She is slow on the helm and over-corrects, imposing DM-2 on all Pilot checks. |
| 6 | **Just Plain Annoying:** Lights randomly go out in compartments; the water in the freshers is always too hot or too cold. Food unaccountably tastes bad and machinery produces horrible squealing noises no matter how carefully maintained. CEI is reduced by -1 and all checks to obtain personnel suffer DM-2. |
| 7 | **Honourable Traditions:** The vessel has a tradition of honourable service. All checks to obtain personnel gain DM+1, and crew Morale is increased by +1. |
| 8 | **She Likes Us:** The ship has an unusually low percentage of niggles and minor faults, and operations are subject to less distraction and disruption as a consequence. CEI is increased by +1. |
| 9 | **Lucky Ship:** The ship has a reputation for good luck. Once per mission, a problem may be mitigated by some unlikely but physically possible happenstance. For example, rescuers cutting their way into devastated gunnery chambers find the entire crew of the spinal mount alive in a miraculously unscathed compartment, or the lone torpedo that makes it through the point defences turns out to be a dud. |
| 10 | **Straight Shooting Ship:** The gunnery software and weaponry are unusually well integrated. Whatever the reason, all Gunnery tasks relating to offensive weapons gain DM+1. |
| 11 | **She Looks After Her Own:** All checks connected with personnel welfare – from making a well-earned meal after a tough operation to life-saving surgery in the midst of battle – are made with DM+1. There is no obvious reason for this, and some crewmembers attribute it to a guardian spirit that they swear they have 'felt' watching over them. |
| 12 | **Die Hard:** Any system completely disabled by critical damage will unaccountably struggle back into weak life after 1D rounds, temporarily removing the last critical effect. Each round thereafter, the system will fail again on a 2D roll of 10+, and will remain dead. |

# CREW EFFECTIVENESS INDEX (CEI)

The Crew Effectiveness Index, or CEI, is used to resolve many situations that a ship and her crew encounter. It is based on an estimate of the training level and general competence of the ship, modified by leadership and a number of factors arising from events during the mission. These include incidents that will improve or reduce morale, crew disaffection, and fatigue.

CEI is rated 0-15 just like a Traveller's characteristic, and can go up or down during a mission. This can result in a crew becoming more effective as they 'shake down' and settle into their roles, and less effective as they become tired or demoralised during the mission. CEI produces a DM on tasks undertaken by the crew.

The base level of CEI is based on the crew's training level.

**CREW EFFECTIVENESS INDEX**

| CEI | Training Level | Specialist/General Skill Levels | Task DM |
|-----|----------------|--------------------------------|---------|
| 0 | Barely able to do their jobs, with little cohesion | 0/0 | -6 |
| 1 | | 1/0 | -5 |
| 2 | Extremely poorly skilled crew | 1/0 | -4 |
| 3 | | 1+0/1+0 | -3 |
| 4 | | 1+0/1+0 | -2 |
| 5 | Low-quality or poorly trained crew | 1+0/1+0 | -1 |
| 6 | | 2+1/1+1 | -1 |
| 7 | Properly trained naval or merchant crew | 2+1/1+1 | 0 |
| 8 | | 2+1/1+1 | 0 |
| 9 | Highly-trained crew | 3+1/1+1 | +1 |
| 10 | | 3+1/1+1 | +1 |
| 11 | | 3+1/1+1 | +2 |
| 12 | Elite or veteran naval crew | 3+1/2+1 | +3 |
| 13 | | 3+1/2+1 | +4 |
| 14 | | 3+1/2+1 | +5 |
| 15 | Legendary crew formed from the cream of veterans and prodigies | 4+2/2+2 | +6 |

The Specialist/General Skill Levels column indicates the skill level that could be expected of a typical specialist serving aboard the vessel. The first digit indicates primary specialism such as Pilot or Engineer (j-drive). Any additional digit before the slash indicates an additional specialist skill level which must be taken in a different skill. Digits after the slash indicate general skills. For example, an Engineering crewmember whose skills are indicated 2+1/1+1 might take Engineer (power) 2, Engineer (j-drive) 1, Vacc Suit 1, and Mechanic 1.

This indicates the general skill levels of random crewmembers who might be encountered or assigned to do a particular job. For example, Able Spacehand Jiimaai is a sensors tech in the gunnery division of a highly trained ship's crew. He possesses Electronics (sensors) 2, and Gunner (turrets) 1 as his specialist skills, and Mechanic 1 as a result of his general training and experience. In addition he has received cross-training as an emergency medic for his department, and has Medic 1.

This system does not indicate all the skills a crewmember has, and is merely a quick indicator to avoid detailing a crew numbering in the hundreds.

In peacetime, most navies would correspond to a base CEI of 6-8. Whilst crews would have considerable experience of routine operations, most would not have faced real pressure or danger. The occasional incident or pirate raid is not enough to raise the experience of a whole fleet, though some ships will have sharper crews as a result of involvement in out of the ordinary situations.

All navies aspire to an excellent recruitment and training programme that produces the most efficient ship's companies, but budget constraints generally make this impossible. There will be 'showcase' vessels which have extremely well trained crews, and vessels that have a higher-than-average percentage of gold-brickers and malcontents. There may even be a few vessels whose crews are frankly a danger to themselves and everyone else, but there will always be a reason for such a slovenly crew.

A vessel stuck on a remote guardship deployment for months at a time, or one captained by a politically appointed officer who does not really care about his duties, might be quite incompetent. Such ships tend to be stationed where they can do little harm, but the very places where no-one expects trouble might be just where an enemy decides to strike. For the competent captain sent to assist, who finds himself outranked and subordinate to such an officer, the mission will be harder no matter how good his own crew might be.

CEI also applies to other vessels and can be used to resolve many situations. For example, if an enemy

vessel is trying to ambush the Travellers' ship, the CEI of the two vessels will affect efforts to detect and track one another, and how fast each ship reacts when contact is made.

Corsairs and similar paramilitary vessels tend to have less disciplined crews but make up for this in experience – a corsair crew will likely see a lot more action than a naval one (and tend to have a shorter career). Paramilitary vessels of this type therefore tend to have a CEI of 4-9. The well-trained crews of a major merchant line are often similar in skill to naval vessels, whereas a down-at-heel Free Trader making do with whatever personnel it can get might have a CEI of 3-5.

## Effective CEI

A vessel's Effective CEI (ECEI) is used to resolve situations that need to be abstracted. ECEI varies throughout the mission according to circumstances and can be increased or decreased before a mission begins. Permanent changes to CEI require long periods of training or considerable experience, and can result from a successful mission but should not be assumed to always do so.

ECEI is determined at the beginning of a mission and varies thereafter. Every time a vessel suffers a crisis there is a chance ECEI may go down, and it can be increased by various measures. A crisis can include one of the following:

• The vessel takes casualties equivalent to 5% of its starting crew.
• A major system such as the bridge, spinal mount or battery of barbettes is disabled.
• A Leadership Crisis occurs (see Morale on page 17).
• The ship's commanding officer is disabled or killed.

To avoid a reduction in ECEI the ship's commanding officer must make a Difficult (10+) Leadership check (2D x 5 minutes, INT). If the check is unsuccessful, one point of ECEI is lost, and Morale is reduced by a value equal to any negative Effect.

ECEI may be increased before or during a mission. To obtain an increase of +1 ECEI, an event that can increase ECEI must occur and the ship's commanding officer must make an Average (8+) Leadership check (2D x 5 minutes, INT). Morale is modified by the result of this check, and can go down if the event is mishandled.

Events that can increase ECEI include:

• Generous supply and provisioning. This is rare for naval vessels and tends to happen only when a ship is about to embark on a special mission or receives advanced equipment.

• Solid success that demonstrates good practice and the reliability of team-mates, such as a textbook rescue of a distressed merchant ship under difficult conditions.
• A period of well-planned training or exercises lasting at least 2 weeks. Note that the normal ongoing training aboard a ship is routine and necessary for the maintenance of ECEI. The crew need to receive training above and beyond this in order to improve.
• A draft of additional or replacement personnel are received.

In addition, every 2D weeks a vessel is on a mission, its crew have a chance to increase or decrease ECEI. A crew may fall into an effective working rhythm and become more efficient, or might lose their focus and become less competent overall.

The vessel's commanding officer must make a Difficult (10+) Leadership check (INT) and apply the Effect as a DM on the table below to determine whether the crew remains effective.

## Using ECEI

In addition to functioning as a whole-ship DM, ECEI can be used to get the ship out of trouble or complete difficult tasks, representing a heroic effort on the part of the crew. The commanding officer of the relevant division (or whole ship if appropriate) must make an Average (8+) Leadership check to inspire the requisite effort. Up to three points of ECEI can be deducted in the attempt, with each point imposing DM+3 on all task rolls during the effort *or* permitting some near-impossible obstacle to be overcome.

**ECEI CHANGES**

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

Skill levels of crewmembers do not fall as CEI drops, nor do they suddenly gain new capabilities.

This reduction in ECEI is permanent, and represents exhaustion, depletion of resources and the sacrifice of some crewmembers to get a necessary job done.

**Example:** *INS Khelashimu* staggers out of a desperate fight with heavy damage. Her spinal mount is out of

action as is her jump drive, and enemy vessels are mopping up the defeated remains of her task force. The drive cannot be repaired with the resources at hand, nor in the time available. *Khelashimu's* commanding officer expends two points of ECEI. One buys a chance to jury-rig the jump drive and escape, and the other is applied to the engineering department's attempt to complete the task in time.

*INS Khelashimu* receives a DM based on her ECEI of 9 at the start of the task, but as the task is completed ECEI drops to 7. She manages to enter jump and escape, but at the cost of several engineers killed working around live cables and amid tangled wreckage. The ship has been saved but she will require a dockyard and replacement crewmembers to restore her previous efficiency.

## The Detachment Efficiency Index (DEI)

The Detachment Efficiency Index is used in a similar manner to CEI, for actions involving part of the crew rather than the ship and her company as a whole. At the referee's discretion, DEI can be calculated for each of the ship's departments and used instead of CEI for tasks involving that part of the crew. This is not recommended for non-player vessels or where the Travellers are running a squadron or task force, but for an individual ship it can add an extra dimension to the naval campaign.

Having departments with differing DEI can make for an interesting challenge when Travellers command them; a campaign where officers are desperately stealing resources and personnel from one another to ensure they do not face the wrath of a tyrannical captain might be an interesting situation, or a ship that has recently suffered heavy casualties or been plundered for its best personnel might present challenges for a new command team, and might not be quite the prize her captain first thought she was going to be.

DEI is also used for any group of personnel pulled out of a department or drawn from the whole crew in order to carry out a specific task. A detachment will normally contain a leader (a petty officer or junior officer), one or more individuals with good skills applicable to the task at hand, and additional personnel to provide enough hands and eyes to get the job done.

## Forming a Detachment

Typically, a detachment uses the best personnel who can be spared rather than the best available, unless the task is extremely critical. For example, the ship's gunnery officer would not normally weaken the sensors-and-weapons team in the middle of a fight to provide personnel for casualty evacuation. However, bad decisions are sometimes made, or there might be a reason why critical personnel have to be pulled from their posts.

## Subdividing the Ship's Company

If the referee wishes to determine the DEI for different parts of a ship's company, it is recommended that the subdivision be along standard departmental lines unless there are Travellers in charge of parts of the same department. In this case, it is recommended that the DEI for the detachment under each Traveller's control be separately determined and tracked.

The following subdivisions are recommended:

**Flight:** All operations involving directing the ship and getting it from A to B, including sensor operations connected with these functions. The Flight department could be further subdivided into 'ship' and 'boat' operations, since the small-craft crews and maintenance personnel might have a different level of competence to the bridge crew, which may be especially important to determine if the ship carries fighter squadrons.

**Gunnery:** All functions involving weapons and defensive systems, including sensor operations connected with these tasks. The Gunnery department might be subdivided into spinal and secondary weapons teams, or offensive and defensive systems.

**Engineering:** All functions involving the ship's powerplant, drives and technical systems. The engineering crew could be subdivided into power and drive teams, and the technical support personnel assigned to computer and electronic systems might also be considered a sub-department or even a separate department.

**Crew:** Medical, administrative, security and damage-control functions can be subsumed into a general Crew department or treated as separate sub-departments; a ship mighht have an amazing chef and excellent medical staff, but the overall standard of crew competence is low.

**Others:** If a ship carries marines or specialist boarding parties, these might be created as a separate department. If not, then boardings (hostile and otherwise) can be considered to be part of the Crew function.

When any detachment is formed, the same process is used as when determining the DEI of a department of the ship's crew unless the referee wishes to assign a desired value.

The DEI of a detachment is based on the DEI of whatever department it is pulled out of, or the ship's CEI if the detachment is put together from a mix of personnel. This value is modified by the results of the following process:

The officer forming the detachment must make a Difficult (10+) Leadership check. The Effect of this check is applied to the running total modifier. In addition, the size of the detachment and the personnel pool available to form it will affect the amount of suitably competent crewmembers available. This modifier is not used when determining the DEI of a department of a ship's crew unless it is being formed by borrowing personnel from other vessels.

### DETACHMENT SIZE

| Size of Detachment | Modifier |
| --- | --- |
| Less than 1% of available personnel | +2 |
| 1-5% of available personnel | 0 |
| 6-10% of available personnel | -2 |
| 11-20% of available personnel | -4 |
| 21-30% of available personnel | -6 |
| 31-40% of available personnel | -8 |
| 41-50% of available personnel | -10 |

A 'detachment' of more than 50% of the available personnel is not really a detachment at all, and is subject to special rules. See Weakening the Ship's Company on page 17.

The Effect of the Leadership check and the modifier for detachment size are totalled, along with any of the following that apply, and used as a modifier to a 2D roll on the Total DEI table below.

**'A' team to the shuttle bays:** If the decision is made to create the most effective team possible even if this weakens the parent crew, a modifier of +3 applies. However, see page 17 for the negative effects of this.
**Send in Ensign Expendable:** If the detachment is of low importance or the ship's company cannot spare well-qualified people, a deliberately weak detachment might be created. If so, a -3 modifier applies.

The base value used to calculate DEI is the DEI or CEI of the parent body. Thus a detachment pulled out of a larger detachment uses its DEI as base; a detachment of the ship's company sent off as a boarding party would use the CEI of the ship or the DEI of the Crew department, as appropriate.

## DEPARTMENT SUBDIVISION SUMMARY

**FLIGHT**

Bridge Operations
Relevant Sensor Operations

→ Ship Operations

→ Boat Operations

**GUNNERY**

Weapons & Defensive Systems
Relevant Sensor Operations

→ Spinal Weapons Teams

→ Secondary Weapons Teams

or

→ Offensive Systems

→ Defensive Systems

**ENGINEERING**

Power Plant, Drives
& Technical systems

→ Power Teams (Engineers)

→ Drive Teams (Engineers)

*Tech Support Personnel Subdivision or Separate Department*

→ Computers

→ Electronic Systems

**CREW**

Medical, Administrative, Security
& Damage control Functions

or

→ General Crew Department

→ Separate Sub-departments

**OTHERS**

Marines or Specialist
Boarding Paties

→ May be considered part of Crew function

## TOTAL DEI

| 2D | DEI |
|---|---|
| 0 or less | Base -2D3 |
| 1-2 | Base -1D |
| 3-4 | Base -D3 |
| 5-6 | Base -1 |
| 7-8 | Base +0 |
| 9-10 | Base +1 |
| 11-12 | Base + D3 |
| 13 or more | Base + 1D |

Note that it is quite difficult to create a detachment that is more competent than the parent group, but it can be done. This reflects sending only the most efficient team or using the absolute best personnel and allowing them to stand out from the average competence of their crewmates.

## Weakening the Ship's Company

The ship's company can be weakened by several circumstances, and under-manning, casualties or a need to send off parties for various tasks can leave a ship dangerously understaffed. Whenever the ship's company or a detachment is subject to any of the circumstances below, it is potentially weakened.

- When a detachment is formed.
- When casualties are taken in combat.
- When sufficient personnel are unavailable for their normal duties due to needs elsewhere.
- When the ship's company or a detachment is not experienced at working together.

Whenever circumstances arise that might weaken the ship's company or a detachment, the officer commanding it must try to avoid a reduction of capabilities by making an Average (8+) Leadership or Admin check. The Effect of this check is added to the following modifiers and a 2D roll to determine the outcome.

Use the following modifiers:
If an 'A-team' detachment was formed: +2
If a deliberately weak (low-skills) detachment was formed: -2
Casualty percentage or detachment size is less than 1% of crew: 0
Casualty percentage or detachment size is 2-4% of crew: -1
Casualty percentage or detachment size is 5-9% of crew: -2
For each additional 5% casualties or otherwise lost personnel: -1
If the crew or detachment have common training but little experience of working together: -2
If the crew or detachment do not have common training: -4

## WEAKENED DETACHMENTS

| 2D | Effect on DEI or ECEI |
|---|---|
| 0 or less | -4 |
| 1-3 | -3 |
| 4-6 | -2 |
| 7-9 | -1 |
| 10-12 | 0 |
| 13 or more | +1 |

It is actually possible to increase efficiency by losing some crewmembers, but more commonly even after a reshuffle of personnel the detachment or crew will be less effective than before.

For example, a ship with a nominal crew of 700 has been operating with a skeleton staff of 250 whilst undergoing maintenance. It is suddenly placed on alert and a draft of personnel intended to bring it up to strength is summoned. However, only 300 personnel arrive before the vessel has to leave port on an urgent mission. The ship is 150 personnel short, about 21% of her intended complement. This imposes DM-5 on the captain's Leadership or Admin check. In addition, the new crewmembers are reasonably well trained but the ship's company as a whole has no experience of working together. This imposes an additional DM-2.

The captain tells his executive officer, who is an administrative genius, to sort out the crewing problem as efficiently as possible, and the XO makes an Average (8+) Admin check with his DM+3. This produces an Effect of 2. The final modifier for the table is -5+2 = -3.

The XO rolls an 8 on 2D, modified by -3 to 5. Despite his best efforts, the ship's ECEI is modified by -2 as it begins its cruise. Things were bad enough already; the skeleton crew was demoralised and had no opportunities for training, so started with a CEI of 5. This is now modified down to 2. The ship's company is barely functional as she leaves port, and the daily list of disasters is disheartening. Everything the ship does is subject to DM-4 until improvements occur.

If the command team had managed to get a few more personnel from somewhere, things might not have been so bad. As it is, they will have to somehow get by, though the crew's performance should improve over time.

## MORALE

Morale (MOR) is a measure of the determination and psychological resilience of a ship's company. It is relevant not only to the Travellers' ship but also to vessels it encounters. The Morale of a naval warship or paramilitary vessel such as a corsair begins as its CEI plus 1D. MOR for other vessels can be determined randomly.

## That's My New Command?????

Bringing a ship up to combat readiness might be the focus of the campaign or a part of one. The Travellers take over command of a run-down vessel with half a crew of dispirited second-rate spacers. Far from the shiny, sleek greyhound of the stars they hoped for, they are stuck with an old rustbucket assigned to a backwater patrol. It is not what they expected but the Travellers are still responsible when the rustbucket and her crew of losers underperforms….

The Travellers might ignore the problems their ship has, hoping that great dice rolls will offset negative modifiers caused by their incompetent and lackadaisical crew. That, combined with playing politics or just plain blagging their way through debriefings, might let them serve out their tour on this vessel with their careers intact. Alternatively, they might try to fill out the crew roster, fix up the ship and leave their old rustbucket better than they found her.

A campaign where the Travellers are forced to contend with the limitations of their ship and crew can be far more interesting than one where the Travellers have everything they need to win medals and impress the admiralty from the start.

### STARTING MORALE

| Vessel Type | Starting MOR |
| --- | --- |
| Naval Warship | CEI+1D |
| Naval Auxiliary | CEI+D3 |
| Merchant Line Vessel | CEI+D3 |
| Paramilitary Vessel or Corsair | CEI+1D |
| Independent Vessel | CEI+0 |

Morale is rated on the same 0-15 scale as a Traveller's characteristics, and creates a DM in the same way. Morale is used rather than CEI to resolve situations affecting the mood of the crew.

Morale varies a lot more than ECEI during a mission. A wise captain does as much as possible to maintain the morale of the crew, but it will be worn down over time by setbacks and fatigue. Some events alter Morale value directly, while others require a Morale check.

## Morale Checks

There are two common types of Morale check, and both are carried out the same way. The usual difficulty of a Morale check is Average (8+) but difficulty can be higher or lower if the situation is particularly grim or encouraging.

A Minor Morale Check imposes a loss of -1 MOR if failed. A Major Morale Check imposes a loss of -1D MOR if failed.

If not otherwise specified, a Morale check is assumed to be Minor.

## Leadership Crisis

A Leadership Crisis takes places at any time Morale drops by 3 or more points in the same event, and when the head of a division (e.g. the chief engineer) or the captain or executive officer is put out of action without a clear replacement. This might occur if the ship's communications are down and orders are desperately needed even if the officers are still alive. A Leadership Crisis may cause ECEI to be reduced.

## Events Affecting Morale

Morale can be affected by a number of events and circumstances, some positively but most negatively. A separate Morale check must be made for each situation that occurs.

## Deliberate Action

Most deliberate attempts to influence Morale are positive, such as the captain touring the ship praising the crew and listening to their concerns. Rabble-rousing on the part of disaffected crewmembers can instead reduce Morale. Efforts of this sort normally take at least a day or two and require the use of skills such as Persuade or Leadership.

## Hardship

A crew that is forced to suffer hardship for an extended period must make a Minor Morale check. Hardship in this case might mean being forced to live in very cramped quarters or on short rations, either due to supply difficulties or damage to the ship.

## Injustice

If the crew perceive injustice, such as crewmembers being punished too harshly for infractions or rules applied unevenly, a Morale check is required. This will normally be Minor but a major incident like the summary execution of a popular shipmate might require a Major check instead.

## Liberty

A vessel that is on a mission in hostile space will have limited opportunities for crew liberty, but under most circumstances the crew will expect the chance for the occasional 'run ashore' in a friendly port. The ship's officers may restrict liberty for discipline or security reasons, but this comes with the consequence of reduced Morale. On the other hand, allowing the crew liberty in ports they visit allows the referee to impose events and incidents on the crew. A vessel whose crew is given

severely restricted or no liberty in a port where they would normally expect at least some personnel to be allowed to go planetside must make a Minor Morale check.

## Severe Danger

The crew of a naval vessel accept a certain degree of risk in their duties, and under most circumstances would not be unduly upset by the prospect of danger. However, if ordered into a situation of severe danger the crew must make a Major Morale check if the action seems unnecessary or a Minor Morale check if there is a clear reason why the risk is warranted.

## Success

Morale thrives on success. If the command crew can provide the ship's company with a clear goal and proof it has been attained, Morale may increase by one or occasionally more points. The goal must be something worthwhile and difficult, such as making repairs in a very short time or capturing a notorious pirate. Escaping from a bad situation can also improve Morale.

## Weak Leadership

A crew that has cause to doubt the competence of its officers, or who witness a challenge to the authority of the commanding officer, a department head or some other important figure, must make a Morale check. This will be Minor in the case of a small challenge but an incident such as a public duel between senior officers might require a Major Morale check.

# CREWING THE SHIP

It is quite possible to create an entire crew using the standard Traveller career system, but this is a bit hardcore for most referees. Instead, we use the following to create personnel tailored to their duties.

Firstly, decide what the crewmember's role is to be aboard the ship to determine his specialist skill area. The crewmember's level of experience, rank and any special considerations will indicate additional skills.

All crewmembers begin with the following skills: Electronics 0, Gun Combat 0, Mechanic 0, Vacc Suit 0.

Skills are then divided into categories. Each time a crewmember gains a skill level, pick one from the appropriate category on the Crew Skills table. The crewmember gains specialist and general skills as indicated by the ship's training level and CEI; for a typical naval crew this is 2+0/1+0 (that is, a typical crewmember has one specialist skill at level 2 and another at level 0, and one general skill at level one, another at level 0).

Note that this system is not intended to create Travellers and omits skills not usually relevant to a naval campaign. A crewmember might well have an advanced civilian ground vehicle driving license even if it is not indicated here. If a crewmember becomes important to the storyline, the referee can flesh them out in more detail.

It is assumed that most crewmembers are humans or members of a similar species. Some can be more alien, and detailed as necessary, but they need to perform duties aboard ship just like everyone else, so skill levels will be broadly the same.

Note that normally a skill appropriate to the crewmember's role aboard ship will be chosen, but it is acceptable to give the crewmember other specialist skills reflecting cross-training or a change of branch. Officers and petty officers will not just be 'command specialists' and should have specialist or general skills.

Some skills appear both as specialist and general skills. These are common areas of expertise important to some specialist roles. 'Other' skills may be picked up by crewmembers through education, intelligence work or unofficial activities.

Some skills are gained at level 0 as a general skill and higher levels as a specialist skill.

Higher-ranking and more experienced crewmembers gain additional skills and may also roll on the Incidents table.

## CREW SKILLS

| Specialist Skills | General Skills | Command Skills | Other Skills |
|---|---|---|---|
| Astrogation | Athletics | Admin | Broker |
| Electronics | Carouse | Advocate | Deception |
| Engineer | Drive | Diplomat | Gambler |
| Explosives | Engineer 0 | Leadership | Investigate |
| Gunner | Flyer | Tactics | Language |
| Mechanic | Gun Combat | | Persuade |
| Medic | Mechanic | | Profession |
| Pilot | Medic 0 | | Recon |
| Steward | Melee | | Science |
| Vacc Suit | Steward | | Stealth |
| | Vacc Suit | | |

# INCIDENTS

The Incidents table is intended to create more interesting crewmembers. In theory it could be used for everyone aboard a ship, but it is recommended that the table be used only for crewmembers the referee wants to flesh out. The probability of an incident occurring at any given point in a crewmember's career is given in the Career Advancement Summary on page 22. If an incident occurs, roll 2D on the Incidents table and apply any effects immediately.

**INCIDENTS**

| 2D | Incident |
|---|---|
| 2 | You won a medal or promotion in an incident that claimed a lot of lives. Some say you are a hero, some a glory-hound who got others killed. Roll 2D: on 8+ you are serving in this current role whilst you await an inquiry which may have serious consequences for you. |
| 3 | You were involved in a major incident and 'beached' or stalled in your career for a time, resulting in you being older than the average for your position. Add 2D to age. |
| 4 | You were involved in a mildly controversial incident. Other members of your service may have opinions about this, or you may be the subject of rumours. |
| 5 | You badly underperformed in some important task or combat and are finally in a position to redeem yourself. Many personnel mistrust or even despise you. |
| 6 | You have a history with someone outside the navy. They may or may not still be in the same job or role when play begins. Roll 1D to determine the nature of this relationship: 1: Enemy, 2-3: Rival, 4-5 Contact, 6: Ally |
| 7 | Interactions with other naval personnel result in you having a history with someone within your service. They may or may not still be in service when play begins. Roll 1D to determine the nature of this relationship: 1: Enemy, 2-3: Rival, 4-5 Contact, 6: Ally |
| 8 | You were assigned to unusual but not particularly 'special' duty for a time, such as serving as a messenger for the Procurement Board or secondment to a planetary navy. |
| 9 | You were cross-trained in another branch. Gain 1level in any skill outside your normal specialism. |
| 10 | You were promoted early and very young, and there is intense pressure upon you to continue to excel. |
| 11 | You were involved in something secret. All the files are sealed and nobody will talk about it. Gain 1 skill level in any skill of your choice. |
| 12 | You are something of a hero, having won medals for valour or awards for excellence in your field. Your achievement was honourably attained and you are genuinely respected for it. |

# CAREER ADVANCEMENT SUMMARY

It takes time to attain high rank in the navy, unless it is through 'dead men's shoes' in wartime or a period of political purges. The crewmember's rank will generally indicate how old he or she is, assuming a normal human lifespan. Age can be randomised plus or minus 10% (2D-2 taken as a percentage of age) for most crewmembers.

**CAREER ADVANCEMENT**

| Rank | Age | Effect | Additional |
|---|---|---|---|
| Crewmember-Recruit | 18 | -1 skill level from any Specialist or General skill | |
| Crewmember-Spacehand | 20 | Standard skills. | +1 level in any Other skill: 8+ |
| Able Spacehand | 22 | +1 skill level in any Specialist skill | Event: 8+ |
| Petty Officer | 38 | Leadership 0 | Event: 8+ |
| Chief Petty Officer | 46 | +1 level in any General skill | Event: 8+<br>+ 1 level in any Other skill: 8+ |
| Master Chief Petty Officer | 50 | +1 level in any Specialist skill | Event: 8+<br>+1 level in any General skill: 8+ |
| Officer Cadet | 20 | Leadership 0<br>Admin 0 | +1 level in any Other skill 8+ |
| Ensign | 22 | Melee (blade) 1 | Event: 8+ |
| Sublieutenant | 26 | Leadership 1 | Event: 8+<br>+1 level in any General skill |
| Lieutenant | 34 | + 1 level in any Specialist skill<br>+ 1 level in any Command or Specialist skill | Event: 8+ |
| Lieutenant-Commander | 38 | +1 level in any General skill | Event: 8+ |
| Commander | 42 | Tactics (naval) 1<br>+1 level in any Command or Specialist skill | Event: 8+ |
| Captain | 46 | SOC 10 or Soc+1, whichever is higher | Event: 8+ |
| Commodore | 50 | +1 level in any Command skill | Event: 8+ |
| Rear-Admiral | 58 | +1 level in any Command skill | Event: 8+ |

# RECRUITING CREWMEMBERS

Normally a starship is crewed by personnel assigned to it by the Admiralty's selection board and Personnel Resources staff. However, it is possible to play this system or have it played against you. A ship or captain with a solid reputation tends to attract the best personnel, and this is no coincidence. There are those who pull strings to get a berth aboard, and of course the Personnel Resources staff have their own agenda. Often this means sending the best or at least average-and-above personnel to the 'right' ships whilst lesser vessels make do with what is left.

The navy does have some shockingly bad personnel of course. Disaffected long-service personnel, politically connected officers who have to be given a job somewhere, gold-brickers and those traumatised by earlier events can cause trouble aboard any ship. Most poor personnel are not that bad, however. They are simply below average,

under-trained or struggle with some aspects of navy life. With good leadership and training, these crewmembers can develop into solid and reliable naval personnel, but just because the captain wants that to happen does not mean it will. As a general rule a good crew will bring up weaker recruits to its standard, or as close as they can get, but a troubled ship will only get worse.

When a new draft of personnel comes aboard, or a single individual of note (such as the new gunnery officer) is assigned to the ship, their competence is determined in a similar manner to a ship's CEI. Roll 1D+2 for the effective CEI of the new arrivals, with the following modifiers.

Officer of lieutenant rank or lower: +1
Officer of lieutenant-commander rank or higher: +2
Experienced draft, for example transferred from another ship: +2
Rushed or very basic training: -1
Rapid expansion of the navy ongoing: -1

The efficiency index of these new personnel may alter that of the ship as a whole. If the draft is more than 25% of the ship's nominal complement, the ship's CEI is averaged (round down) with the new draft and the result is the ship's new CEI. Big personnel changes can disrupt a ship's entire working environment – or actually increase efficiency if a competent team comes aboard and shows the crew how the job should be done.

If the personnel draft is less than 25% of the ship's complement but more than 10%, reduce CEI by 1 unless the personnel draft is more competent than the ship's company. If so, increase CEI by 1.

For smaller drafts, the ship's commanding officer must make a Difficult (10+) Leadership or Admin check. The vessel's ECEI is reduced by the Effect of this check if negative. If the check is passed, there is no effect.

For new officers, effects will normally be on their department unless a significant number come aboard. An officer whose efficiency index is higher than of his new department or crew will have to work to raise it. One whose index is lower will benefit for the time being from taking over a well-set-up department and would be wise not to make changes. The referee should note that the department is commanded by an inferior officer and use this as a plot hook or flaw to hang an adventure on.

## Rewards and Promotions

Naval service is its own reward. That is, whilst the salary is actually pretty decent and the benefits are not bad, nobody joins the navy to get rich and most benefits are available more easily in other lines of work. People join the navy for other reasons. For the commoner, it is a career they can be proud of, which may provide an education or opportunities that might not exist after they muster out. It is also a steady job with a uniform that commands respect, and there is a camaraderie among serving and former naval personnel that is hard to find elsewhere. For the noble or aspiring noble the navy is a chance to climb the social ladder and get noticed by the right people.

There is also the matter of duty – the Imperium and its people need protecting, and a life spent among the stars defending the Imperium is an honourable one. The lure of adventure and the chance to cut a dash in foreign ports lures some people in; others are drafted or go into the navy because it is expected of them. But once they are in, they all have something in common: they have a job to do and whilst the system rewards endeavour and success, it is not about money or material goods. It is about being part of the navy, being proud of the navy, and doing what the navy does… or perhaps just getting the job done because the navy is not lenient towards those who fail to do their duty.

The point is, it is the job that matters and rewards just happen. However, Travellers and their crewmates can expect that their efforts – or lack of effort – will be noted and rewarded or punished.

## Internal Rewards and Punishments

The captain and senior officers of a navy ship are empowered to hand out rewards for satisfactory service including passes for additional liberty time, exemption from unpleasant duties, and similar minor perks. Likewise, they can hand out minor punishments such as confinement to quarters or a few days in the brig, extra duties, or suspension of shoreside liberty privileges.

This is at the discretion of the ship's captain and senior officers, and is not normally the subject of much external scrutiny unless the ship's company has come to the attention of investigators. A captain who plays favourites among the crew or who fails to reward the good service of diligent crewmembers will face morale problems, but for the most part internal rewards and punishments are just that – internal to the ship's company. They rarely have much outside impact.

## Major Rewards and Punishments

Rewards and punishments that affect a crewmember's career are subject to more scrutiny than those internal to the ship. A cancelled leave pass resulting from a minor infraction is unlikely to harm a career, but a year spent in confinement at a 'special naval facility' for a major incident will set the crewmember's promotion prospects back years even if they are not dishonourably discharged at the end of their jail term.

Travellers can recommend or request major punishments and rewards for their subordinates, but such matters are decided upon by an external authority. Minor offences are dealt with by a disciplinary board, often dozens at a time over a period of a few days. More serious charges are brought before a court-martial. Note that a court-martial is not a punishment; it is a hearing held to determine if the crewmember has committed a serious offence and if so what action to take. An officer (and some senior petty-officers) can request a court-martial to examine their own actions if they feel they have been treated unfairly.

For officers and chief petty officers, almost any offence dealt with outside the ship will result in a full court-martial, with all of the pomp and gravitas associated with such affairs. This can be an opportunity for an adventure, as the Travellers try to weasel their way out of responsibility for a fiasco, or avoid being stitched up by a rival. Indeed, under most circumstances any time a Traveller faces a court-martial it should be played out in full using the system below.

## Courts-Martial

A court-martial requires more complex resolution than a simple disciplinary board, but in both cases the referee must first determine what evidence the court has available. This may vary wildly from what actually happened – the outcome of a court-martial is based on what the court can prove, not upon unsupported claims about distant events that may or may not have happened.

**Solid, Reliable Evidence** provides DM-4 on the Outcome table
**Weak or Unreliable Evidence** provides DM-2 on the Outcome table
**Little or Conflicting Evidence** provides no DM

Images from surveillance showing the defendant taking the actions in question would count as solid and reliable, whilst testimony from a couple of crewmembers would be considered unreliable in this context – the assumption is that people can be wrong or may not tell the truth for their own reasons but the camera just shows what is there. Actions that can be explained in more than one way would also be considered weak evidence.

A court-martial, unlike a civilian court, is permitted to consider factors outside the guilt or innocence of the defendant. A court might decide that a Traveller's actions are excusable under the circumstances but then punish him anyway to avoid setting a precedent that might encourage others to shirk their duties. Thus there are stages to the proceedings. At each stage the matter can be abstracted or an adventure may break out!

## Presentation of Evidence

Evidence for and against the defendant is presented. This can be abstracted as the referee informing the Travellers of what level of evidence they face. There are opportunities here for skulduggery and adventure as the Travellers try to obtain, suppress or fabricate evidence, or influence the court in other ways.

## Case for the Prosecution

The prosecution makes as much of the available evidence as possible, which can be abstracted with an Average (8+) Advocate check. A typical naval prosecutor or officer handling a minor disciplinary matter will have DM+2. A full court-martial will usually require a legal officer with DM+4, and for very serious matters or the court-martial of a lieutenant-commander or higher a very experienced prosecutor with DM+6 will be brought in. The Travellers may manipulate this process by throwing legal obstacles in the way, for example finding a law that says the case has to be tried at a particular place and time which forces the prosecution to use whoever is available. Enemies of the Travellers might do the same.

## Case for the Defence

The defence then refutes the evidence or uses it to demonstrate innocence, again abstracted by an Average (8+) Advocate check. The Travellers can provide their own defence or use the defender assigned to them. This individual will have an Advocate DM one less than the prosecution.

The Travellers may also attempt other measures at this stage. Impassioned pleas for mercy are unlikely to sway anyone, but if the Travellers can come up with some reason to mitigate the consequences of their actions or even set aside what would otherwise be a guilty verdict, they can try. A Difficult (10+) Persuade or Diplomat check is normally required, though another skill might be used – for example, Tactics to demonstrate the Travellers had no better options or Medic to show they were suffering from stress and fatigue at the time.

## Outcome

The referee should roll 2D, subtracting any DM for evidence against the Traveller and subtracting the Effect of the Prosecution's Advocate check, and adding the Effect of the defence and any additional measures. Consult the table below for the outcome of the hearing.

**OUTCOME**

| 2D | Result |
|---|---|
| 0 or less | The Traveller is found guilty and vilified beyond what is normal. DM-2 applies on the Punishment table, and the Traveller immediately suffers SOC-1. |
| 1-2 | Guilty. |
| 3-4 | Guilty, with some mitigating factors. DM+2 is applied to the Punishment table. |
| 5-7 | Acquitted. The Traveller is found to be innocent of the charges, and suffers no career effects. |
| 8-9 | Honourably Acquitted. The Traveller is found completely innocent and a few praiseworthy deeds are brought to light. |
| 10-11 | Praise and Thanks. The Traveller is not only acquitted of the charges but is found to have upheld the finest traditions of the service. |
| 12 or more | The trial is considered to have been a fiasco and a disgrace. The Traveller emerges smelling of roses and the prosecution may face investigation. |

## Punishment

A Traveller convicted at a court-martial faces punishment. The Punishment table can also be used to abstract the outcome of a disciplinary panel for a minor offence. In the latter case, the Traveller is permitted a Difficult (10+) Advocate check. A positive Effect means the Traveller has provided an adequate explanation for his actions and is not censured. Negative Effect is applied to the Punishment table.

No modifiers are applied for minor offences. For major offences such as stealing munitions or refusal to obey orders, DM-4 applies. DM-8 is applied in very serious cases such as mutiny or aiding the enemy.

**PUNISHMENT**

| 2D | Result |
|---|---|
| 0 or less | The Traveller is – at the very least – dismissed the service and loses all Benefit rolls. In cases where the Traveller has acted against the navy or Imperium (for example, mutiny or selling secrets to foreign powers) a period of incarceration is likely. The court may even impose the death penalty. |
| 1-2 | The Traveller is demoted one rank and will not be eligible for promotion for 2D years. Officers are strongly urged to resign their commission and thereby give up all mustering out benefits. |
| 3-4 | The Traveller is sentenced to a punitive assignment. This may be imprisonment, or service aboard a vessel engaged in unpleasant work. For example, a former destroyer captain may be given command of a garbage scow for his next deployment. |
| 5-7 | The Traveller receives a 10% pay cut for the next 2D months and promotion prospects are harmed. DM-4 applies on all attempts to obtain promotion for the next 4 years. |
| 8-9 | The Traveller is confined to quarters for a period of 3D days and given extra duties |
| 10-11 | The Traveller receives a token fine of Cr1Dx10 to be taken out of pay. |
| 12 or more | The Traveller's extenuating circumstances or pleas for mercy result in nothing more than a note in his record of the offence. |

## Medals and Promotion

The captain of a ship can appoint any crewmember to 'acting' rank, which carries the pay and benefits of the new rank but is not permanent. It is very uncommon for personnel to be appointed more than one grade above their permanent rank. Promotion boards look favourably upon time spent doing the job of a more experienced crewmember and might decide to promote a Traveller a little earlier than usual, but acting rank is not a shortcut to the Admiralty. The usual rate of no more than one promotion per term (4 years) should be observed other than in extreme circumstances such as when the fleet has been devastated and must be quickly rebuilt.

The details of which crewmembers are due for advancement are not usually necessary to a naval campaign, but the Travellers will want to know if *they* are eligible for promotion. The referee should remember that the navy does not promote officers every time they come home from an adventure; there is a requirement to gain experience before moving up.

Any Traveller can be put forward for promotion by the ship's commanding officer, except the captain himself – he has to wait until the Admiralty sees fit to recommend him. Promotion is not automatic; a board will examine the application and decide if the Traveller has sufficient experience and aptitude but, as always, this process can be influenced. An adventure revolving around schmoozing the promotion board and persuading a couple of rival officers to write letters of recommendation might be a nice change of pace from guns-blazing style adventures.

When a Traveller is put forward for promotion, he must make a Difficult (10+) check against a department-related skill (e.g. Astrogation or Pilot for Flight branch, Gunner or Electronics (sensors) for Gunnery, and so forth - command officers may use Tactics, Admin or similar skills necessary to run or command a ship), with DM-2 for every year less than four the Traveller has held his current rank. Success indicates promotion to the next rank.

Recommendation for medals works in a similar manner. The captain of a ship puts in medal recommendations – his own come from the Admiralty's assessment of the ship's performance, though sometimes a captain will be decorated for form's sake, either as a PR exercise or because a captain of his experience is expected to have medals. Some officers work the system to obtain additional decorations, though someone who makes too many recommendations will find they fall on deaf ears.

At the end of a mission, each Traveller who is put forward for a medal or other award should roll 3D and add DM+2 for every point of Mission Success Index. A negative MSI reduces the total. The Medals and Awards table indicates the award received. Note that there are

## MEDALS AND AWARDS

| 3D | Award | Notes |
|---|---|---|
| 0-8 | No Award | |
| 9-12 | Detachment Citation | The official record of the mission mentions the Traveller's comrades as a group (e.g. 'the officers of this vessel' or 'the point-defence team'). This is good for bragging rights but not much else. |
| 13-16 | Mention in Dispatches | The Traveller is personally named in official dispatches; their deed is now a (small) part of naval history. The Traveller gains DM+2 on their next attempt to achieve promotion. |
| 17-20 | Meritorious Conduct Under Fire (MCUF) | The Traveller is awarded the MCUF in accordance with the Unified Decoration Code used by all Imperial services. |
| 21-24 | Medal for Conspicuous Gallantry (MCG) | The Traveller is awarded the MCG. |
| 25+ | Starburst for Extreme Heroism (SEH) | The Traveller is awarded the SEH, but only if the mission involved combat or extreme hazard. If not, the Traveller receives the Navy Cross. |

requirements for some decorations; if they are not met the Traveller receives an alternative.

The MCUF, MCG and SEH assume a combat deployment or situation where there is danger from enemy action. These awards may not be appropriate for some situations, in which case an alternative medal is awarded. This is just as highly regarded in most cases, and represents courageous and intelligent action in a different situation.

If there is no combat situation, an MCUF recipient instead receives the Meritorious Service Medal instead. The MSM is awarded by all services, including rear-echelon units and merchant vessels supporting the navy in service above and beyond the call of duty in situations not directly threatened by an enemy. An MCUF might be awarded for actions taken amid a natural disaster or daring rescue of a distressed ship if there was danger equivalent to enemy action. Much depends on the role the Traveller played – the boarding team leader might receive an MCUF whilst the brilliant astrogator who made the intercept and rescue possible gets an MSM.

The same applies to the Medal for Conspicuous Gallantry, though the MCG specifically includes actions requiring great moral courage or resilience in the face of exhaustion, stress, and other mental harm. Thus a commander who made good decisions throughout a five day operation in which she barely slept would qualify for the MCG as she has been through the wringer, even though she never came under fire. The alternative decoration is the Distinguished Service Medal, which is awarded for excellence in non-dangerous fields. The designer of a new targeting package that helps win a major battle would qualify for the DSM, but not the MCG.

The Starburst for Extreme Heroism is the Imperium's highest military decoration and awarded only for action in the face of extreme personal danger. This could be bullets, laser beams, hard radiation or an erupting volcano, but there must be extreme hazard to qualify. The non-combat alternative is the Navy Cross, which is usually awarded for excellent leadership and planning. The logistics officer who organised mid-combat resupply of a missile cruiser squadron and prevented the destruction of the battle squadron it was supporting would be eligible for a Navy Cross, whilst the lone gunner manning point-defence in a burning control room might be up for the SEH.

In addition, there are some automatic awards based upon mission events and other factors. These are received when the Traveller or crewmember qualifies, in addition to any other awards.

**Naval Service Medal:** Awarded for four full years of service to all personnel who have performed adequately and not blemished their record with serious misbehaviour. Modified clasps are awarded for additional 4-year periods.

**Combat Ribbon:** Awarded to all personnel who have served aboard a vessel that saw 'significant action' (which is loosely defined, but a grossly unfair fight with a smuggler crew or weak pirate vessel will not count) or who have seen combat groundside whilst under navy or joint-services command. Additional awards are made for each mission in which the Traveller saw action.

**Command Cluster:** Awarded for each mission in which the Traveller was in a command position (captain, XO or head of a department) aboard a vessel that saw sufficient action to qualify its crew for a combat ribbon.

**Purple Heart:** Awarded for each occasion a crewmember was significantly injured (usually defined as 'requiring a period of hospitalisation') in the line of duty.

**Exemplary Service Crest:** Awarded to all personnel serving aboard a vessel which was awarded a Naval Unit Citation.

**From left to right: Meritorious Conduct Under Fire Medal, Medal for Conspicuous Gallantry and Naval Service Medal**
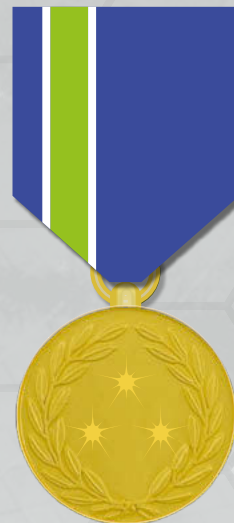
**Purple Heart Medal**

**Starburst for Extrem Heroism Medal**

**Exemplary Service Crest**

# THE CAMPAIGN

A naval campaign will typically consist of several missions or a single very long and important one, with one or more adventures taking place between each of the missions or during them. A campaign can shift in focus during play, with key crewmembers being assigned to another vessel or the ship moving to a different deployment area, and a change in the political situation may well make things simpler. Indeed, it can be a relief to go from tense brinkmanship to the simplicity of outright warfare – though this may not be in the best interests of the navy or the society it serves.

## INFORMATION AND INTELLIGENCE

Information is vital to naval operations, and often in short supply. Even when using the fastest courier ships available, intelligence and orders based upon it can often be out of date by the time it reaches those intended to implement it. A wise captain maintains a slight mistrust of what the intelligence people tell him, and obtains his own intelligence wherever he can.

There is always the possibility of deliberately false information being fed to a ship's company – perhaps from devious internal politics or a clever ruse on the part of the enemy. More commonly, information is incomplete and contains inaccuracies. This can be used as a plot device by the referee in many ways, from deliberate deception by an enemy who wants the ship destroyed or her crew disgraced, to unfortunate happenstance such as the courier carrying revised estimates of enemy strength arriving just after the task force jumps out to engage them in battle.

Obtaining good intelligence might be the focus of a mission, or could be something the Travellers feel they need to do before plunging into a situation. Either way, there are two main kinds of intelligence that can be sought.

**Routine** intelligence gathering is carried out all the time. Direct methods include sensor data gathered by the Travellers' ship or reports from informants among trader crews and starport personnel. Routine intelligence gathering produces a great deal of raw data which must be collated to search for patterns and anomalies. For example, a patrolling warship will download the starport logs of ships at each port of call. Her intelligence staff will build up an image of local traffic patterns and may notice that certain ships have an anomalous movement pattern. Are they exploiting sudden changes in the market due to insider trading? Are they pirates? Or is there some mundane explanation? Often there is, but investigating leads thrown up by routine intelligence operations is part of the navy mission.

**Specific** intelligence gathering has a particular objective in mind. For example, a ship might be sent to conduct a reconnaissance of several systems just over the border and report in detail on the type and size of vessels using local ports, as well as the capacity of those ports to support a naval squadron if a forward base were suddenly needed. Specific intelligence gathering does not need to be cloak-and-dagger stuff; often a ship can openly enter a system and use its sensors to find out all it needs. However, this does not mean that a ship openly gathering data on one subject is not secretly trying to uncover something completely different.

### Intelligence Events

An Intelligence Event is a point at which the quality of information available or its analysis needs to be determined. One normally occurs at the beginning of a mission segment, determining the sort of information available at that time. The Travellers may decide to conduct more analysis or gather better data before acting. This is resolved as one or more mission segments or an adventure.

Adventure leads or plot-related information gleaned from analysis of routine intelligence gathering are best used as a plot device, with information becoming available when the referee wants to reveal it. Analysis normally takes a predictable length of time; that is, the intelligence staff will have some answers at round about the time they say they will. However, accuracy is improved by taking longer and cross-referencing more. It is unrealistic to expect every piece of routine analysis to be conducted in this manner however; it is a big job and very time-consuming. The normal practice is to conduct routine analysis at a standard rate and focus in on anything that stands out.

Intelligence analysis uses the Investigate skill, though raw data may be gathered by various means using a range of skills. The referee should call for an Investigate check using the intelligence's officer's skill or relevant Efficiency Index. Normal difficulty is Average (8+) for routine analysis. The referee may wish to make this check in secret, ensuring the Travellers do not know how accurate their information is. Alternatively, the check can be made openly and the result used to modify further checks to abstract the next operation undertaken by the crew.

### INTELLIGENCE EVENTS

| Effect of Investigate Check | Result |
| --- | --- |
| -6 or worse | Information is confusing, contradictory and basically useless. DM-4 applies to mission segment resolution until better information is available. |
| -4 to -5 | Information seems reasonably comprehensive and reliable, but contains serious omissions and errors. DM-1 applies to mission segment resolution and an Incident occurs. |
| -3 to -1 | Partial information is available but inaccurate in places or has serious gaps. DM-2 applies to mission segment resolution. |
| 0 | Sufficient information is available but vague or patchy and contains a number of inaccuracies. DM-1 applies to mission segment resolution. |
| 1-3 | Sufficient information is available and reasonably reliable. No modifier is applied to mission segment resolution. |
| 3-5 | Good, solid intelligence is available. DM+2 applies to mission segment resolution. |
| 6 or better | Good, solid intelligence is available. DM+2 applies to mission segment resolution. In addition, an unexpected opportunity is spotted. |

## Intelligence Missions

Deliberate gathering of intelligence, such as a sensor sweep of a suspected pirate haven or a party sent planetside to follow up rumours of illicit dealings may be the stuff of adventures, especially if something goes awry. Alternatively, it can be abstracted using the standard mission segment resolution system (see page 43). Information gathered must still be analysed and collated, but when the Travellers have gone to the trouble of obtaining data by their own efforts they should usually be rewarded with reliable intelligence… unless of course someone wanted them to obtain and believe deceptive information.

## CAMPAIGN EVENTS

Campaign Events typically occur between missions but could happen during one. To qualify as a campaign event, an incident must have some effect on the political situation or the ability of the Travellers to carry out their missions. This could be something as grand as the outbreak of a major war or the recall of an admiral to face charges of embezzlement from navy funds, but might be much narrower in focus such as an incident depriving the Travellers' ship of one of its support vessels.

The referee can impose Campaign Events he sees fit, though it is worth thinking through the implications. If a war breaks out today, it will still be going on for the next few months. This could take the campaign in an unexpected direction – which might be good, or may derail the intended plot. It is therefore best to keep incidents below the threshold of setting-changing events unless the referee wants something big to happen.

How often Campaign Events take place is a matter for referee discretion. As a rule of thumb, roll 2D before each mission and on 8+ an incident will occur before or during it.

## INCIDENTS

An Incident occurs when indicated by the mission resolution system. Most Incidents are negative, reflecting the fact that the simplest mission can go awry. Incidents normally occur during the resolution of an Operation, and are noted at the scale of a detachment or small segment of the crew. Incidents involving the whole ship can be scaled up to match the situation.

Incidents are spurs to adventure, or at least short challenges that will keep the Travellers thinking. For example, an Incident on a sensors task requires a necessary person needs to be in two places at once. The referee runs with the idea and informs the gunnery officer that his sensor team has been left dangerously weak by a well-meaning subordinate's actions. Half the techs are two decks down trying to unjam a missile hoist that had a live warhead on it. That is an urgent task, but there are sensor bogeys out there and the captain is demanding information. Decisions need to be made, and quickly….

| 2D | Event |
|---|---|
| 2 | **Rumours of War:** A potentially major incident takes places within a few parsecs, threatening the stability of the local area or war with an external power. All nearby ships are ordered to proceed to the area and restore the situation. |
| 3 | **Conflict:** A minor conflict breaks out between nearby worlds or corporate holdings. The situation is complex and has the potential to spread. |
| 4 | **Mutiny:** A friendly ship suffers a mutiny or is captured by pirates. There may be friendly prisoners on board. All ships are ordered to be on the lookout and to recapture or destroy the vessel. |
| 5 | **Nearby Incident:** The Travellers' ship receives word of an incident (a pirate attack perhaps, or a minor rebellion on a local world) within its patrol area. Details are sketchy, and investigation might be merited. However, this means departing from the scheduled mission. |
| 6 | **Distant Incident:** The Travellers' ship receives word of an incident beyond its patrol area, and is advised to remain alert for vessels involved in it or repercussions in the local area. |
| 7 | **Show the Flag:** The Travellers' ship is ordered to a particular system to 'show the flag' and remind locals that the navy is doing its job. This may be a routine visit or could be intended to calm local tensions. |
| 8 | **Thinned Out:** An incident or major fleet exercise pulls several ships out of the area, forcing the Travellers' vessel to accept a greatly expanded mission. |
| 9 | **Reinforced:** Additional ships are assigned to the area, with or without explanation from the Admiralty. These ships might be an asset or could be less than effective in which case the Travellers might find them a hindrance. |
| 10 | **Return to Port:** A friendly ship is recalled to deal with a problem or has to be pulled off its station to repair a breakdown or major defect. The gap in the patrol schedule must be filled somehow, perhaps requiring unreliable forces to take on an important role. |
| 11 | **Command Reshuffle:** A senior officer is suddenly transferred, promoted, or cashiered, leaving a hole in the command structure that must be filled. Local forces are thrown into confusion for a few weeks, with garbled orders and unaccountable delays in receiving resupply. |
| 12 | **Top Brass:** Local forces are selected to receive a visit from the top brass or nobility. Local commanders are determined to look as good as possible, imposing additional tasks on ships under their command whilst requiring them to be as presentable as possible. |

# SUPPLIES, SPARES AND STORES

The key to successful naval operations is to have the right ships on station, fully equipped, and crewed by well-trained personnel. This is easier said than done, however, and logistics absorbs a great deal of the navy's energy. Wise captains constantly monitor their stores and supplies levels and have a backup plan for getting what they need if the supply chain breaks down.

Stores, spares and supplies are abstracted as Supply Units, or SU. A starship is assumed to carry enough spares lockers, spud bunkers, and other stowage for its normal level of supplies without needing to use cargo space for the purpose. Note that supplies are separate from expendable large ordnance such as missiles or fuel for the power plant and jump drives, and represents food for the crew as well as replacement parts for the ship.

A warship normally consumes a number of SU equal to 1% of its tonnage per day on maintenance and minor repairs, as well as feeding and clothing the crew. A ship at full supply capacity, not using any additional cargo space, carries 100 days of spares and supplies in its internal bays and lockers. If carried as bulk cargo, 100 SU consumes 1 ton. A warship on deployment can carry addition supplies in its cargo bay, but these are not available for immediate use; they must be broken out and set up in a ready configuration.

The amount of supplies a ship consumes can be altered by its crew. A skilled crew makes better use of available supplies and wastes less without having to go short. Each week on deployment the ship's Logistics Officer or her commanding officer must make an Average (8+) Admin check. The ship's routine use of spares and supplies is reduced by 2.5% for every point of Effect.

To operate without penalty on a reduced logistics budget the ship's Logistics Officer or her commanding officer must

## INCIDENTS

| 2D | Incident |
|----|----------|
| 2 | Something goes suddenly wrong with a piece of equipment. Failure is unlikely and the timing is as bad is it could possibly be. That suggests deliberate sabotage, but there is no immediately obvious suspect. |
| 3 | A routine task turns complicated or dangerous, fast. This may be hostile action such as a band of smugglers or unsuspected terrorists making an attack or escape, or could be a natural threat such as an uncharted asteroid on a collision course. It might be a threatening situation that stops short of violence, such as belligerent protesters or an 'unfriendly-but-not-enemy' warship making provocative actions. |
| 4 | A crewmember suffers serious injury due to inattention or equipment failure. If an interaction is taking place with outsiders the incident might be misconstrued and result in confrontation. |
| 5 | The situation is complicated by the arrival of another ship or detachment, which begins interfering or behaving in a suspicious manner. |
| 6 | A newly promoted or transferred junior leader decided to take charge and get things done. This irritates more experienced personnel who have established a good working practice… or maybe they are just set in their ways and resent being asked to make a proper effort. |
| 7 | Confusion reigns! Garbled orders and bad information result in the mishandling of simple tasks. Perhaps a boarding party will fail to conduct all necessary checks; items will be missed from inventory or mission preparation, and the detachment will appear embarrassingly incompetent. The job more or less gets done, though. |
| 8 | A dispute breaks out over necessary equipment or a crewmember whose skills are wanted in two places at the same time. The resulting bickering derails the task at hand. |
| 9 | Important and possibly irreplaceable equipment is missing or inoperable. Unless a workaround can be improvised the task cannot be completed. |
| 10 | The detachment reports the job done in double-quick time. They may have actually achieved that or might be cutting corners. |
| 11 | A complex task turns out to be extremely easy. Suspiciously so, in fact… |
| 12 | An ordinary crewmember has a moment of sheer brilliance and displays hidden potential. The task goes off exceptionally well, but why has this crewmember suddenly come to the fore? |

make Difficult (10+) Leadership check with a DM of -1 per 5% the running budget is reduced by. This cannot be combined with general crew efficiency as it is a deliberate shortening of rations and skimping on maintenance.

Any negative Effect on this Leadership check is applied to an immediate minor Morale check – this check is not made if an Effect of 0 or better is achieved, since the crew has accepted the situation and agrees it is necessary. Grumbling and some internal black marketeering are likely but the crew will not suffer reduced Morale if the check is made.

For example, a 50,000 ton warship normally consumes 500 SU per day. Her crew are efficient and waste little, and her logistics officer is adept at managing the supply situation. This week she makes her Admin check and rolls a total of 11, for an Effect of +3. The ship's logistics burden is reduced by 7.5%, or 37.5 SU per day – 262.5 per week. This equates to an extra day without resupply for every two weeks on station.

The ship's captain decides this is not enough, and implements a stark regime banning all but the most essential maintenance and placing the crew on short rations. He decides to reduce supply use by 50% and must make a Difficult (10+) Leadership check at DM-10. Despite a rousing speech about tight belts and necessity, and some less than subtle hints from the ship's marine contingent, the outcome of the check is an Effect of -5.

Since this is negative a Morale check at DM-5 is required. Not surprisingly it is failed and Morale drops by -1. The captain decides this is acceptable; Morale will steadily drop if the crew are hungry and systems keep breaking down, but the ship can stay on station much longer without resupply.

## Ghalalk-class cruisers

A Ghalalk-class cruiser, at 50,000 tons, uses 500 SU per day – five tons of supplies – and carries 50,000 SU. A full resupply requires logistics ships with 500 tons

of cargo space available, in addition to fuel. Note that these supplies are not used up at an even rate. Some components are never used at all, but are carried just in case certain repairs might be needed. Others need to be topped up at a constant rate. This system is intended to abstract the logistics burden of a ship, imposing limitations that can be used by the referee to direct the plot without turning a naval campaign into a bean-counting exercise.

## MAKING REPAIRS

A warship that has suffered battle damage or otherwise needs to make repairs can do so using spares carried aboard. Large repairs such as restoring a few hundred Hull points blasted off the ship cannot be carried out without a dockyard – which means a ship on a long mission will just have to cope with a big hole in the forward accommodation complex.

A critical hit to a system can be repaired on a Difficult (10+) Engineer or Electronics check. The amount of SU used in a repair is determined by a roll of 3D minus the Effect of a successful check. Multiply this figure by 1% of the ship's tonnage to determine how many supplies are used up. If the check is failed, the attempt still uses half the normal amount of spares, which are expended and cannot be used in a second attempt.

Attempts to repair structural damage use up a lot of bulk materials, which cannot be carried in great quantities. Each attempt to repair structural damage uses up 1D% of the ship's tonnage in SU and repairs an amount of Hull points equal to 1Dx the Effect of an Average (8+) Mechanic check made by the chief engineer. If the ship's crew can find quantities of suitable materials – even inferior stuff like sheet steel from a mid-tech planet – they can substitute this for 75% of the SU needed… but getting it could require an adventure!

For example, a 75,000 ton cruiser needs to repair a critical hit taken to her spinal weapon. Her chief engineer makes the repair check with an Effect of 2, and rolls 13 on 3D to see how much SU is used up. This gives a total of 11, or 11% of the ship's tonnage; that is 825 SU. He then attempts to repair structural damage using plates of wrought iron bought on a nearby mid-tech world using the ship's funds. Joining steel and bonded superdense is not very satisfactory, but will have to serve. The effort uses 1% of the ship's tonnage in SU. This is 750 SU, but 75% of that is crudely shaped plate iron, so only 187.5 SU is used. The engineer makes a successful check with an Effect of 3, repairing 3D structure points. Well, it is a start.

To determine the time required to fix a critical hit to an internal system, the ship's engineering officer should make a Very Difficult (12+) Engineer or Electronics check. The time required is 4D hours minus 3 for every point of Effect.

Attempts to repair structural damage take 2D hours and cannot be attempted during high-g manoeuvres or whilst in jump space.

## OBTAINING SUPPLIES

Normally when a ship is to be sent on a mission it is fully supplied by the Admiralty. However, sometimes orders come through unexpectedly, supply ships fail to turn up, or another captain successfully redirects the shipment. If so, the Travellers may have to start their mission under-supplied. The Supplies table is used to determine the supply situation when the unexpected happens, or when a senior officer makes a snap inspection.

The ship's Logistics Officer must make an Average (8+) Admin check, adding the Effect to the result of a 2D roll.

**SUPPLIES**

| 2D | Outcome |
|---|---|
| 0 or less | The locker is bare. Stores stand at 2D% of capacity |
| 1-2 | The stores situation is dire. The ship has 20+2D% of its normal stores aboard |
| 3-4 | The stores situation is serious. Only 40+2D% of capacity is available |
| 5-6 | There are shortages in some areas. Stores stand at 60+2D% |
| 7-8 | The supply situation is about normal. Stores stand at 80+2D% full. |
| 9-10 | The supply situation is fine. Stores stand at 100% or close enough not to matter. |
| 11-12 | The ship is slightly overstocked in some areas, including some luxuries. The vessel begins its mission with Morale +1. The excess is not huge, and might represent quality rather than quantity. The extra goodies are jammed into awkward corners and do not take up cargo space. |
| 13 or more | We have everything we need, and most of the things that destroyer over there needs, too. Stores are crammed at 120+2D% full, and both ECEI and MOR gain a +1 bonus during this mission. |

If the ship's stores are at less than 75% of capacity at the beginning of a mission, Morale is reduced by -1 for every full 25% the ship is short of her nominal capacity.

ECEI is reduced by -1 for every full 30% the ship is short of her capacity.

## Going on the Scrounge

A shortfall in stores can be offset in a variety of creative ways. This could be the subject of an adventure, in which case the referee should reward the Travellers appropriately if they succeed. If the attempt to obtain enough supplies is to be abstracted, then the Travellers may try each of the following once. Each attempt must be made by a different Traveller or segment of the crew.

**Go Through Channels**: Make an Average (8+) Admin or Advocate check to push through an expedited requisition.

**Beg, Bargain and Bribe:** Make an Average (8+) Persuade or Diplomat check to trade a few things another ship wanted, call in favours and generally work the system to get what you need.

**No Details:** Make a Difficult (10+) Streetwise check to obtain supplies by 'some other means' which the captain really does not want to know about.

**Do Something Really Radical:** Solutions like raiding the dockyard and basically stealing supplies, or similarly off-the-books methods are the subject of adventures.

Each successful check produces (2D+3)% of the ship's nominal supply amount, averaging 10% per attempt. Thus it is only possible to improve the supply situation by 45% of the nominal amount, and more typically 30% or so. If the Travellers need more they will have to come up with a plan to get it. Even logistics and book-keeping spawns adventures when you are in the navy!

# THE MISSION

A mission is not the same thing as an adventure. Indeed, a mission could be completed without anything that would be considered an adventure taking place.

Missions are self-contained sets of objectives the ship or crew are ordered to achieve, and can be resolved in as much detail as the referee desires. It might be interesting to play out every meal in the galley and every maintenance detail, but in most cases the routine can be glossed over until something goes wrong or an interesting event occurs.

A mission has a distinct beginning and end, but can be long or short depending on circumstances. Missions are broken down into segments and operations.

**The Mission:** A set of tasks and objectives the ship or crew are ordered to complete.
**Mission Segment:** A distinct subdivision of the overall mission, such as occurrences during a visit to one of the several star systems the ship is ordered to pass through. A segment may conveniently group some of the ship's tasks or be defined by the ship entering and leaving a particular star system.
**Operation:** A specific job undertaken by the crew during a mission segment. A single operation can expand into a whole adventure if something goes wrong.

For example, a warship is ordered to patrol several star systems. This is its **MISSION**. Along the way the ship visits the mainworld of a star system and hosts local government officials for dinner before heading out to the system's gas giant to search for intruders. The referee decides these are two separate **SEGMENTS** as this creates a convenient group of activities separated by a few days voyaging across the star system.

During the gas giant segment of the mission, the ship undertakes several distinct **OPERATIONS** including scanning the gas giant for hidden mines and corsairs waiting in ambush, refuelling from the gas giant, and deploying a detector drone to monitor local traffic. Along the way, the ship detects a suspect vessel and gives chase, at which point an adventure begins.

A Mission is resolved in distinct phases. At the beginning the crew are presented with the Big Picture; an overview of the situation and any relevant intelligence information available to them along with mission orders.

This phase is followed by Preparation, as the ship and her company are readied for the tasks ahead. Once the mission begins it is subdivided into several Segments, and those into Operations. At the end of the mission the focus returns to the Big Picture as the results of the mission and reactions of the Admiralty are determined.

Adventures can take place during any of these phases, and are likely to take place during several of them. Preparation and returning to base are just as fertile ground for adventures as any other part of the mission.

It is possible to resolve any mission using Crew Efficiency Index (CEI) and rolls on the resolution tables. The same goes for mission segments using Detachment Efficiency Index (DEI). You need not actually do any roleplaying for an entire mission if that suits your purposes. More commonly though, there will be incidents played out at various parts of the mission. By way of example, a hypothetical mission might look like the visual overleaf.

All of the Segments and Operations can be resolved with dice rolls, but any could become an incident that requires playing out. Scripted incidents can also be inserted where the referee feels appropriate. This means the Travellers will undertake routine activity not knowing when something will happen – and it might be a random incident or scripted referee campaign moment.

## Mission Start

A mission typically begins one of two ways: when the captain of the ship decides something needs to be done and sets out to deal with it or, more commonly, when orders are received from the captain's superiors. Captains are always expected to use their discretion but must balance the need to carry out their existing orders (and be where a courier with new orders can find them) and the requirement to carry out the navy's general aims in response to emerging situations.

For example, a captain who discovers rumours of a pirate base might think it is a wonderful idea to find it. Eliminating a pirate nest would be good for everyone's career and will surely benefit local interstellar traffic, but what about the current mission? What if something more urgent crops up whilst the only major warship in fifteen parsecs is off chasing glory? Every decision is

## BIG PICTURE
**The Admiral's reception:**

*Interact with officers and annoying noble.*

## PREPARATION
**Inter-service interaction:**

*Try to get useful information out of the Scouts. Attempt to locate missing supplies; deal with missile shortage.*

## MISSION
*Undertake patrol & flag-showing mission, visit annoying noble's homeworld.*

**Mission Segment:**

*Transit from base to annoying noble's planet.*
  **OPERATION**: *Jump.*
  **OPERATION**: *Skim Fuel.*
  **OPERATION**: *Jump.*
  **OPERATION**: *Encounter suspect merchant ship and board it.*

**Mission Segment:**

*Make nice at annoying noble's planet.*
  **OPERATION**: *Enter orbit without causing self-embarrassment.*
  **OPERATION**: *Deal with bolshy merchant captain who won't get out of the way.*
  **OPERATION**: *Diplomatic Party.*
  **OPERATION**: *Deal with protestors.*
  **OPERATION**: *Listen to annoying noble's demands and placate him.*

**Mission Segment:**

*Conduct patrol.*
  **OPERATION**: *Patrol, sensor sweep, more patrolling.*
  **OPERATION**: *Pirate attack on merchant shipping.*
  **OPERATION**: *Aftermath of pirate attack.*
  **OPERATION**: *Deal with annoying noble again. Avoid throttling him.*

**Mission Segment:**

*Transit Home.*
  **OPERATION**: *Jump.*
  **OPERATION**: *Skim Fuel.*
  **OPERATION**: *Jump.*
  **OPERATION**: *Enter Port.*

## MISSION END
*Make report to the Commodore. Deal with admin, logistics and crew issues.*

## BIG PICTURE
*Determine how the situation has changed, and what the next mission is likely to be.*

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a balancing act between risk and necessity, and the captain of a warship will answer for everything his ship chooses not to do as well as everything it does.

Orders given to a warship commander normally take the form of a recorded or personal order from the captain's superior along with formal written instruction and authorisation. Hard copies of every set of mission orders ever issued are retained at the Sector Fleet Archive (normally located at the sector's naval depot) and at the Central Naval Archive in Core sector. Orders will be supported with additional information, intelligence briefings and the like as required.

Orders are always written very formally and in a 'top-down' format, starting with the general aims of the mission and specific objectives to be attained, then going into more detail. To be valid and binding, orders must come through the proper chain of command and be accompanied by appropriate authentication codes.

A captain receiving a set of orders, like any naval officer, is permitted (and in fact required if he deems it necessary) to decide whether to accept and acknowledge the order, request clarification, suggest a reason why the orders are unworkable, acknowledge under protest, or refuse the order.

**Accept and Acknowledge:** This is the usual course of action for most orders. For a direct verbal order to a crewmember, standard practice is to repeat the order back and add 'aye sir' on the end. For formal orders to a captain from his superiors, an authenticated transmission stating 'orders received and acknowledged' is issued if possible. In the case where the order originated in a different system or some other circumstance prevents immediate acknowledgement, the captain must still record acknowledgement in the ship's computer. After a mission, it can thus be proven that the captain understood what his ship was supposed to be doing.

**Acknowledge Under Protest:** This is a statement that the officer will try to carry out the orders but does not agree with them for some reason. Examples might include an order to take a heavily damaged vessel on a non-urgent or suicidal mission, or carry out actions that seem morally or politically questionable. Protesting an order does not absolve an officer of responsibility for carrying it out, but may be used at an inquiry into the superior's conduct.

**Request Clarification:** This is sometimes used to politely suggest that the officer thinks the orders are unworkable or reckless, but is supposed to be simply a request for confirmation and additional information. Clarification may be required in a complex situation and can give

the superior a chance to revise the order to something more suitable without making an issue of it. It is not practicable to delay a mission for weeks waiting for a courier to bring clarification however; sometimes the captain must just interpret as best they can.

**Decline with Reason:** It is legitimate to decline an order that simply cannot be carried out, either for physical reasons such as a damaged drive that prevents relocation to a target system or because the officer has other orders or standing procedures that prevent it. A captain who expects an imminent attack on a given world due to recent intelligence data could decline an order to move elsewhere if he thinks his superior's information is out of date, though his decision may be called into question and an inquiry will decide if his actions were legitimate.

**Refuse the Order:** Orders that come from outside the chain of command, such as a local noble demanding a warship escort his yacht halfway across the sector, or orders which contravene Imperial High Laws, can be legitimately refused. In almost all other cases the decision to refuse an order will result in a court of inquiry and serious consequences.

# INAPPROPRIATE ORDERS

Normally a set of orders will be fairly specific about what the ship is supposed to achieve and far more general about how it is to do so. The captain is essentially told what outcome the Admiralty wants and has discretion to decide how this is to be achieved. However, sometimes a set of orders can create additional problems.

**Conflicting Orders** may require a vessel to do something that makes its primary mission impossible. Conflict between standing fleet orders and a specific order is one option, but a more insidious one is to order the captain to do something that sounds innocuous such as 'deliver the ambassador to the conference on Whitmore Station', then move the conference to another location that takes the ship too far away to complete the rest of its assigned mission.

**Vague or Compromising Orders** do not always look questionable, but along the way it will become apparent that the vessel has been sent into a dangerous situation without clear guidance on what to do. A captain whose ship has been sent to 'be a stabilising influence and prevent the outbreak of war' between two allied powers arrives to find the fighting has already begun… and he has no orders for this contingency. Or he arrives in time to find a fleet massing for a surprise attack. His vessel could prevent the attack but only by firing on the aggressor fleet, which will start the war he has been sent to prevent…

**Illegal Orders** create an interesting situation. An important noble who thinks he has the right to command the Imperial Navy but is not in the chain of command starts issuing orders that seem to make sense. The captain must decide whether to comply or reject the orders, which will create additional problems. A variant on this is the situation where a senior captain who is not in the ship's chain of command arrives and orders the ship to join his mission. This is not a legal order as it originates outside the chain of command, but the senior captain seems to be doing something important…

**Incomprehensible Orders** require the vessel to do something it cannot, such as make a rendezvous somewhere it lacks the jump capacity to get to in time. This could arise from an unfortunate circumstance such as a courier taking several weeks to locate the orders' recipient, or might be genuinely inexplicable. Much later, it transpires that the ship has been mis-registered as a high-jump rift cruiser. Alternatively, a ship might be ordered to do something that makes no sense and goes against standing orders, but with clarification several weeks away and a clear and legal order, the captain must plunge into the unknown and try to figure things out along the way.

# OBJECTIVES AND THE MISSION SUCCESS INDICATOR (MSI)

When the referee creates a mission, he should decide what the criteria for success should be. Most criteria will be explicitly stated to the Travellers in their briefing, but if the mission is to contain events unforeseen when the orders were created or there will be developments that must be dealt with, then some criteria may be concealed from the Travellers.

The Mission Success Indicator (MSI) is a running total kept by the referee, indicating how well the Travellers have accomplished their mission. It is used to determine the outcome of the mission when they return to port and make reports to the Admiralty.

The referee should create five mission success criteria for each mission. These will normally be reflected in the mission briefing, which sets out objectives for the mission. However, the mission success criteria should reflect the mission as the referee knows it will develop rather than what the planners expected when

# DEPOT/DENEB 022-1105: DISCRETIONARY PATROL OPERATIONS

Commodore T.F.J. Reiksveld,
19th Cruiser Squadron,
Deneb Sector Fleet

Captain Armade Agiikhekhi,
Light Cruiser INS *Aikir Khu*

Sir,

You are hereby requested and required to conduct discretionary patrol operations in area of operations designated Kegankha-Blue for a duration of not less than forty days and not more than sixty days, plus transit time.

Your patrol must include visits to destinations detailed in the sealed part of these orders, but otherwise you are to proceed at discretion.

Intelligence estimates of the situation indicate a moderate probability of corsair activity and low probability of unrest on local worlds.

The presence of your vessel in the region is intended to reassure local world governments that the recent spate of corsair attacks has been dealt with appropriately. Your officers should make every attempt to stress the importance attached to security of trade when interacting with local officials. It is recommended that officials be invited aboard your vessel in order to demonstrate its capabilities.

In the event that corsair activity is encountered, arrest and delivery to the local authorities is considered preferable to outright destruction. Local nobility have indicated that governments wish to make an example of captured pirates and are less likely to be satisfied with footage of destroyed vessels. You are hereby granted the authority to move outside your patrol zone in order to pursue corsair vessels or to act upon information obtained from captured pirates.

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

Good hunting, Captain.

*Commodore T.F.J. Reiksveld*

they created the briefing. If something is scheduled to happen during the mission which will catch the Travellers unawares and change their goals, they should not be made aware of it in a briefing whose planners could not conceivably have known it would happen.

Each objective has a status: Paramount, Critical, Routine, or Optional, and the degree to which it is achieved is rated as follows: Complete, Partial, Marginal, and Failed. At the end of the mission the referee will decide how well a particular goal was achieved, and award MSI points accordingly.

## MISSION SUCCESS

| Degree of Success | Meaning |
|---|---|
| Complete | The goal is fully and provably completed, with evidence in the form of reconnaissance data or observation that allows the Admiralty to say with confidence that the mission has been a success. |
| Partial | The goal is more or less completed but there are a few loose ends, or the evidence of completion is inconclusive. Most objectives are completed to this degree; the Admiralty understands that perfection is usually impossible to achieve and will settle for 'good enough'. |
| Marginal | The objective is partially completed, for example a pirate haven is damaged but not destroyed or some members of a distressed crew were rescued but others perished. Marginal success is 'not quite good enough' but will not usually attract displeasure from senior ranks unless it is frequently repeated. |
| Failed | A failed objective is just that; perhaps the pirate haven was not located or the Travellers failed to even notice the clues that would have alerted them to an impending attack which then went ahead unhindered. |

**Paramount:** This objective is utterly vital. If it is not accomplished the mission will be for nothing and judged an utter failure. Most missions will not have a Paramount objective. The phrase 'at all costs' is vastly over-used in fiction; it is rare that a crew will be ordered to carry out a mission or die trying, but that is what a Paramount objective is. If a mission has a Paramount objective and is not achieved, nothing else matters; it is worth the risk of losing a ship just to make an attempt to achieve this goal. Failure to accomplish a Paramount objective means the mission was a complete failure no matter what else was achieved.

**Critical:** This objective is extremely important and worth taking severe risks for. Losing a ship to achieve a Critical objective might be judged worth it. Not all missions have a Critical objective, and very few will have more than one. If a Critical objective is assigned, the mission overall is likely to be considered to be a failure if it is not achieved.

**Important:** The primary point of a mission is normally an Important objective, and others may also be rated as Important. A typical mission will have one Important objective and four Routine objectives, but this can vary.

**Routine:** This is the normal level of importance for a mission objective. A failed Routine objective does not mean the mission as a whole is a failure. MSI is totalled normally and the outcome determined using the Mission Outcome table.

The Mission Criteria table below indicates the MSI points awarded for different levels of success.

## MISSION CRITERIA

| Criteria | Complete Success | Partial Success | Marginal Success | Failure |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Paramount | 5 | 3 | 1 | -12 |
| Critical | 4 | 2 | 1 | -8 |
| Important | 3 | 2 | 1 | -4 |
| Routine | 2 | 1 | 0 | -2 |

Note that a naval ship is still expected to carry out its duties. Even if that chance encounter with a distressed merchant ship was not in the mission criteria, a crew who ignore it will face severe consequences. MSI is used as a way to abstract the degree of success encountered in the main mission and is not a substitute for common sense on the part of the referee.

## Determining Mission Success

The maximum score possible for a mission depends upon the objectives set. In theory it can range from 10 for a mission with only Routine objectives to 25 for five Paramount objectives. It is unlikely that a mission would ever be so important; normally a mix of Important and Routine objectives gives a maximum MSI of around 12-13.

It is possible to create a negative result if things go badly wrong. MSI should be used in conjunction with the referee's judgement where necessary; if the Travellers complete their mission and in addition deal with multiple random events thrown up by the Incident tables, they may receive extra praise. However, the navy hands out missions expecting the unexpected to occur; there is nothing unusual about having to

deal with a few extra problems. Unless the Travellers' actions are particularly noteworthy, the Admiralty will be primarily concerned whether the mission was carried out, and less interested in an incidental clash with smugglers and the assistance of a stranded merchant ship.

At the end of the mission, the Travellers' superiors will conduct a debriefing. The referee should ask the Travellers Three Tough Questions about their mission. These can be about specific actions, such as 'you opened fire at long range rather than attempting a stealthy approach to the target. Please explain that decision' or more general 'how do you think morale could have been best maintained during this deployment?'. If the Travellers reported a spectacular success somewhere, or if there are hints something went wrong, the questioning should be focussed on these events.

Each Traveller can answer only one Tough Question, and the captain can choose who answers unless it is specifically directed at someone (if there are less than three Travellers plus the captain, more than one can be answered by the same Traveller). The Traveller answering a Tough Question must make a Difficult (10+) Leadership check with a bonus or penalty based on the referee's appraisal of their answer. At the referee's discretion Admin, Diplomat or Persuade can be used instead of Leadership, depending on the officer's relationship with the Admiralty and his presentation style.

At the end of the debriefing the captain will make his summary comments, abstracted as an Average (8+) Leadership check (this one must be done with the Leadership skill). The total Effect of these four checks is added to the Mission Success Index to determine the Admiralty's reaction to the mission, and consulted on the Mission Outcome table.

## MISSION OUTCOME

| MSI | Outcome |
| --- | --- |
| -6 or less | The captain and one or more of the ship's officers will face a court-martial for their actions. |
| -1 to -5 | The Travellers are given a punitive deployment, perhaps in a different ship, as a chance to redeem themselves. |
| 0-3 | The Admiralty has serious concerns about the conduct of the ship's company. The next 1D missions will be under great scrutiny, equating to DM-1D to MSI at the end of each mission. |
| 4-6 | The Admiralty has serious concerns about the conduct of the ship's company. The captain and officers are ordered to improve their performance or be reassigned somewhere they can do no harm. The next missions will be under increased scrutiny, equating to DM-1 to MSI at the end of the mission. |
| 7-9 | The mission is judged a success, though barely. A faint whiff of disapproval emanates from the Travellers' superiors. |
| 10-12 | The Admiralty is satisfied with the ship's performance. |
| 13-15 | The Admiralty is pleased with the ship's performance but this is what everyone should aspire to as a matter of course so there is no special praise. |
| 16-18 | The Admiralty congratulates the ship's company on their excellent performance. Morale is increased by +1 permanently. |
| 19-21 | The Travellers' vessel is lauded as an example to others. Morale is increased by +1 permanently and the ship gains DM+2 on all checks to obtain personnel and supplies |
| 22 or more | The vessel is awarded a Naval Unit Citation, a great honour accompanied by parades and visits from senior nobles. Crew get a few days' extra furlough and a lifetime of bragging rights. Morale and Crew Efficiency Index are increased by +1 permanently and the ship gains DM+2 on all checks to obtain personnel and supplies |

## Example of Mission Success Criteria

The Travellers' ship is assigned to carry out a patrol of nearby systems and conduct an exercise with smaller vessels from one of the local system defence squadrons. The mission objectives are stated in the Travellers' briefing as:

1. Visit planets A, B, C, and D, spending not less than five days in each system 'showing the flag'.
2. Conduct anti-piracy sweep in the outsystem of B and D. It is imperative that these systems be cleared of any pirate vessels ahead of the Deneb Cup yacht race.
3. Rendezvous with local squadron in system E on a specific date.
4. Conduct joint-operations exercise with local squadron.
5. Visit planets F and H if possible, spending as much time in each system as appropriate.
6. Visit planet G, a small outpost, and drop off marine personnel to bolster the security contingent there.
7. Return to base within 120 days of departure.

The Travellers can deduce from these orders some of their mission success criteria. Orders should always be written in a way that allows this, unless there is a plot reason not to do so, such as interference from a rival or an incompetent admiral. However, they may not be able to tell which actions are scored for their Mission Success Index. Travellers should always attempt to accomplish all of their mission objectives unless circumstances dictate that they cannot. By keeping the mission success criteria secret, the referee can prevent Travellers from ignoring parts of their mission in favour of what they expect to be the important or medal-worthy aspects.

What the Travellers do not know at the start of the mission (the mission planners could not have predicted this) is that the local squadron will arrive for the joint exercise without a suitable plan for one, expecting the Travellers' ship to have the details. The Travellers will have to come up with a meaningful exercise on the fly: plan it, organise it and provide feedback to the locals' government and senior commanders. If they do not, the prestige of their navy will suffer.

More critically, in system D the Travellers will arrive just as one of the Route Scouts for the yacht race is coming under attack from a pirate vessel. Aboard is the daughter of a senior noble. Saving her is a critical mission objective, though the Travellers will not know about it beforehand. If they fail, whatever else they do will count for nothing in the face of the noble's wrath and put pressure on the Admiralty to censure the officers who failed to protect his daughter.

The referee decides the mission success criteria will be:

1: CRITICAL: Save the yacht race Route Scouts, or at least the noble's daughter.
2: IMPORTANT: Make the rendezvous with the local squadron and carry out a meaningful exercise
3: ROUTINE: Visit systems A, B, C and D as per mission objectives.
4: ROUTINE: Visit system G and drop off the marines.
5: ROUTINE: Visit systems F and H.

The Travellers manage to visit systems A, B, C and D and thus completely satisfy objective 2 for 3 MSI points. They manage to save the noble's daughter, though her ship is wrecked and some of her crew are killed. Mistakes are made in the fight with the attackers, resulting in the Travellers' ship taking needless damage and some enemies escaping. The referee judges this a marginal success, worth 1 MSI. Under other circumstances he might have give a 2 for partial success, but the noble's daughter makes a huge fuss about how late the Travellers were in arriving, resulting in the death of some of her crew. This will affect perception of the incident, and lowers the MSI value.

The Travellers reach their rendezvous a little late and manage to cobble together an exercise with the locals. This goes surprisingly well, and the local crews are extremely impressed with the meaningful training they have been given by an expert Imperial Navy crew. Their glowing reports are worth a 3 for a complete success.

The Travellers are able to reach system G and drop off the marines, earning them an easy 2 for complete success at a Routine objective. However, after this the Travellers are distracted by an attempt to chase down one of the pirate ships that escaped them in system D. They are running out of time and head back to base without visiting system H. This earns them a 1 for Partial Success on a Routine objective.

The Travellers' MSI total is 3+1+3+2+1 = 10. Their performance at their debriefing is mixed, but a total Effect of +2 gives them a result of 12. The Admiralty is satisfied with their performance, with no positive or negative results.

In the course of this mission there have been easy and hard objectives. Dropping off marines is not difficult, unless the Travellers mishandled some other part of the mission and could not reach the system in time. Other parts were more difficult, and required a range of problem-solving approaches. The fight to rescue the yacht did not go well, but the Travellers' brilliant

improvisation of a training exercise got them out of trouble. A mission should be a mix of problem types.

It is very difficult to win unit citations on routine flag-showing missions. This is intentional. A ship that is given a big, critical job has a chance to win everlasting laurels, but only at great risk. One that diligently patrols the backwaters and rescues the odd stranded belter cannot expect the same reward… but the job still has to be done.

# MISSIONS AND ADVENTURES

The mission, in this case, is a narrative tool to get the ship and its crew doing something so they can have adventures. Some adventures will be created on the fly, as a result of mishaps or bad decisions during routine operations. Others are scripted by the referee

and can occur at any time during the mission. An adventure might not be what the Travellers expect at all; for example a ship out pirate hunting suddenly suffers fatalities among her crew whilst in jump. Has a crewmember turned murderous, or did someone or something get aboard at their last stop?

Adventures are resolved just like any other Traveller adventure, by interaction between the Travellers and the referee. Once the adventure has begun almost anything can happen, though the fact that the Travellers are naval personnel aboard a starship on a specific mission might force them to make some decisions differently than they would under other circumstances. This can add another dimension to an adventure, as the Travellers try to not merely survive their current predicament but also finish the job they came to do.

## Resolving the Mission Start

The first order of business at the start of a new mission is to brief the crew and ensure the ship is properly supplied. It is very rare for a vessel to have everything it is supposed to. The vessel's supply and crew situation is determined using the rules on page 30, after which the Travellers can try to remedy any shortages or obtain items they think might help.

The referee should not allow Travellers to put off launching their mission for several weeks while they seek out every possible item they might need and have a few side adventures along the way. Naval campaigns do not work like that – the Travellers have been given a job to do and must do it when they are told. If not, their ship will be given to a crew that actually obeys its orders.

After as much or as little preparation time as the referee deems necessary, the mission begins.

## Mission End

A mission should have a distinct end point. This will usually be the ship's home base, where the crew can have some downtime and receive their just rewards. It is highly uncommon for crews returning from even a very important mission to be showered with medals and promotions, and the referee should be careful not to create an expectation that handfuls of Starbursts for Extreme Heroism are going to be dished out every mission.

Promotion-bloat can lead to real problems for the referee, as it becomes very difficult to come up with reasons why these naval heroes would still be crewing the same vessel when their obvious expertise could be better used elsewhere. At the end of a mission the ship's command crew can recommend personnel for medals or promotion, and senior officers may be promoted if the Admiralty sees fit, but it takes years

to go from lieutenant-commander to commander to captain. A referee who remembers this is not being stingy or denying Travellers their just reward; he is ensuring campaign longevity.

Of course, receiving medals or attending a training course to prepare for promotion can be an adventure in and of itself. A naval campaign does not always have to be aboard the same ship, and adventures do not have to take place out among the stars. A Traveller recommended for promotion might be saddled with a bunch of new-entry cadets to look after for a while, or something might happen at the medal ceremony that triggers an adventure.

It is worth keeping in mind that many Travellers have expectations about reward at the end of an adventure. The rewards for a successful naval mission are not the same as for a freewheeling adventure. The salary is not that great and you do not get bonuses. There are few opportunities to make money on the side – not legally, anyway. Medals and promotions are not handed out by the bucketful and even heroic naval characters will not be able to just do as they please whatever the Admiralty might think.

The mindset of a naval campaign is different to many others. The reward is getting the job done and being part of the team. It is knowing that commercial shipping is a bit safer now and a war that might have destroyed countless lives was prevented. These are not tangible things, but there are ways to ensure the Travellers know they have done a good job. A mention in despatches, a call to watch a news report about their ship and its awesome crew, the respect of merchant crews in port – some of them at least – or a message of congratulations from the admiral can all be used to remind the Travellers that their work is appreciated. It is not the same as a heap of Credits and a new gun, but that is how the navy campaign works.

## Operation Resolution

The core game mechanic for naval campaigns is resolution of an operation or whole mission segment using the ship's ECEI or the DEI of the detachment or division carrying out the task. Many segments will go off without a hitch, and any segment can be narrated rather than resolved using the dice if the referee chooses. It is up to the referee whether manoeuvring out of port is played out in detail, resolved with a single ECEI check, or simply narrated in as much or as little detail as desired. As a rule, the more chance there is for something to go wrong, the more likely the referee will want to play out the scene.

For abstract resolution, an appropriate Traveller makes a 2D roll and adds the modifier for ECEI or DEI, as determined by the referee. Any additional modifiers are

also applied to this check. The result is determined by the Mission Segment Resolution table.

Multiple factors can apply, but the referee should be cautious about making things too easy for the Travellers. If they are allowed to claim several advantages every time they do anything, the actual competence of their crew (determined by ECEI) becomes meaningless.

## Notes on Segment Resolution

Segment resolution can generate adventures in a variety of ways. For example, the referee might resolve the segment and present the Travellers with the situation as it unfolds – an adventure happening whether or not they want it to – creating a situation for them to deal with based on the outcome indicated. Alternatively, the Travellers might be presented with a report on how things went and then have a mini-adventure as they question those responsible for the fiasco in the hope of determining just how it all went so badly wrong.

The Travellers will often delegate tasks and thus lack direct observation of how they were carried out. This can create interesting situations in which they have to sort out the aftermath without concrete information. For example, the referee rolls to resolve the loading of supplies, smiles cryptically and informs the Travellers

**MISSION SEGMENT RESOLUTION MODIFIERS**

| Circumstance | Example | DM |
|---|---|---|
| Specialist or expert assistance is available | A shipyard officer who helped build the vessel can advise on how best to make repairs. | +2 |
| Improved equipment or lavish resources are available | A freighter full of construction equipment is in port as the Travellers arrive to assist after an earthquake. | +1 |
| Operation is carried out under pressure | There is just enough time to make these repairs before the enemy missile cruiser gets into range. | -1 |
| Operation is carried out under extreme pressure | We have to shoot down every single one of the nukes headed for the cities planetside. | -2 |
| Distractions | The embedded news crew are getting in the way again. | -1 |
| Difficult circumstances | Flying the ship from a holed bridge, in vacc suits, whilst the damage control teams clear bodies of your crewmates. | -3 |
| Reluctance | The crew have lost confidence in the command team or their own ability to succeed and are reluctant to enter a fight they expect to lose. | -1 |
| Internal Divisions | Some elements of the crew are on the brink of mutiny and will ignore orders they disagree with or even openly challenge them. | -3 |

**MISSION SEGMENT RESOLUTION**

| 2D | Outcome |
|---|---|
| 0 or less | The task was a fiasco and was not completed. A Mishap occurs. |
| 1-2 | The task dissolved into chaos and was only partially completed. A Mishap occurs. |
| 3-4 | An obviously poor performance which embarrasses the ship and her officers. An Incident occurs. |
| 5 | A sloppy performance, but maybe nobody saw the mistakes. Roll 2D; on 10+ a Mishap occurs |
| 6 | The job got done but there was an Incident. |
| 7 | The job got done. Some captains will be satisfied with this level of performance; some would be relieved that it went off OK. |
| 8 | A decent job, with room for some lessons learned. However, an Opportunity occurs during the operation. |
| 9-10 | A solid performance, good enough to satisfy even a critical observer. |
| 11-12 | A textbook performance. Roll 2D: on 12+ the crew gains +1 Morale. |
| 13-14 | Near-perfect resolution, as good as anyone would expect in an exercise. Roll 2D; on 10+ the crew gains +1 Morale. An Opportunity occurs. |
| 15 or more | Everything goes perfectly or even better than that. Newer crewmembers are given a chance to try out their skills in a 'live' situation and even they perform brilliantly. Anyone watching would think this was a staged propaganda film. Roll 2D; on 8+ the crew gains +1 Morale. An Opportunity occurs. |

that the junior officer in charge of the transfer reports the ship is loaded and everything is squared away. A few minutes later a comms operator informs the Travellers that the captain of their supply vessel is requesting an urgent conference. Something to do with discrepancies in the manifest, apparently…

Note that the segment resolution system is intended to give the referee an indication of how things went. The Travellers may not be so certain; things look okay, but something could have gone wrong or an apparent shambles might have resolved itself in the end. The referee can always decide that the dice rolls are all there is to an incident, and likewise always has the option to expand a segment or create an entire adventure from the results.

## Improving Performance

CEI checks differ from skill checks in that they represent a team effort making use of a great many skills. Such activity could perhaps be modelled using a truly gargantuan task chain, but even then there are factors that would not be represented. These include the ability of the crew to work together and the overall competence level of the personnel involved.

Most CEI checks produce a positive outcome, in that the job will get done. However, a crew with a mediocre CEI or ECEI will perform their tasks in a sloppy and less-than-effective manner. This does not mean that everything has to go wrong in grand style. An Incident or Mishap indicated by the CEI check can be minor or trivial; something reported as a footnote rather than a crisis the Travellers have to deal with. A string of such minor incidents should alert the Travellers to the fact that their crew is not performing as well as might be hoped.

One solution to this is to find ways to increase ECEI, a long-term undertaking that may not be possible under the current circumstances. The alternative is for the Travellers to create favourable circumstances for the task. Lavish equipment or expert advice can be simply factored into the CEI check as a modifier, but additional DMs are available if the Travellers find a way to make use of their skills.

This will usually require a mini-adventure. For example, rather than simply abstracting entry into port as a CEI check, the Travellers decide to roleplay it a little. The captain gives orders, other officers liaise with port traffic control, and the referee calls for a Pilot check from whomever is in charge of the docking manoeuvre. This does not necessarily mean the pilot – aboard a big ship, the pilot typically implements the orders of a senior officer who makes the actual manoeuvres.

A well-set-up docking manoeuvre will gain the Travellers DM+1 or at most +2 on their CEI check, providing their skill checks produce a positive outcome. The mini-adventure is played out using the normal rules, after which the scale changes back to whole-ship operations using CEI and ECEI.

## Incidents

An Incident is an event of note that occurs during resolution of an operation. It might be fairly minor in nature, but depending on how it is dealt with could spiral out of control. An Incident may lead to an impromptu adventure or a short session of role-playing as the Travellers sort out the mess. It could also be abstracted with an ECEI check if the referee desires, but on the whole Incidents, Mishaps and Opportunities are intended as adventure leads.

When an Incident occurs, roll 2D and consult the Incidents table. The referee should tailor the severity of the Incident to the situation; an out-of-the-ordinary happening whilst giving a lecture on naval deployment strategy to new officers is likely to be less serious than one that occurs during live-fire training. Note that Incidents are not always negative in nature.

A mission segment that results in an incident will often be expanded into an adventure – at least a short scene or two – unless there is a pressing reason not to. The exception is where the referee decides to let the apparent result stand and have the incident come to light – or become important – later. Incidents make the mission more interesting for everyone involved, and give opportunities for roleplaying that will make the mission 'come alive' in the minds of the Travellers. Yet another gas-giant refuelling sweep might become memorable as 'that time a Zhodani destroyer was watching and complimented us on our tight manoeuvring.' Incidents do not need to lead to major events, just interesting ones.

Mishaps should always be expanded into an adventure unless there is a good reason not to. In many cases, the Travellers will become aware of the mishap after it has occurred, and have to deal with the outcome. For example, if a damaged section of a power conduit takes a point-defence battery out of action, the Travellers will most likely learn about it in a report from the gunnery officer or his subordinates. However, depending on the crew and how the Travellers treat them, the officer might try to conceal the fault and fix it without anyone knowing – especially if negligence was involved. In some cases, typically a low-morale ship whose command crew are harsh on those they blame for failure – the fault might go entirely unreported and only come to light much later… perhaps in the middle of a missile duel with a foreign ship.

## INCIDENTS

| 2D | Outcome |
|---|---|
| 2 | Something goes sufficiently badly wrong that the incident becomes a Mishap. |
| 3 | An equipment breakdown causes difficulties for the detachment or crew. For example, the main sensor processing centre suffers a software glitch and has to be rebooted whilst the ship is trying to scan local traffic. The Travellers will have to figure a way around the problem, which cannot be fixed in time to complete the task at hand. |
| 4 | A discipline problem occurs during the operation, disrupting the work of everyone involved. A heavy-handed solution might cause further resentment, but letting crewmembers get away with indiscipline will lead to more problems in the future. |
| 5 | The operation is made more complex by the arrival of a third party. This might be a friendly ship needing assistance, an interfering politician or some other source of unnecessary delay and difficulty. |
| 6 | Some of the necessary equipment is unexpectedly missing, offline or out of commission, requiring a creative workaround or a hurried fix. |
| 7 | A minor hiccup occurs, such as an infraction of regulations that requires a hearing and disciplinary action. This might be embarrassing in front of outsiders and could have repercussions if the crew are discontent. |
| 8 | Something unusual is spotted during the operation; a sensor blip, a strangely repetitive cargo manifest or something equally puzzling but not immediately threatening. |
| 9 | A crewmember or detachment demonstrates unexpected resourcefulness and gets the job done better and quicker than expected. |
| 10 | A friendly vessel or group of personnel arrives and offers to lend a hand… or possibly just be an audience to witness the execution of the operation. |
| 11 | The operation requires dusting off an unusual piece of equipment or trying out a technique not normally used. Make a Difficult (10+) check using CEI and if successful, gain 1 point of Morale. |
| 12 | Things seem to go pretty well, and in the middle of the operation an Opportunity occurs. |

## MISHAPS

| 2D | Outcome |
|---|---|
| 2 | Structural damage is taken or a weakness is detected. The ship loses 2D% of its Hull points until properly repaired. |
| 3 | The ship is involved in a minor collision with a small craft or station, or causes a similar incident to happen to another vessel. |
| 4 | A major system such as the spinal weapon or a drive develops a fault which makes it erratic. Impose DM-1 on all checks involving that system until repaired. |
| 5 | One of the ship's minor systems, such as a single small craft or a point-defence battery, suffers a malfunction and is out of action until fully repaired. |
| 6 | A crewmember is seriously injured, requiring investigation. |
| 7 | A crewmember suffers a minor injury, which may well be his own fault. |
| 8 | A crewmember causes injury to someone outside the ship's company, creating a possible incident. |
| 9 | A crewmember manages to insult or offend someone important. |
| 10 | One of the ship's officers (possibly a Traveller) notices data discrepancies which, upon investigation, indicate that some records have been either falsified or incorrectly entered onto the system. Critical information (such as fuel expenditure parameters or intelligence data on known pirates in the region) may no longer be reliable. |
| 11 | One of the ship's subsystems (such as a point-defence battery or one of her shuttles) suffers a serious breakdown which is not repairable with the resources aboard ship. The hole in capabilities thus caused is small but may be significant. |
| 12 | Someone with a grudge against the ship or her crew has arrived in the area. The Travellers may or may not be immediately aware of this. The new rival might be openly hostile – such as a foreign warship hunting the Travellers' vessel – or a more subtle rival. |

| 2D | Outcome |
|----|---------|
| 2 | The Travellers obtain a lead on an intelligence windfall, such as a lost vessel from a foreign power or a defector. If the lead can be successfully followed up, significant advantages will be obtained. |
| 3 | The Travellers are made aware of an equipment and supply cache hidden in the area, which may contain spares and supplies they need. |
| 4 | A crewmember has insider information about the current situation. This might be a recruit from the world the Travellers are visiting or someone who served in an intelligence team collecting data about this subject. |
| 5 | A piece of highly useful data is obtained. The Travellers may 'cash in' this find at a later date, in return for information from the referee or a bonus to resolve tasks during a mission segment. |
| 6 | Routine intelligence-gathering produces a lead on some minor threat such as the haven of a small pirate band. With some additional investigation the Travellers may be able to locate it. |
| 7 | The Travellers encounter a friend in an unexpected place, such as a retired former colleague in a new job. The old friend is probably willing to help out but may need something in return. |
| 8 | A friendly vessel arrives unexpectedly and is in a position to help out or support the Travellers for a few weeks. |
| 9 | A faction in the region asks for help from the navy, in return for which they will provide help and support. |
| 10 | The Travellers' ship is unexpectedly met by a support vessel carrying equipment that will provide significant advantages, such as a couple of dozen experimental high-yield missiles sent out for field testing. |
| 11 | The Travellers know or become aware of a circumstance in the region that could help them greatly, such as a recently laid minefield in a certain gas giant or the presence of a forward-deployed cruiser squadron which could offer support. |
| 12 | A highly favourable circumstance occurs, such as a revolt against the government of a nearby world. Which, if successful, will cause the world to align itself more firmly with Imperial interests. |

Much depends on how the Travellers treat their crew, and how motivated and professional the crew are. This is indicated by the ship's CEI and the general culture of the fleet it belongs to. In some navies the 'vertical stroke' falls upon everyone above the perpetrator of a mistake – or the person who gets the blame – regardless of how fair or unfair this may be. In such an environment, blame-deflection may be more important than fixing the problem, which in turn creates an atmosphere of paranoia and mistrust among the crew while officers conceal their subordinates' shortcomings and try to avoid censure rather than doing a good job and being honest when something goes wrong… there are always personnel like this in any navy. Thus a mishap might go unreported for a time, then suddenly become critically apparent when something else is going on.

Like mishaps, opportunities are just begging to be expanded into adventures. They tend to be less immediate in nature, however. In some cases, the opportunity is something the Travellers become aware of and can choose to follow up or use to their advantage at a later date. In other cases, the opportunity might not present itself straight away. For example, the table indicates that a person asks for refuge aboard the Travellers' ship… but they are in deep space conducting a sensor sweep. The referee might decide they stumble upon a wreck containing a single survivor in an emergency low berth and, once revived, the survivor turns out to have useful information. Alternatively, the referee might file the opportunity for the present and implement it when the Travellers are next in port… or when they board a suspect vessel and a crewmember begs them to grant her refuge in return for information.

# MISSION EVENTS

Even the simplest of missions can be derailed by events in the wider universe, or complicated by the involvement of additional factors. Almost any event the referee can conceive might happen, but care should be taken before imposing anything that might be setting-changing. The replacement of an admiral might have implications in the local region but the navy will continue to carry out its mission. On the other hand, the arrival of hundreds of warships sent by a previously unknown alien race to conquer Charted Space will be a game-changer.

The following events are intended as a starting point for the referee's imagination. There is no reason why an event cannot be repeated, or why it will play out the same way each time - one attempted mutiny is not necessarily like another! Mission events can be inserted at any point the referee sees fit, and can vary in scope and severity.

**Admiral's Inspection:** The Travellers are rather suddenly informed that their vessel is to be visited by a high-ranking officer. This could be nothing more than

routine, as inspections are normal and rarely announced far ahead of time. The admiral might unexpectedly bring others aboard though; dignitaries from a world government or corporate representatives. The Travellers are expected to be polite no matter how annoying these people get, and are under close scrutiny. There is always the possibility that the visit is a cover for something else, perhaps a briefing for a top-secret mission or request to look into a matter 'off the books'.

**Aid to Civil Power:** A world government or organisation requests assistance in a matter that would normally be outside the navy's remit, such as providing security for government installations during serious unrest. If properly requested such intervention is quite legal, but it can be a confusing and taxing business in which there is a possibility for serious mistakes. The decision not to assist could land the Travellers in real trouble with their superiors, but over-zealous action by nervous crewmembers could make things worse… or the government requesting assistance might be legitimate but highly unpleasant.

**Anomaly:** The Travellers become or are made aware that there is something strange in their stellar neighbourhood. This might be astrophysical in nature, such as flaring of a previously stable star or a rogue asteroid entering the system on a course perilously close to the mainworld, a pattern of ship movements that does not make sense, or a vessel of completely unknown design reported by a distant outpost. Anomalies can turn out to be false alarms or the product of spacers' imagination, but if the anomaly turns out to be something real, the referee should decide how significant it is to be. A new alien race will be in the setting forever, while a star that goes nova and incinerates its mainworld will have widespread effects, and rather permanent ones in the local vicinity.

**Breakdown:** The Travellers' mission could be derailed by the breakdown of a major system such as their jump drive, power plant or main weapon. It may be possible (even imperative) to limp on with the mission somehow, or they may have to abandon their plans and head for a safe port to make repairs. This might lead to new adventures there, or the journey itself may be an adventure as the Travellers fight cascading breakdowns to get their ship home. Alternatively, the breakdown might have happened to someone else. One interesting version of this is to have an unfriendly but not-enemy ship stranded in the Travellers' patrol zone. Helping would be a wonderful opportunity to gather intelligence data or improve relations with the owning government. Of course, the breakdown might have been staged for sinister purposes.

**Convoy:** The Travellers are requested to provide support (which could be in the form of intelligence or direct action such as providing an escort or eliminating a threat) to a convoy of vessels. These might be navy logistics ships or a group of merchant vessels passing through a dangerous area. Bickering among the vessels of the convoy may add to the Travellers' problems.

**Corsair Attack:** The Travellers interrupt or become aware of corsair, raider or hijacker activity in the area. This may be after the fact, requiring the Travellers to hunt down raiders and rescue hostages, or about to happen in which case the Travellers might be able to prevent the incident if they act fast. The target might not be a ship; installations and outposts can also be attacked by raiders.

**Crew Problems:** A series of minor incidents escalates into a serious morale problem or internal dispute between groups or departments. The cause might be petty thievery, unwillingness to do jobs properly and thus making work for others, or personal differences. By the time it comes to the notice of the Travellers, the matter is quite serious and has started to affect efficiency. Alternatively, an officer might be at odds with his subordinates with similar effects.

**Crewmember Taken Ill:** A crewmember or officer comes down with a serious illness, which may or may not be contagious. This could be very serious, with the Travellers trying to stop the spread of disease through their crew, perhaps as a result of some object brought aboard or deliberate action by enemies. The disease might be a straightforward sickness, but could also be something more insidious such as a malady that causes irritability and then psychosis.

**Deception:** Deception is the stock in trade of intelligence services, and not just those of the navy and its enemies.

The Travellers might be the subject of a deception operation aimed at obtaining preferential contracts for a shipyard, or getting them to take their ship out of position to make way for a pirate raid. They are fed deliberately misleading information in order to further someone else's agenda, perhaps leading to adventures in places the Travellers are not supposed to be.

**Diplomatic Entanglements:** The Travellers' mission is made more complex by cross-cutting agendas. A world government, a faction in the Imperial nobility, and a major corporation all have fingers in the local pie, and all can provide the Travellers with reasons to support their position. Perhaps more than one group wants a captured pirate leader handed over to them, or wildly different approaches are advocated for the same problem – the navy wants the pirate base found, the government wants its shipping protected by escorting convoys, and the corporation wants the Travellers to recover prototypes pirated from its ships.

**Distress Call:** The Travellers receive a distress call, which might not be local. A courier ship arrives with news of a disaster on a nearby world, or word of a merchant ship that is downed in one of the nearby systems. Responding will require rescheduling or cancelling the current mission. Perhaps the distress call is bogus and intended to misdirect the Travellers?

**False Alarm:** One of the other Mission Events appears to be unfolding, but it turns out that intelligence reports were wrong or the event is so minor in scope as not to matter in the grand scheme of things. This might not be immediately apparent; the Travellers could go haring off across the subsector chasing a raider that turns out to be far less dangerous than expected.

**Friendly Vessel:** A friendly ship is unexpectedly encountered. This might be an opportunity for an officers' cocktail party aboard one of the ships, or something more serious. Perhaps the other ship needs help, or insists on tagging along on the Travellers' mission for reasons that are slightly vague. An alternative is for the Travellers to encounter the wreck of a friendly vessel, which may have survivors or clues on board.

**New Orders:** The Travellers are suddenly given new orders, perhaps along with personnel such as a marine strike team or specialist officers. This requires a rethink of their existing mission or possibly scrapping it. In this case, the referee must decide whether to generate a new set of mission success criteria or watch the Travellers scramble to accomplish everything expected of them.

**Official Aboard:** The Travellers' ship is selected to carry a senior officer for part or all of its mission. This could

be connected with the mission itself or have some other purpose. For example, a rear-admiral from the sector fleet's Engineering staff might come aboard with her team, hoping to gain first-hand insight into problems that have come to light on the Travellers' ship class, or intending to learn lessons to be incorporated into a new design. How intrusive these high-ranking but not-in-charge officials might be is up to the referee.

**Personnel Transfer:** The Travellers' ship gains new crewmembers and/or officers, perhaps in return for others transferred out. The newcomers might be real hotshots, or a bunch of no-hopers another captain wanted rid of. There is always the possibility that the new personnel are not what they seem, or that some have secrets that will come to light later in the mission.

**PR Exercise:** The Travellers' ship is assigned an embedded news or documentary crew during the mission. This could be the navy's own public-relations department or an outside agency. How much access the crew has been given (and how much they claim) can vary. The Travellers might be ordered to just go about their normal business, or they could. Be under pressure to put on a show for the cameras.

**Questionable Vessel:** There is something not quite right about a ship encountered by the Travellers, but they do not have sufficient grounds to simply board her and search for answers. Perhaps the vessel is another navy ship which is acting strangely, or it may be a merchant vessel whose crew seem oddly military in their bearing… an intelligence-gathering vessel perhaps? But whose? The Travellers' orders do not mention any in the area…

**Redirection:** The Travellers' ship is urgently redirected to deal with some crisis… or to sit in space for three weeks waiting for further orders. All this time the supply situation grows increasingly worrying and time allocated for the main mission is ticking away. This event can be used by the referee to show Travellers they do not have time to waste; if they are in the habit of taking extra time over every task they may find they are running out by the time they are redirected to carry out an additional task. If this causes a mission to be failed, and the redirected task was trivial, the Travellers can learn valuable lessons after the admiral gets through chewing them out.

**Resupply:** The Travellers' ship is intercepted by a supply vessel with a full and rather generous load of spares, food, and even luxury items. There may be no additional complications, which will leave the Travellers wondering if their good fortune presages some problem they do not yet know about, or they may be missing something. Alternatively, the resupply might be accompanied by additional orders, perhaps extending the mission by several weeks.

**Spooky Goings-On:** Additional intelligence personnel are assigned to the ship. They may or may not reveal anything about their mission, and what they do say might not be true. The intelligence team might be covert, in which case the Travellers may be ordered to integrate them among the crew and hide them in plain sight. Alternatively, they may be on their way to a mission somewhere and just hitching a lift with the Travellers. Or so they say…

**Supply Shortage:** The supply situation is worse than the Travellers thought. Perhaps some of their stores are damaged or spoiled, or a supply ship fails to make rendezvous. Alternatively, the shortage could be caused by a friendly vessel arriving with orders to transfer some of the Travellers' stores (and maybe personnel). This could be a real problem as the Travellers are returning to port having offloaded stores and personnel, only to be redirected to deal with a new problem developing nearby.

# RESOLVING COMBAT

Any time that combat occurs is an opportunity for an adventure, especially if it involves the whole ship. However, there are occasions when a combat situation needs to be abstracted. For example, if the Travellers are conducting delicate negotiations whilst their marine contingent keep a horde of insurgents at bay, it may be desirable to abstract the combat and provide the Travellers with updates on how the battle is developing rather than attempting to play out a huge firefight which would otherwise occur off-camera.

Combats can always be scripted by the referee if a particular outcome is necessary to the mission storyline, and wildly inappropriate results should be toned down at the referee's discretion. If the unexpected victory of a navy task force against impossible odds would upset the storyline, then the referee needs to decide whether to run with it and see where things go, or to overrule the resolution system.

Typically, combats that will be abstracted are small-scale, such as a boarding action or security operation. An attempt at 'kicking the doors in' and snatching a target for interrogation could also be abstracted in this way if opposition materialises. Note that this system is not intended to resolve massed planetside battles; it is geared to the situations a ship's marine contingent will face rather than a planetary army. Likewise, this is not a ship-to-ship combat system. Starship battles are among the most exciting parts of a naval campaign and should be played out as normal.

Combats are resolved as a series of phases. The exact length of a phase depends on the type of fight that is occurring and how badly it is going. Some phases may be scripted, and might be subject to modifiers that the Travellers may or may not know about. Others are resolved as they happen.

## RESOLUTION

Combat is resolved using the Detachment Efficiency Index, with checks modified by a 'running DM' which starts at +0 unless the Travellers have some advantage or disadvantage at the beginning of the fight. Each phase, the DM may be altered by setbacks or advances; it is possible for the running DM to go up and down repeatedly during a protracted engagement. The fight

goes on until the Travellers achieve victory or are defeated, or until they decide to break off. Breaking off is considered a defeat.

It is possible to break off from a losing fight then come back for another attempt, or try to turn a defeat around by an immediate counterattack. A previously defeated force (or one that has broken off a losing engagement then re-engaged) begins with DM-2 (figured into the running DM) and an additional DM-2 for each subsequent failed attempt. Battering the ship's company to pieces against impossible odds will lead to mutiny.

If a routed force is ordered back into action, it will refuse or make a token attempt then go to ground and stay there unless the Travellers can make Very Difficult (12+) Leadership check. Even then, the force starts with DM-4. Ordering a force into action in this way may result in the loss of crew Morale if a Minor Morale check is not made.

At the beginning of a combat the referee should consider the factors which will influence or even dictate the outcome of a battle: Firepower, Protection, Numbers, Position and Miscellaneous. Each creates DM-3 to +3, which are totalled and added to the running DM at the beginning of the fight.

### Firepower

Firepower is the referee's assessment of the relative weaponry on both sides given the circumstances. A shipboard security team armed with short-ranged weapons such as snub pistols fighting a bunch of farmers with bolt-action rifles has a small firepower advantage (DM+1) at close range (for example, in a built-up area) but would be at a severe disadvantage at long range in the open (DM-2). Typically military weapons (e.g. submachineguns, assault rifles and the like) vs civilian weapons (pistols, shotguns and carbines) would be worth a minor advantage (DM+1). Adding in support weapons such as machineguns or advanced personal weaponry such as gauss rifles would increase this advantage to DM+2. To achieve DM+3, the Travellers would need to have a huge advantage – plasma guns and shuttle-mounted VRF gauss guns versus hunting rifles would be a suitable example.

## Protection

The relative personal protection of both sides also gives DM-3 to +3. Personal armour such as vacc suits or shipboard security armour versus nothing more than a leather jacket is a minor advantage; heavier personal armour such as boarding suits or heavy flak jackets and helmets increases this to DM+2. Battle dress and combat armour would increase this to DM+3. Note that this DM, like all others, is relative. If both sides have roughly equal protection, neither has an advantage.

## Numbers

Relative size of the forces involved can influence the outcome. A force that has 50%-100% more personnel than the other gains DM+1, 100%-300% is worth DM+2. A force that has more than 300% of the opposition's numbers gains DM+3; being outnumbered 3:1 is worth DM-3.

## Position

A fluid fight in which both sides have roughly equal cover or are moving within a built-up area or ship offers no real advantage to either side. If one force is defending a weak position such as some prefabricated huts and a couple of vehicles used for cover, it gains a minor advantage. This is worth DM+1 or -1 depending if the Travellers are defending or attacking. A good solid position is worth DM+2 or -2, and a fortified position DM+3 or -3. A starship being defended against boarders is considered a fortified position.

## Miscellaneous

Other factors may apply, giving a total DM-3 to +3. Excellent intelligence work might indicate a weakness in the enemy's positions, or a communications breakdown might adversely affect coordination. All miscellaneous factors should be considered by the referee, and a DM ranging from +/-1 (minor advantages) to +/-3 (very significant advantages) is applied.

These DMs are totalled to create the starting value for the running DM. This is modified for any scripted events that occur during each phase.

Each phase the Travellers make an Average (8+) Tactics check using the running DM. The Effect of this check is then applied to a 2D roll on the following table. Note that an extremely advantageous situation can result in a DM that creates instant total victory. That is what happens when a company of Imperial Marines in battle dress with orbital gunfire support takes on a handful of pirates armed with pistols…

**OUTCOME**

| 2D+ Effect | Outcome |
|---|---|
| 0 or less | **Rout:** The Travellers' side is totally defeated, suffering heavy casualties and a collapse of fighting power. This fight is lost and another attempt cannot be made without reinforcements, reorganisation and a period of recuperation. |
| 1-2 | **Defeat:** The Travellers' side is defeated and must abandon the objective or fall back to a safe rally point. Another attempt can be made almost immediately, but without a chance to regroup and recover from the defeat any subsequent attempts are made with DM-2, increased to by an additional -2 for every failed attempt after the first. |
| 3-5 | **Setback:** The Travellers' side suffers a setback, losing some ground or taking casualties. DM-1 is applied to further combat resolution checks. |
| 6-8 | **Deadlock:** The fight is deadlocked. No changes occur this phase. |
| 9-11 | **Advance:** The Travellers' side advances its position, perhaps literally or in some other way, such as the enemy becoming demoralised or running short of ammunition. DM+1 is applied to further combat resolution checks. |
| 12-14 | **Victory:** The Travellers' side has gained an obvious advantage which causes the enemy to break off, surrender or otherwise quit the fight. Pockets of resistance may remain and not all objectives have been completely achieved, but the Travellers have won this fight. |
| 15+ | **Total Victory:** The Travellers' side has overrun or wiped out the enemy, securing objectives in time to prevent the destruction of documents or escape of senior enemies. |

The timing of any given phase can vary. It will typically be a couple of minutes in the case of a small firefight, but might be several hours if the Travellers' force is involved in a siege. Unless the referee wishes to resolve the whole incident, phases should be long enough to allow the Travellers to intervene meaningfully, for example by ordering additional reinforcements to the site. These may take several phases to arrive, of course…

The conflict goes on until one side loses or the Travelers decide to break off. This can be quite some time in a very even fight, which is a sign that the Travellers did not commit a sufficient force or support it properly.

Note that it is easier to lose a fight than win one. Sometimes it is necessary to accrue advantages over several phases before the enemy's will collapses.

## Casualties

This system does not attempt to model combat in detail, but some indication of the number of casualties taken is necessary. A 'casualty' in this case is anyone requiring medical attention. Not all casualties are physical and not all are the result of direct enemy action. Ensign Yark's broken ankle caused by falling down the assault ramp still makes him a casualty. Spacehand Miracru's need for psychological counselling is as real an injury as the marine blown to bits in front of her by a land mine.

At the end of the combat, the referee should determine the level of casualties as follows:

Make an Average (8+) Medic check using the appropriate DEI or CEI. The Effect of this check is added to the result of a 2D roll, with DM-1 per phase the combat took to resolve. Apply the Travellers' Position, Protection and Firepower DMs – overwhelming friendly firepower tends to reduce casualties on your own side – and apply the result on the table below.

Casualties are applied as a percentage of the deployed force. However, only a very small proportion of these casualties are actually dead.

- 1/3 of the casualties taken are 'slight', and can continue with their duties whilst they heal. This represents personnel who were shocked, cut off from their force, trapped somewhere or not wounded as badly as they thought. These personnel are immediately available but should be given some time to recuperate.
- 1/3 of the casualties taken are 'minor' and require a period of recuperation, perhaps with some light duty. These personnel are unavailable for 2D days on average, after which they can return to duty.
- 1/3 of the casualties taken are 'serious or fatal'. These are further subdivided: 1/3 are dead, 1/3 require emergency life-saving measures and may require long-term treatment, and 1/3 require 8D days of medical care (about a month on average) before they can return to duty.

Thus only 1/9 (about 10%) of the casualties taken in a fight are actually dead. However, the presence of wounded aboard a ship will require the Travellers to make decisions about what to do with them. Should the mission be scrubbed? Can the ship treat its wounded and carry on with their mission? What happens when sick bay reports that Sergeant Yulsen has died of his wounds after a brave fortnight-long fight for life?

### CASUALTIES

| Result | Casualty Percentage |
|---|---|
| 0 or less | 15D% |
| 1 | 14D% |
| 2 | 13D% |
| 3 | 12D% |
| 4 | 11D% |
| 5 | 10D% |
| 6 | 9D% |
| 7 | 8D% |
| 8 | 7D% |
| 9 | 6D% |
| 10 | 5D% |
| 11 | 4D% |
| 12 | 3D% |
| 13 | 2D% |
| 14 | 1D% |
| 15 or more | No significant casualties |

Casualties do not just reduce morale and ECEI; they impose yet more decisions upon the Travellers.

# EFFECTS OF COMBAT RESOLUTION

Even if the Travellers are not directly involved in the fight, combat resolution can spawn many adventure opportunities. A victory might lead to negotiations that can be played out or abstracted, and defeat might place the Travellers in an awkward position requiring clever resolution. For small-scale combats there will not normally be much effect on the morale of the crew. The total rout of a 4-man scouting team, or the success of the captain's bodyguard against two armed intruders will have temporary and short-term effects but the crew's efficiency and morale are unlikely to be affected. The success or failure of a larger force can certainly affect morale though.

If the force committed is less than 10% of the available fighting personnel (for example, a 10-man detachment sent shoreside out of a crew of 700) there is no lasting effect on morale, though the referee can still create an adventure based around the dismay of the crew that their comrades were wounded, and the Travellers' attempt to deal with the situation.

If the force committed is in the range of 10-25% of the available fighting personnel, a lasting effect on Morale is possible. This will be a Minor (1 point) alteration one way or the other.

# EXAMPLE OF COMBAT RESOLUTION

The Travellers have sent their marines planetside to take out a pirate base. The initial stage of the attack is scripted – not the outcome, but the events that affect it – after which the fight is resolved as it plays out until a second set of scripted events occur. The referee sets this up as follows:

Phase 1 of the fight begins as the marines make their landing and launch the first attack. They may well win the fight outright in this phase. If not, the referee decides that the pirates will attempt a breakout if things begin to turn against them, or after 1D phases if the fight is not obviously going their way. If a breakout occurs, they will make a dash for their ships, bringing about a running battle rather than the defensive action they start out fighting.

The Travellers have sent 20 marines, equipped with gauss rifles and heavy body armour. They are facing around 100 pirates (outnumbered 3:1 is DM-3), who are armed with a mix of light military weapons such as submachineguns and assault rifles. The pirates have little armour available. The referee decides this means the Travellers have DM+1 for superior (but not hugely superior) Firepower and DM+3 for Protection. The pirates have a pretty good defensive position at their base, giving the Travellers DM-2, but the referee decides this does not apply in the first phase as the assault shuttle hits the landing pad and catches the pirates going about their normal business.

In addition, a miscellaneous DM+1 is applied because the pirates are not expecting an attack and caught by surprise. This will apply throughout the fight because there is no time to recover from the initial shock; the pirates are fighting wherever they happen to be and with what weapons they have rather than using a good defensive strategy.

Thus the Travellers begin the fight with a running DM+1, dropping to DM-1 once the first phase is over.

The marines have a DEI modifier of +2, giving them a total of +3 on their commander's Tactics check in the first round. A mediocre roll of 6 is modified to 9, giving an Effect of +1. This is applied to the outcome roll – an 8, modified to 9.

The marines' commander reports to the Travellers that the assault is progressing well, which is more or less true. 9 is a result of 'Advance' on the Outcome table, and the running DM is increased by +1 in subsequent rounds. However, those pirates who survived the initial assault are now hunkered down in defensive positions, reducing the running DM by -2.

As phase 2 begins the running DM is +0. The marines' commander rolls an 11 on his Tactics check, and with his unit's DEI this is 13 – an Effect of +5. Adding this to a roll of 6 on the Outcome table gives 11 – another advance. The Travellers receive a report that the marines have taken some casualties but pushed into the pirates' base and neutralised some of their positions.

The referee decides the pirates will now attempt their breakout. As they rush for their ships they lose their defensive advantage (the DM-2 for Position is removed). The running DM had risen to +1 due to the second advance, so it is now DM+3 with the pirates disorganised and in the open. The marine commander rolls 8 on his Tactics check, +2 for the marines' DEI and +3 for the running DM. This is a total of 11 for an Effect of +13 again. A distinctly mediocre 7 on the Outcome table still results in Victory.

It is not a complete victory though. Some pirates got to their ships and some of the intelligence data the Travellers hoped to recover was destroyed. There may be a few holdouts to be mopped up in the pirate base, and the combat has created an adventure opportunity – should the Travellers' ship fire on the fleeing pirates? Chase them with small craft? Should the marines be immediately picked up or left groundside? They have casualties, remember... The Travellers have won this fight but now have new decisions to make based on its outcome.

The referee evaluates the casualties taken. The fight went on for 3 phases (giving DM-3). The marines had DM+3 for Protection and DM+1 for Firepower. The DM-2 for Position is not applied in this case since the pirates were only under cover some of the time. An Average (8+) Medic check produces an Effect of +2. This total DM of +3 is applied to a 2D roll of 6 to give a total of 9: 6D% of the force became casualties.

Rolling 6D, the referee comes up with a total of 20% of the force became casualties. 20% of a 20-man detachment is 4 personnel. 1/3 of these are slight, 1/3 minor and 1/3 serious/fatal. The referee interprets this as 1 in each category and rolls D3 getting a 2 for the last – another minor injury. One of the marines is seriously hurt. The referee rolls D3 and gets a 3 – a fatality.

The Travellers receive a casualty report: One marine became disorientated and was missing for a time, but has since returned to the unit. Two have non-life-threatening wounds and will be unavailable for duty for a few days, though in an emergency they might be able to perform light tasks. One of the marines was killed in action. The Travellers hold a funeral for their comrade and bury her in space. There is a letter to be written to her family, but the mission goes on.

If the force committed is more than 25% of the available fighting personnel, this is a Major (1D Morale points) alteration in the case of defeat and a Minor alteration (1 point) for victory.

If the ship carries specialist combat personnel, such as marines or the equivalent, then these count as five times their number for the purposes of determining the morale effect of defeat. If a 20-man security detachment from a crew of 700 gets their collective posterior handed to them by insurgents, this is one thing. Seeing 20 marines overrun in the same manner is likely to shock a crew and shake their confidence. On the other hand, if the marines trounce the bad guys, well, that is only to be expected. A victory has to be spectacular to inspire people who have come to take it almost for granted.

If a Morale effect is indicated, it can be averted by leadership actions. Normally, this would be done to avoid negative effects; positive effects would usually be allowed to occur. However, some circumstance might undermine the feeling of celebration, such as disaffected naysayers convincing the crew that winning was actually somehow bad. This would be an adventure opportunity for the Travellers, or at least a warning that things are not good among the crew. The Travellers might even choose to derail a morale increase for reasons of their own. The system is the same in each case.

To avoid a Morale reduction (or gain), make a Leadership check at a difficulty determined by the level of the event.

For Rout or Total Victory the check is Very Difficult (12+). For Defeat or Victory, the check is Difficult (10+).

If the check is successful, the morale effect is not applied.

# APPENDIX:
# ALTERNATIVES AND OPTIONS

The standard format for a naval campaign places the Travellers in the most senior positions aboard a vessel. However, there are other options. These should be approached with caution since they may require more work on the part of the referee or have the potential to go off the rails in exciting new ways. However, some alternative play styles may suit a given referee or Traveller group.

## THE RANDOM APPROACH

An interesting, if sometimes haphazard, option is to have each player create a Traveller using the normal generation system in the *Traveller Core Rulebook* and assign shipboard roles according to rank and suitability. This does not always produce a crew that makes sense, however. That is fine if the mission involves a scratch crew thrown together in an emergency, but normally a crew and its officers will be tailored to the needs of the vessel they are assigned to.

## THE NON-PLAYER CAPTAIN

It is not necessary to assign all of the ship's senior positions to the Travellers. The referee may prefer to play the captain, thus retaining control over the ship's general actions. This is useful with Traveller groups who have a tendency to wander off and miss the adventure entirely as they chase some random comment overheard in a bar which they have decided is an important clue.

Having a non-player captain takes away a part of the decision-making from the Travellers, which can be a good thing and is actually preferable for some groups. It allows the referee to railroad the Travellers when necessary, since the captain's word is essentially law aboard his ship. A non-player captain might be incompetent of course, or a traitor. Deciding whether to act against a captain who is acting strangely might be an interesting challenge, and going about it will certainly be an adventure.

Care must be taken to allow the Travellers plenty of autonomy within the orders of the captain. The Travellers should still be decision-makers, or else there is no point in them taking part in the game. However, it may be useful to run a game with a non-player captain to allow the Travellers to get used to the navy environment, before they set off on their own.

## ADMIRAL ABOARD!

Having a flag officer aboard can be an interesting variant, and can be handled in a number of ways. The admiral (or commodore) could be played by a Traveller, or might be a character for the referee. Remember that the admiral is in command of the mission but *not* the ship. He gives orders to the captain about what the ship is to do, but the captain must run his own vessel. This can be very interesting, especially if the referee has given the two Travellers slightly different goals. A variant on this approach is to have a senior noble aboard, who is needed for part of the mission but not in command of it. Again, conflicting agendas can lead to complex situations for the Travellers to resolve.

## LESS SENIOR TRAVELLERS

Some or all of the Travellers may wish to play less senior positions – not everyone likes making big decisions! A game where the Travellers are low-ranking ratings or marines aboard a naval ship could be very interesting. They will be given general orders with some discretion about how to carry them out, and may have little idea what is happening in terms of the 'big picture'.

This could be an ongoing campaign, in which the Travellers are conveyed around the universe in what amounts to a heavily armed spacegoing adventure-taxi, and occasionally dumped into the middle of a crisis with no real idea what is going on.  Alternatively, it could be a one-off adventure in which the marine contingent (or whoever the Travellers are playing) survive a disaster that wrecks most of the ship and must contend with the situation as best they can.

Alternatively, some Travellers may wish to take roles where they can participate in adventures but do not have big decisions to make. The captain's bodyguard might be an interesting character to play, or the ship's chief steward. Nobody should be forced to play a character they feel is ineffectual or take on a role they do not want, so junior characters must still have an area where they can excel even if they do not get to dictate the fate of worlds.

As a variant on this theme, it may be desirable to have two sets of characters – 'leaders' and 'doers'. If so, the most senior member of the leaders group should be the most junior in the doers, and so forth – unless the Traveller does not want to be in charge. Typically the doers will be the ship's odd-job-squad, assigned to carry out boardings, intelligence-gathering raids and most other hands-on tasks away from the ship. The doers will typically be enlisted personnel led by petty officers or perhaps a very junior officer or two.

For those Travellers who do not want to be part of the naval hierarchy, there are additional options. A naval ship might be carrying a diplomat, scientist or other expert, though this does require some explanation from the referee and should be built into the campaign narrative. Personnel on exchange from other navies or services are also an option, though they will be outside the ship's chain of command.

# PRE-CAMPAIGN CONSIDERATIONS

A mainstream naval campaign is likely to be fairly serious in tone, though this is not necessarily the case. A slapstick adventure revolving around the ship nobody wants in their squadron might be fun, but the appeal will wane over time. Likewise, it is possible to create all manner of adventures against a naval campaign background, such as a romance story in which the naval aspect is mainly an excuse to look dashing in a lot of braid.

An oddball ship and crew can still work in a serious context. For example, the navy's experiment with an all-psionic or varied non-human crew might be an interesting concept. Such a vessel might not correspond to a standard command structure, which could allow players who do not like a strict hierarchy a little more leeway. This is pushing the bounds of the naval campaign concept though, and most games will be closer to the norm.

The referee needs to decide ahead of time how much leeway Travellers will have regarding their orders. A maverick captain who flings the rulebook out of the airlock might be a good story, but if he keeps doing so there will have to be reasons why he gets away with it. The same goes for crewmembers; navies run on a chain of command and less senior Travellers will need to at least pay lip service to their orders.

One way around this problem is to allow Travellers such as a scientific advisor or member of a noble house assigned to a ship's crew for political reasons. This creates an interesting tradeoff whereby the Traveller has more freedom to do as they please than a typical crewmember but lacks the powers and rights of someone in the chain of command.

Even in this situation one factor that players need to accept is that there *is* a command structure in place and those who oppose the captain's decisions or simply ignore them may land themselves in trouble. A Traveller who is an officer aboard a starship will have to deal with a maverick who is endangering the ship or the mission, which may cause resentment between them. The only real answer to this problem is for Travellers to accept the boundaries of the campaign environment and agree to either remain within them or live with the consequences if they do not.

The referee should give thought to other factors before beginning the campaign. The existence of a hierarchy and chain of command can be a problem if high-ranking positions are given to Travellers who are not good strategists or whose attention tends to wander during a game. Being unable to act without orders yet stuck waiting for another Traveller to stop chatting about last night's TV is frustrating, as is being ordered to do something obviously dumb.

These problems can be solved in-game to some extent, though some of the Travellers might not like the way it goes. An adventure could be based around the inquiry into an officer's actions, and might result in a new officer coming aboard to take over that position. This can cause resentment but can also be a good story.

One important question is that of rank and 'screen time'. Low-ranking Travellers should not be relegated to simply rolling dice to carry out whatever their superiors have ordered. The answer is to place Travellers in important roles, which are not necessarily the highest-ranking. For example, the ship's master-at-arms has to obey the orders of the captain but as the leader of the enlisted personnel aboard he is also – at least up to a point – in a position to give advice and even argue with officers if he thinks a mistake is being made.

Naval campaigns are sometimes referred to as 'bridge crew' campaigns but this is potentially misleading. A

lot of very important activity takes place away from the bridge, giving each of the Travellers a chance to be in charge of something and have their fair share of the spotlight. Thus, choice of position should not be restricted to bridge officers or even officers in general; there is a lot to do in a naval campaign and plenty of screen time for everyone if it is well handled.

Another important consideration is how much oversight to give the Travellers. Those who have accepted the style and nature of a naval campaign can usually be trusted to stay within its bounds and 'think the navy way', though they may still make mistakes. However, some Travellers cannot resist the temptation to revert to a 'what's in it for me?' approach.

One solution is to include frequent reminders that the rest of the navy is there to keep the Travellers in line. This can be quite subtle, like meetings with other ships, visits from admirals, and frequent trips to naval bases to report to the brass. This is more difficult to achieve on a long mission, especially if the Travellers are operating far from friendly space.

The referee might assign some strong non-player-characters (strong in the personality sense) as a reminder of the Travellers' loyalties. These could be relatively subtle, such as the big dumb brick of a Marine sergeant whose loyalty to the Imperium is unswerving and is always around as a reminder that the crew might not go along with radical ideas. Less subtle is the mid-level officer whose uncle is a subsector duke, who constantly reminds the Travellers of their obligations. A specifically appointed 'political officer' is a possibility in some settings.

The decision really comes down to how much responsibility the referee wants the Travellers to have and how great a risk he is willing to take that they might wreck the campaign by doing something unexpected. 'Let's mutiny and set up a pirate kingdom' is a valid campaign theme but if the referee has prepared a storyline and adventures surrounding loyal servants of the Iridium Throne, a lot of work will be wasted.

## OPTIONAL RULE: CREW FATIGUE

Naval personnel expect to spend a lot of time in cramped quarters, and those who are likely to be worst affected by such confinement are weeded out at the recruiting phase. However, even the most seasoned crew will become fatigued by long weeks cooped up in a starship, especially if nothing interesting is going on. This can present the Travellers with additional problems, as morale and efficiency can slump unless the crew

are kept sharp by providing diversions and stimulating experiences. Technology helps, but only so much.

It has been observed that a ship with a well-trained crew leaves port as a finely tuned machine, but at some point in its cruise the ship becomes little more than a huge flying target. How long this takes depends largely upon training, motivation and leadership.

Crew fatigue is more than just physical or mental tiredness. It has been described as an insidious disease that poisons the whole crew, usually spreading out from a few more-than-usually susceptible crewmembers. At first, fatigue manifests as listlessness, argumentativeness and general inattention to details, all of which can be fatal aboard a naval starship in hostile space. Fatigue can cause otherwise excellent crewmembers to neglect their duty or get into pointless arguments with their superiors, in turn creating a discipline problem. In extreme cases, it has led to fights among the crew or even mutiny.

Fatigue can be used as a plot device, allowing the referee to hand the Travellers additional problems. This can be quite subtle, in the form of warning signs and a general loss of efficiency. Alternatively, it can be used in a graphic manner, with a 'space crazy' crewmember causing a diplomatic incident or running amok. In this case, the onset of fatigue should be a scripted event, with the referee implementing it at a plausible time.

Alternatively, fatigue can be used as a 'clock' for the mission, forcing the Travellers to remain mindful of their crew's resilience and influencing their decisions. Just as a wise captain is always aware of the fuel and munitions situation, he will also want to know about the crew's state of mind and try to keep fatigue to a minimum. However, there will be times when the Travellers have to forego shore leave or skip a fatigue-reducing activity in order to get an urgent job done. If the referee uses fatigue effectively, it will become another factor in the decisions made by the Traveller. Eventually they will cease doing the most effective thing possible to get the biggest DM on resolution rolls and start making decisions like real navy officers – accepting compromises and least-bad-of-the-available-bad-options as the price for avoiding potential trouble later in their cruise.

Fatigue is tracked for the crew as a whole, and can also be tracked for key individuals – including the Travellers. If they try to behave like superhuman efficiency-machines, the referee can impose Fatigue upon them and watch their effectiveness degrade as the mission goes on.

Fatigue is tracked using the Crew Fatigue Index, and Individual Fatigue Indexes if the referee decides to do so. Fatigue Index starts at 0, and at intervals during a mission, may increase. This will not usually happen during the first few weeks of a naval mission, but undisciplined civilian crews can become bored and restless within days of leaving port. Fatigue Index can also be applied to passengers and non-naval personnel carried aboard a ship, such as diplomats, causing them to become increasingly difficult to get along with as the mission continues.

After the initial interval shown on the Fatigue table, and again each time the indicated interval has passed, the Fatigue Index automatically increases by 1. At the same time, the referee should determine if the individual (or crew as a whole) has become Fatigued with a 2D check.

### FATIGUE

| Crew Type/Circumstance | Interval |
|---|---|
| Undisciplined (for example, a Free Trader crew flung together form whomever was available at the last port of call) | 1D Days |
| Typical (for example, an experienced Free Trader or corsair crew) | 2D Days |
| Disciplined (for example, a formally organised merchant ship crew) | 3D Days |
| Highly Disciplined (for example, a naval crew) | 4D Days |
| Cramped Accommodation | -1D Days |
| Generous Accommodation | +1D Days |
| Long Mission | +1D Days |
| Wartime | +2D Days |

On average, Fatigue Index will increase by +1 every 14 days in space for a naval crew. A crew who have prepared for a long mission or are engaged in wartime operations are more resilient and will fatigue more slowly, though there may be psychological effects later in life. Similarly, a ship with generous accommodation (common areas totalling more than half the tonnage allocated to cabins) will reduce fatigue. Cramped accommodation (significantly less than half the cabin tonnage allocated to common areas) will cause fatigue more quickly.

The referee may impose modifiers on the Fatigue check to avoid becoming fatigued, depending upon circumstances. Lousy food leads to rapid disaffection, as does an 'entertainment' facility containing nothing but propaganda films and animated musicals.

## Becoming Fatigued

To avoid becoming Fatigued, it is necessary to roll equal to or over the current Fatigue Index. For individuals, a DM may be applied equal to the character's highest shipboard skill (such as Pilot, Astrogation, Engineer, Gunner, and Steward) to represent experience of dealing with shipboard life. When rolling for the crew as a whole, ECEI is used. If the check is passed, there is no effect, though grumbling is a way of life for some crewmembers.

If the check is failed the crew (or individual) has become fatigued and will at least be difficult to live with. This is not the same as merely being tired; the affected crewmembers have become uncomfortable aboard ship and disaffected with the whole experience. This cannot be cured by a good night's sleep.

A Traveller or crew suffering from Crew Fatigue suffers a Bane to all shipboard skill checks until the situation is remedied. In addition, Fatigue Index continues to rise at the prescribed intervals, and each time a Fatigue check is made any crewmember who is already fatigued must make an END check which begins at Simple (2+) and rises one level in difficulty on each subsequent occasion.

A failed END check means that the crewmember has become dangerously incompetent. All skill checks are increased one level of difficulty in addition to the existing Bane, (e.g. Average becomes Difficult). Failing the END check with an Effect of -6 or worse means the crewmember has suffered a breakdown. They may become aggressive towards other crewmembers, so depressed that they cannot perform their duties, or otherwise a menace to the ship and her crew.

Obviously, the whole crew will not suffer a mass breakdown. Instead, the referee should pick a small number of individuals who suffer serious effects, with the number increasing at each interval until the situation is remedied.

For a naval ship, the fatigue interval is 4D days, with an average of 14. An average naval crew is likely to become fatigued after 8 such intervals – around 110 days in space unless measures are taken to reduce Fatigue. Not coincidentally, few naval missions are longer than 3-4 months before the vessel returns to base, unless a stopover and period of recuperation is built into the mission itinerary. In wartime, missions are as long as they need to be, but navies understand that even the most disciplined and motivated personnel have their limits. Of course, plans do

sometimes go awry, and a tired crew might be ordered straight back out again, or have their mission extended several times. The Travellers will have to find a way to cope, or watch their crew become a shower of incompetents before their very eyes.

## Offsetting Fatigue

Fatigue Index can be reduced by various means. For individuals, getting out of the ship for a significant time (at least a day) in a port or aboard a roomy space station will reduce the Fatigue Index by -1. A crew Fatigue Index cannot be reduced in this manner unless the ship rotates large numbers of personnel through portside liberty over the course of a few days. Many mission plans include just such a stopover.

If the Travellers make a special effort to keep their crew entertained and distracted, Fatigue Index is reduced by -1 if an Average (8+) skill roll is made by an appropriate Traveller or crewmember using a suitable skill. For example, the ship's chief steward can make an effort to organise a round of particularly good meals, effective social time and maybe a full-scale gala dinner to honour some achievement during the mission. If this works, Fatigue Index is reduced by -1. However, the same method can be used only once per mission, so if the Steward skill is used in one attempt (successful or otherwise), the Travellers will have to come up with something else next time.

Aboard a military ship, or one with ex-military crew, the captain can use Leadership to get the crew to refocus. This might take the form of a rousing speech or the imposition of harsh discipline, depending on the character of the captain. A Difficult (10+) Leadership check reduces Fatigue Index by -1D but can be attempted only once per mission. The equivalent for private or merchant ships would be appeals to comradeship or fiscal motivations using Persuade or perhaps Broker skill.

A short break of at least 3 days in a decent port will reduce Fatigue Index by -1D, but only for crewmembers who get to enjoy it. If the ship's engineering department is left aboard to make repairs whilst everyone is out partying, it does not benefit and may become resentful. The end result will be some crewmembers being less fatigued and others more so, for an overall zero result – and there is the chance that unfair treatment will reduce Morale.

A good break of at least a week doing something other than normal duty reduces Fatigue Index to 0, but again only for those who can enjoy it. Rotating the entire crew through enough downtime to refresh them is normally done at the end of a mission; the Travellers will have to be quite creative if they want to build a large-scale vacation into their mission planning.

In some cases, the week away from the ship might not be all that pleasant. A crew that has spent a fortnight digging earthquake survivors out of the rubble might return to normal duty physically exhausted but mentally content to get back to business-as-usual – and Fatigue *is* more a state of mind than of body. The referee should not allow the Travellers to exploit this, but a change is, as they say, as good as a rest.

A break of this sort 'cures' all fatigue effects except a breakdown. A crewmember who is in such a mess that they cannot perform their shipboard duties will not recover over the course of a week's holiday. Instead, they will improve to some extent but retain quirks and potentially dangerous habits (such as not caring much about pre-flight checklists) which can only be 'fixed' by therapy or some solution devised by the Travellers.
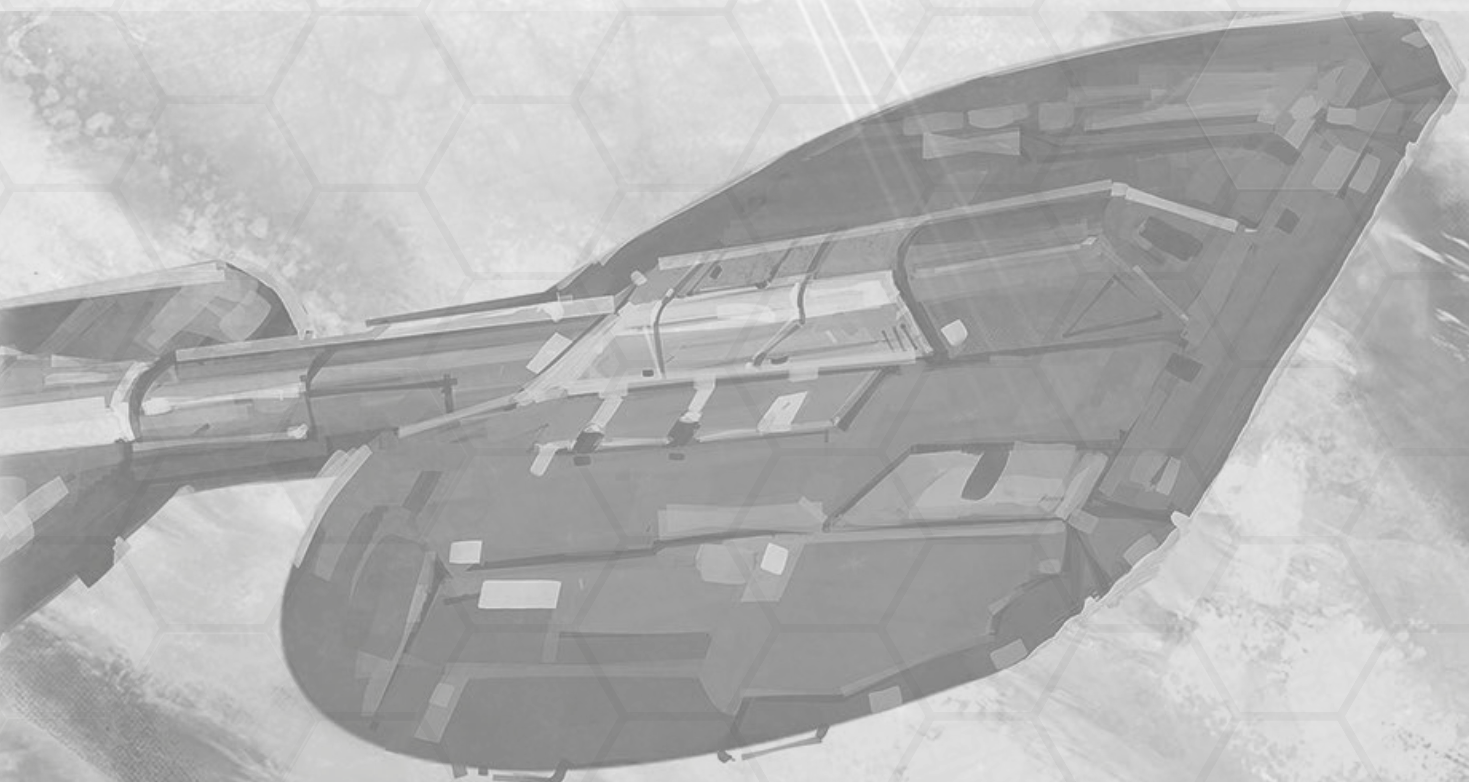
## Chronic Fatigue Syndrome

CFS is a recognised mental illness, and one which naval doctors are careful to monitor. Some personnel are more prone to fatigue than others, and some do not recover as quickly when rest or diversion is available. A CFS sufferer may try to 'keep it together' and do their job, and may manage to conceal their symptoms or go undiagnosed by an inattentive medical staff.

CFS is grounds for removal from a position of authority, so naval officers are sensitive to accusations they are suffering from excess fatigue. Crewmembers who have not been spotted in time may 'crack' at a dangerous moment, adding to the Travellers' troubles. The breakdown may be graphic, with a crewmember leaping up from his station and running around the ship screaming, but far more often it is insidious. For example, the highly experienced pilot develops a deep fear and insecurity about her abilities, and may freeze during a hazardous docking manoeuvre or ignore an order because she is just too scared of what might go wrong when she tries to come alongside the admiral's flagship in a 75,000-ton cruiser. An inventive referee can use CFS in a number of ways, even if it is not actually present. For example, a commodore comes aboard to lead a mission, but there are rumours he was promoted out of starship command because he was suffering from CFS. Can he be relied upon during a long mission?

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## CLASS

## SHIP QUIRKS

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## HULL POINTS

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## SENSORS

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| | |
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## POD TYPES

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| HA | Hangar | MI | Missile |
| MA | Marine | EX | Exploration |
| TO | Torpedo | IN | Intelligence |
| OA | Orbital Assault | FC | Forward Comms. |

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## CREW EFFECTIVENESS INDEX (CEI)

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|-----|----------------|--------------|-----|---------|---------|------|
| | | | | | | |

# DEPARTMENTS AND DETACHMENTS

**DEPARTMENT**

**DETACHMENT**

DEI

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