

# AD ASTRA PER ASPERA

High Frontier Guidebook V2.0



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## Introduction

This is the guidebook for the universe of the *High Frontier*, a universe derived from multiple movies, TV series and books that share common themes or design aesthetics as originated by popular and influential movies and TV series over the course of the last 30+ years.

The first version of this document was issued nearly 20 years ago, this is an update of that original document incorporating new material that has been released since the original publication as well as combining it with other items to create a complete system handbook.

## What this is

As described in the introduction, this is a guide to the various events, places and organisations that form and are part of the High Frontier. It is intended for this to be a living guide where it will be updated as new events happen and occur and as the canon also expands.

## Disclaimer

This book has been assembled by fans of each and every genre source referenced for fellow fans. This has been done in a not-for-profit way and is freely distributable, we claim no copyright on the sources listed.

## Bibliography

*High Frontier* is based on the extrapolation of various films and TV series that we deem to share

a common basis or background. The list below is not complete but gives an idea as to what sort of media has been the basis for this game background, some films have been removed from the list that was in the previous version as we think the below list gives us a more cohesive universe: -

- Alien
- Alien Covenant
- Alien vs Predator
- Alien vs Predator Requiem
- Alien<sup>3</sup>
- Aliens
- Armageddon
- Blade Runner
- Blade Runner 2049
- Event Horizon
- Moon
- Moon 44
- Outland
- Predator
- Predator 2
- Prometheus
- Soldier
- Star Cops

## Universe Background

### Timeline

This section lists all of the events relevant from each item that is referenced in the Bibliography. Events from previous LARP games may also be included within this section.

#### 1904

The members of a whaling station in the Antarctic disappear seemingly overnight, there are signs of a struggle with an unknown force of some kind, but no trace of the crew is ever found.

#### 1987

A Special Forces Search-and-Rescue team goes into the South American jungle to perform an extraction of downed American Nationals. Whilst leaving the theatre of operation, they are attacked by an apparent Extra-Terrestrial Biological Entity (EBE). Only one member of team survives, creature apparently commits suicide when heavily injured, resulting explosion is apparently nuclear

in nature, but resultant Radiation is negligible. No trace of creature or spacecraft found. The then fledgling 73rd Space Group (still under the auspices of US Space Command) handles the Debriefing of Major 'Dutch' Schaefer.

#### 1996

A new military program is launched that takes orphaned infants and raises and conditions them to function as dedicated soldiers without compassion or empathy, it is rumoured similar programs exist in both the USA and Russia.

#### 1997

During a heatwave, the Los Angeles drug wars erupt on the streets in an orgy of violence unparalleled in a major metropolis. The police find themselves outgunned in almost every battle. In the middle of this several-feared gang members are killed with almost surgical precision. It is believed that a similar creature to the one encountered in 1987 is responsible. To this end a covert task force led by Captain Peter Keys (US Space Command, Medical Wing) is sent to try and capture it. They fail, and LAPD cop Mike Harrigan kills the creature.

#### 1998

A Rogue comet smashes its way through the Asteroid Belt and sends an asteroid hurtling towards Earth. The space shuttle Atlantis is destroyed followed by the devastation of large parts of New York. An executive team at NASA devise the only solution to destroy the asteroid is from within. A team of Oil drillers is drafted in and sent into space on prototype shuttles 'Freedom' and 'Independence'. Despite losing one shuttle and almost half the team, the asteroid is destroyed when the civilian team leader, Harry Stamper, stays on the Asteroid to manually detonate the nuclear device. With disaster averted the so-called 'Stamper' bill is passed through congress tripling the annual budget of NASA. NASA's budget will continue to increase year-after-year which enables exploration of the solar system like never before.

#### 2004

The Weyland Corporation detects a thermal emission in Antarctica (underneath an old Whaling Station) which indicates a potential structure beneath the ice. CEO Charles Weyland leads a team comprising of scientists, explorers and Private Military Contractors (PMC's) and successfully arrives at the station but they are nearly wiped out and the structure is destroyed in a mini thermal-nuclear explosion akin to ones previously seen. The sole survivor, Alexa Woods indicates in her debrief that the structure served as a kind of rite-of-passage for alleged extra-terrestrials.

Ten hours after the destruction of the structure, US Space Command tracks what it believes to be a meteor landing just outside of Gunnison, Colorado. Approximately 24 hours later, the town is destroyed in a mini-nuclear explosion; the media tries to lay the blame on a terrorist attack, but this is played down by the Government who attempt to place the blame on the nearby Nuclear Power Plant. Rumours of survivors are debunked, and the Yutani Corporation is awarded the lucrative contract for the clean-up operation.

#### 2010

The Tyrell Corporation advances genetic engineering to a whole new level with the creation of the Nexus-6 Replicant. This causes a public outcry that makes the GM Food riots of 2002 seem tame by comparison. Never the less, the Replicant's begin their duty servicing space stations and performing low-level hazardous duties on Earth. A significant number of them are employed by the nuclear industry.

On the eve of his execution, convicted multiple murderer, Walter Stans, mysteriously disappears from his prison cell. His escape baffles prison officials. On the same day, select government, intelligence and both military and ex-military operators also disappear in mysterious circumstances, it is noted that this has happened at the same time of year previously.

#### 2013

After a bloody insurrection attempt by a team of Replicants, the United Nations forces Tyrell to

instigate a 4-year lifespan on the Replicants. Replicants are also banned from Earth on pain of death, special police units (nicknamed Blade Runners) are tasked with the tracking down and execution of any trespassing Replicants on Earth.

#### 2015

After one failed attempt, the first permanent Moonbase is established and then expanded to include several external outposts for various secret and hazardous work. It is decided that the controller of Moonbase will rotate on a four-yearly basis and will be picked from the countries with a controlling interest in the base. The base will continue to expand as the years go by and will become the first true stepping stone into outer space as many missions will be launched from its orbiting space docks.

#### 2019

The founder of the Tyrell Corporation, Dr Eldon Tyrell is murdered in his apartment at the Corporation HQ in Los Angeles. Another victim is identified as a JF Sebastian, a Tyrell employee; it is believed that a Nexus-6 Replicant is responsible for both killings.

#### 2020

After the death of its founder the Tyrell Corporation rushes a new line of Nexus 8 Replicants onto the market for use Off-world. Unlike previous Nexus models, built with 4-year lifespans, the Nexus 8s have open-ended lifespans, as well as ocular implants for easier identification. Their production is halted temporarily when the primary Tyrell HQ Building is destroyed, seemingly by some kind of self-destruct charge, planted at the behest of Eldon Tyrell.

#### 2022

A nuclear warhead explodes over the city of Los Angeles, the resulting Electro Magnetic Pulse destroys all electronics in the area, data is also irretrievably lost. It is believed that a Replicant launched the weapon with the intention of destroying all Replicant records still held by the Tyrell Corporation. Coupled with the destruction of the primary Tyrell Installation two years earlier,

fragments of information remain but the greater majority is lost forever.

2023

Peter Weyland delivers a famous TED talk regarding where he believes Replicants went wrong and how he believes the way forward is with a Synthetic version. Soon after authorities order an indefinite hold on Replicant production, the date coincides with the last projected date of the last Nexus-6 decommission date. All Nexus-8 models currently operational are sanctioned to be retired, those that can, go into hiding. It is rumoured that new BladeRunner units are repurposed Nexus-8's.

2025

A blow-out in an airlock on-board the space station Coral Sea (maintained by the Allied Pacific Consortium) causes the death of 21 of her crew.

Idealistic scientist Niander Wallace pioneers advancements in genetically modified food and shares his patents for free, marking an end to a global crisis. His company, Wallace Corporation, E&C, expands across the globe — and into the Off-world colonies.

2028

In the biggest NASA scandal ever, members of the International Space Police Force (ISPF or 'Star Cops') uncover that the commander and members of the crew of the US Space Station 'Ronald Reagan' sealed up one of their orbital laboratories and detached it. The so-called 'Goodman Gate' scandal also uncovers that the pod they detached was being used for developing new germ warfare bacteria. A Senate inquiry finds that although Commander Griffin acted in the best interests of the station and its personnel, the subsequent action and cover up that ensued was illegal. After a string of PR failures with NASA, the 'Truman' Act is drawn up and approved by the US Congress. One of the ramifications of this is that NASA will have more direct oversight than ever before with the newly formed National Council on Astronautics (NCA) who will have free reign to scrutinise any detail of the organisation. The

Executive of the NCA will answer directly to the President of the United States.

Hanimed, of the world's leading pharmaceutical firms, is indicted over the deaths of the crew of the Pluto-5 (an exploration vessel). The ISPF discovers that that an experimental drug was being tested on the crew without their knowledge in strict contravention to the Brussels Accord on Human Testing. Richard Ho (chairman of Hanimed) is prosecuted and convicted. Head researcher and Nobel Prize winner, Christina Janssen, kills herself in her orbital laboratory over the same issue. Hanimed is fined heavily and is then banned from taking part in any kind of pharmaceutical space trial for 25 years.

Niander Wallace acquires the remains of the bankrupt Tyrell Corporation and immediately begins work to research and improve upon the original Tyrell Replicant designs.

2035

The Lunar Corporation are indicted as their supposedly automated Helium 3 refinery (located on the dark side of the moon) actually uses a clone of the original engineer to run and manage the installation.

The prohibition on Replicant production is lifted and the Wallace Corporation introduces the Nexus-9, a line of supposed "perfected" Replicants.

The "Soldier" Program is retired when an exercise apparently goes wrong, and all units are lost, including the new wave that were allegedly combat ready Nexus-9's.

2038

What is generally acknowledged as the first corporate war takes place in the Asteroid Belt between Galactic Mining and newly formed Pyrite. With the UN reluctant to intervene it is left to the Corporations to fight it out. Despite the intervention of a member of the newly formed Interstellar Commerce Commission, the uncovering of a traitor within the ranks of Galactic Mining and the return of their robotic mining

shuttles, too much damage had been done to the infrastructure of the company. Galactic Mining folds only to be bought out by a newly formed and rapidly expanding Anglo-Japanese consortium named Weyland-Yutani.

*2040*

Prototype exploration vessel 'Event Horizon' disappears in the vicinity of Neptune whilst on a shakedown cruise. No trace of the vessel or her crew is ever found.

*2047*

Transponder signal received by USAC (United States Aerospace Command) from the orbit of Neptune is decoded as being the Transponder code from the Event Horizon. Rescue vessel 'Lewis & Clark' sent on a search-&-rescue mission, also accompanying the crew is Dr William Weir, one of the original designers of the vessel. What is known is that the Lewis & Clark did rendezvous with the Event Horizon and then suffered a critical systems failure approximately 2.5 hours after docking. All telemetry from the Lewis & Clark ceased 18 hours later when it is assumed the ship was destroyed. A second vessel, the Poindexter was sent out to investigate, they encounter the Forward Bridge section of the Event Horizon only, in transit to Earth with three members of the Lewis & Clark aboard in stasis. All telemetry from the Poindexter ceases 12.4 hours later. All ships involved are listed as missing and all crew as missing presumed dead. No further rescue attempts are made.

For the next 150 years there are repeated (but never confirmed) sightings of either the Engine or the Bridge section of the Event Horizon, a sensor blip here, a visual glance there. The ship quickly passes into folklore and it soon becomes legend that if both halves of the ship are ever re-united then it will spell doom for whoever encounters it.

*2089*

Archaeologists Elizabeth Shaw and Charlie Holloway discover a cave painting in Scotland that seems to confirm their theory that the Earth was visited by alien beings and also appears to be a map to a distant world. They attempt to seek

funding for an expedition to the world (named LV-223). After an extended petitioning period, aging entrepreneur Peter Weyland agrees to fund the expedition.

*2093*

The Weyland funded "Prometheus" arrives at LV-223 on December 24<sup>th</sup> and all status updates cease approximately 36 hours later, it is believed that the mission has been lost with all hands.

*2101*

A trio of colonisation missions (sponsored by Weyland Yutani) depart the Earth for distant stars where habitable worlds have been discovered. The three ships are the Testament, Covenant and Epiphany, of the three only the Epiphany would arrive at its destination without incident.

*2104*

Status update from the Covenant indicates a serious incident has occurred with several deaths but the vessel is able to carry on to its primary destination.

*2122*

Commercial Towing Vehicle, USSC Nostromo (under contract to Weyland Yutani) vanishes on its journey from the Solomon's Mining Cluster to Earth. No trace of the vehicle or payload is ever found. Crew and ship filed under 'Missing, presumed lost'. Weyland Yutani maintains an open file on the ship and her crew.

*2159*

Weyland Yutani finish construction of the Terraforming Network on the planet of LV-426. The colony of Hadley's Hope is established on LV-426 with purpose of monitoring and maintaining the atmospheric terraformers as well as the exploration of the planet. LV-426 is officially renamed as 'Acheron'.

*2172*

People step out onto the surface of LV-426 for the first time without environment suits, the air (although thin) is breathable.

*2178*

NASA launch the biggest Star ship ever constructed, the USS Discovery is designed to explore and roam further than any ship before it. Despite the project being 5 years late with a huge cost overrun there is still more protest made over NASA's choice of captain, former Space Command Colonel, John Sinclair.

2179

The escape pod of the Nostromo is found adrift in deep space. Lieutenant Ellen Ripley is found aboard in stasis, but alive. At a board of inquiry her story of landing on LV-426, finding an Alien ship and then murder of her crew by an Alien species does not convince the board. The flight recorder of the life pod corroborates some elements of her story but not others. She is suspended pending a psychiatric review. Contact from Acheron (the renamed LV-426) ceases approximately 6 weeks later. A Marine Expeditionary Unit (MEU) is sent to investigate. Lieutenant Ripley and Carter Burke (a representative from Weyland Yutani) accompany them. Their ship, the Sulaco, did arrive at LV-426 and a surface landing was made. Other information has been classified by Space Command, but rumours abound that the marines were wiped out by a new Alien species. The current location of the Sulaco is unknown.

The freighter Nostromo II is forced to make orbit around the world of Lament-262 after some kind of on-board system fault. Most of the crew and the few passengers that were on board, land on the planet near one the mining settlements (maintained by Con-Amalgamated). Information on what happened next is sketchy but an alleged First Contact was achieved with a Sentient Space Faring species. Based on what was observed of their technology and rituals it is believed that they have previously visited Earth. It is also believed that another species was also present on the world. What happened next is unclear but the Nostromo II did leave orbit without waiting for the rest of her crew to return on the orders of her Captain. Upon return the Nostromo II is impounded and her captain arrested. Rumours of any supposed First Contact are vehemently denied.

The multi-national corporation, Con-Amalgamated, is currently conducting an internal investigation allegedly concerning widespread drug abuse on Con-Am 27 (a mining station on Io, a moon of Jupiter). The local Federal Marshall, William O'Neil has since brought charges to this effect before the ICC and an ICC field team has started to investigate all of Con-Amalgamated's mining operations within the moons of Jupiter.

On the oil rich American Colony world of Eeton 2, an independence movement has been bloodily put down by US Colonial Marines. The colonists had requested help from the Government of the South Pacific Consortium in their struggle for freedom and the two countries funded operations that tore the world apart but with the US ultimately successful. Similar secret wars are currently being fought on other worlds such as Ceti-Epsilon 4 and Viet 9.

Weyland Yutani, in an alleged cost cutting move, has shut down operations on one of its older metal smelting and foundry plants on the world of Fiorina 'Fury' 161.

After a board on inquiry, Alex Sangster (Captain of the Nostromo II) takes part in a team to return to Lament-262 in late 2179 with orders to recover any survivors and to investigate any alien species that may be on the planet. Survivors are recovered and there is alleged contact once-again with both types of alien species.

A US Colonial Marine Officer, Colonel Thomas Kincaid, allegedly mutinies and takes his battalion with him. They are currently involved in a bloody but unspecified action on the rim of known space. Loyal USCM forces are in pursuit but Sanders appears to have been reinforced by a renegade unit from the Colonial Royal Marines (the British Space forces) led by a Major Kramer.

December 30th 2179, Colonial Administration and Weyland Yutani issue an official statement that the colony on LV-426/Acheron was destroyed when the fusion reactor in the nearby terraforming plant went critical. There were no

survivors and the Marine Unit that was sent out has returned and the Sulaco is currently in orbit over Phobos harbour awaiting its next mission. Any rumour of supposed Alien encounters is strongly denied.

2180

Now.

### Why 2180?

When the computers first boot up in the film Alien, a date is shown on one of the screens indicating that the year is 2122 and we know Aliens is set 57 years later which gives us 2179. As a lot has happened in that year it makes sense from a creative viewpoint to set the campaign world in the following year. We have tried to use the same years as listed in the media we have based this on have made one or two exceptions in order to make the timeline flow better or have derived a date when none was specified.

## State of the Universe

### Corporations vs Government

Power is still ostensibly in the hands of the governments of various countries and bloc's but the hand of the mega-corporation is rarely far away. The majority of countries are signed up to the League of Industrial Nations which is (in theory) responsible for allocation and awarding of access to resources both on Earth and Beyond. In recent years the League has been accused of institutional corruption, but it continues to remain the gateway to acquiring mining and other similar rights on planets far from Earth.

There are now 5 distinct power bloc's that every country is either part of or strongly aligned with: -

- Allied Pacific Consortium
- Federal League of Europe
- African Alliance
- United Americas
- Asian Confederation

The major spacefaring powers are the United Americas and the Federal League of Europe, all others do have some limited space exposure but

mostly feed off of the other two for their ventures to the High Frontier. A resurgent Russian Federation has recently emerged to almost form a 6<sup>th</sup> bloc and has also launched its own missions. As well as it's recently launched missions it has also been announcing significant advances in weapons research prompting fears of a new cold war between various Bloc's, their recent allies in China appear to have turned their backs on them so far and the Asian Confederation as a whole have made more peaceful overtures to the west as a whole thus ending the so called "Shendu dongjie" or deep freeze that has endured in recent memory.

So-called Mega-Corporations often cross these borders and often command their own resources both on and off world. The authorities try and curb the worst excesses of the Corporations through the Interstellar Commerce Commission but not always with success. The two largest corporations are Weyland-Yutani and Con-Amalgamated, smaller companies include Hyperdyne Systems, Wallace Incorporated, Lunar Industries and Hanimed.

### Law & Order

There are two notable organisations responsible for Law Enforcement in the High Frontier, the International Space Police Force (ISPF) or the office of the Federal District Marshalls. Which branch has jurisdiction usually depends upon which government or corporation founded or has majority ruling on the outpost/colony in question, this has lead to many issues of jurisdiction when a crime has been committed.

The ISPF was founded in the earliest days of space travel in the 21<sup>st</sup> century when the idea of crime in space was very much in its infancy. At the time every space-faring nation signed onto its charter with the exception of the then United States of America. The ISPF was then a volunteer force of already qualified space personnel who received minimal law-enforcement training (whom the press had dubbed the "Star Cops"). It wasn't until Nathan Spring (still a serving police officer) became the new head in 2027 that they first started to become an effective organisation, the

procedures he would lay down would form the basis of policing the new frontier and would provide the foundation of policing that carries forward to this day.

America never officially joined the program but they did later allow ISPF offices to be setup on some American installations, a practice that would continue until the duties of the Marshalls office were expanded to take those duties over.

All colonies, outposts, space stations over a certain size tend to have an office of one or the other, occasionally larger settlements can have both. It's also not uncommon for the two offices to work together if the situation calls for it but as mentioned earlier, jurisdiction issues can delay effective investigation. The ISPF tends to have better local CSI resources than the Marshalls office but the Marshalls tend to have more effective manpower (the ISPF still train space personnel as in law enforcement where the Marshalls office take law enforcement officers and train them to work off world).

### Travelling to the Stars

The *Event Horizon* may have failed as a concept but the research that led to the design of the vessel would lead to a whole new line of research when it came to faster-than-light travel. The Forced Displacement Drive (FDD) was first debuted in the late 21<sup>st</sup> century where it first tested and proved that a functional Faster-than-light drive could work, the commercial applications were apparent. Worlds that had been surveyed remotely but were years away using conventional Ion Engines were now within a few months travel.

The science of suspended animation had been perfected in the mid 2030's (after sabotage on a Mars bound freighter necessitated active testing of a prototype, which when the crew were recovered some months later, they had indeed survived). Even with the new FDD technology it quickly became standard practice for crews to go into hypersleep for the duration of the journey to minimise usage of environmental resources. The ships computer could wake the crew or in some

cases a Synthetic would also watch over the ship during its voyage.

Constantly updated and improved throughout the years, in 2132, to travel 38 Lightyears (or 3.595e+14 kilometres) would have taken a midsize Starship around 10 months, by 2180, it would take only three weeks.

### Talking to the Stars

One of the key creations during the push outwards was the development and creation of the communications array that soon became known as simply the "Network". An array of satellite and repeater stations throughout mapped space provide much needed communication links between distant outposts. A common communications protocol established early in space exploration would continue to be used and would facilitate easier integration of differing technologies from different manufacturers.

The contract to run and maintain it was recently won by the Asian Con-Federation and their upgrade plan has seen delay time in the minutes/hours range as opposed to the days/weeks that it used to be. This upgrade is currently rolling out to all of the nodes currently on the network but is running behind schedule.

### Off-World Colonies

The first colonies on Mars were established in the early 2020's with adverts on Earth promising a new "start", other outposts would be established on the moons of Jupiter and Saturn as well as the continuing expansion of the early Lunar base and the establishing of other outposts on the moon and within the asteroid belt.

The first had been established beyond the Solar System (just before the first FDD was built and demonstrated) when a moon with breathable atmosphere was settled in 2083 in the system of Proxima Centauri.

The creation of the faster-than-light propulsion opened up various possibilities for colonisation and soon huge ships would be departing for new worlds all in the hope of finding a new home out

amongst the stars. Corporations were also keen as there was money to be made in new metals and other as yet undiscovered resources.

Occasionally a suitable world would be found but there would be a problem with the atmosphere. Terraforming technologies that had proved so successful on Mars would soon be employed to transform worlds into habitable places where humans could live without breather suits (it's what soon became called a "shake-and-bake" colony).

With overpopulation a huge problem on Earth, people would pay or do almost anything for a fresh start on another world. Everything from Farmers to engineers to scientists are all roles that need to be filled.

### Life out there

The question of whether or not there is intelligent life outside of Earth's solar system still has not been answered. One of the first colonies settled was the world dubbed *New Eden*, at first dubbed F-Cows (Fake Cows) these rudimentary beasts are quite similar to the earth counterparts. The first colonists quickly tamed them and turned to farming, the meat is safe to eat and allegedly has a "game-y" flavour.

Another useful newly discovered life form is the "Hyper Algae" discovered on *Alexandria*. The unique property of this algae is that when cultivated in an Oxygen, Water, Sunlight and Carbon Dioxide environment, high levels of Oxygen are the by-product. This very useful feature has led to this algae being transported and used in terra-forming efforts of other worlds.

### Notable Organisations

The following are organisations or companies your character would almost certainly have heard of.

#### Central Intelligence Agency (CIA)

A mainstay dating all the way back to the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, the primary intelligence gathering network of the United Americas. Specialising in covert intelligence gathering throughout the solar system and newly established colonies.

Rumours of "Black Sites" where suspects are questioned and/or tortured continue to prevail.

#### Con-Amalgamated

One of the larger corporations with a primary interest in the mining and refining of minerals, maintains extensive operations in the solar system and is expanding to include new worlds beyond. Name is usually abbreviated to just "Con-Am".

#### European Space Liaison (ESL)

European version of the NCA, co-ordinates all space affairs that both countries and corporations within their sphere of limitation are involved in.

#### Hyperdyne Systems

Secondary manufacturer of Synthetic (or "Artificial People" if you prefer) robots, tends to focus more on industrial/military models. Has seen usage taken up extensively since the relative failure of the Replicant experiments in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century.

#### Interstellar Commerce Commission (ICC)

Created in the early 21<sup>st</sup> century as the "International Commerce Commission", it was renamed in the early 22<sup>nd</sup> century but it's mission has largely remained the same. Its primary goal is the regulation and investigation of corporations and their related assets.



#### Interstellar Space Police Force (ISPF)

One of the two law enforcement agencies in the High Frontier.

**League of Industrial Nations**

Similar in nature to the defunct United Nations, this group is responsible for the awarding of newly surveyed worlds to countries, corporations, etc. Maintains a large fleet of survey vessels and also sub-contracts surveying work as well. All claims need to go through them, a situation that has not sat well with some countries for a while, most notably Russia.

**Lunar Industries**

The largest mining company currently operating, was the first to successfully mine Helium-3 from the surface of the moon. Whilst they became embroiled in a cloning scandal in the early 21<sup>st</sup> century they have since gone to successfully establish mining operations throughout both the solar system (their primary rivals are Con-Amalgamated) and other discovered systems.

**National Council on Astronautics (NCA)**

The managing body that oversees all space activity, co-ordinates all space travel and colony activity originating from countries and corporations within its borders, coordinated activity with USAC.

**United States Aerospace Command (USAC)**

The umbrella command structure for all of the United Americas military space ventures. All military operations outside of the Earth's atmosphere has a USAC element to it. Often abbreviated to just "Space Command".

**Weyland Yutani**

One of the largest mega-corps in existence with assets in practically all major industries.

## Creating Your Character

There is no character class as such in the system but rather you pick your skills from a chart using a point system. Each character starts with 10 number of Skill Points (SP) to spend on any skill you feel fits into your character concept.

Creating your character consists of the following steps: -

- Read Universe History
- Choose Skill Background
- Draft Character History

### Character Background

This signifies your characters background in the universe at large and depending on which background you choose also gives you a bonus to your character. The three backgrounds are as follows: -

- Civilian
- Colonial Marines
- Corporate/Government

Available skills are shown in the following table along with their respective point cost which is different depending upon which Skill Background you choose, you must choose your skill costs from the same column, you can't mix and match. Your skill background does not represent your character history, you might be a former soldier, so you would pick your skills as a Colonial Marine but have since left the Corps and are now working as a farmer and your character history should reflect this.

## Choosing your Skills

Skill	Civilian	Colonial Marines	Corporate/Government
Appraisal	1	2	1
Biology	2	3	2
Charm	2	3	1
Chemistry	2	3	2
Code Reader	3	2	1
Computer Hacking	2	2	1
Conceal Item	2	2	2
Contact	*	*	*
Demolitions	3	2	3
Detect Lie	2	3	2
Endurance	2	2	2
Engineering	2	2	2
Forgery	1	3	2
Forensics	2	3	2
History	1	1	1
Instinct	2	2	2
Interrogation	2	2	2
Med-Tech	2	2	2
Physics	2	3	2
Pick Lock	2	3	1
Pilot	3	2	2
Pistol	1	1	1
Rifle	*	*	*
Search	2	2	2
Subdue	3	2	3
Surgeon	3	3	3

\* See entry for specifics on point cost details

**Appraisal**

This skill gives you the ability to be able to appraise items such as precious metal and jewels and determine an approximate value.

**Biology**

This lets you ask the GM Biology questions related to items you may find in game and need to analyse/dissect. This covers items like fauna, flora and anything inbetween or further afield.

**Charm**

This gives you the ability to hoodwink/distract others whilst something else happens, this skill can only be used by saying the key phrase *“You’re never going to believe this but...”* For example, you might say to someone *“You’re never going to believe this, but I think we might be related, describe your mother”*. This skill works better the more you role play it.

**Chemistry**

This let you ask the GM questions on chemicals you may have found and then analysed, depending on how much you spend on the analysis could impact how much information is given. You should have appropriate phys-reps for your analytical needs (although in some cases they may be provided, check with your GM).

**Code Reader**

This gives you the ability to read and decode encrypted messages and also to encrypt messages that you send. In practice if you are confronted by an encrypted message then you will be given part of a key to help with decoding. Exact methodology to deal with this will be provided prior to the game to those who have the skill. Usage of this skill may also have an element that requires a smart phone or similar device and advice will be given as to which apps require loading onto it.

**Computer Hacking**

You are able to hack your way around the Cortex, either looking for information you shouldn’t be, or disabling security systems, etc. Using this skill will require a smartphone or similar device.

**Conceal item**

You are able to hide a single small device from discovery if you are searched, this could either be a small pistol (emphasis on the word small) or a pocket communicator or some other such device. If you searched whilst you are unconscious, then the skill does not work.

**Contacts**

This gives you a contact either in the Government, Military or perhaps from a more shadowy source. This skill can be taken multiple times to give you more than one contact. You should define your contact with what their role is currently and also how you came to know each other. A typical contact entry might read like the following: -

*“Horace Cort, I saved his daughter’s life once and he figures he owes me for that, he’s currently a high-up in the ISPF, you never know when you might need a good copper!”*

This is a variable cost skill. Contacts within your own player class will cost less than those from other classes. Also, the effectiveness and influence wielded by a contact can be increased by pumping further points in to it.

	Civilian	Marines	Corp/Gov
Civilian	1	2	2
Marines	2	1	2
Corp/Gov	2	2	1

In the above table, if a civilian wanted another civilian contact then it would cost 1 point, if they wanted a marine or a corp/gov contact then it would cost 2 points. Certain contacts need to be justified in your character background and may cost additional points (if you are on speaking terms with the Secretary General for example).

**Demolitions**

This gives you the ability to prepare, set and detonate explosive charges of various sizes. Note: You will need to provide your own phys-reps for these. Please see the section on Demolitions further in this manual which goes into further details regarding this skill and prop requirements.

**Detect Lie**

This lets you detect if someone is lying whilst they are being specifically questioned about something (this needs a GM to be present).

**Endurance**

This skill represents enhanced physical conditioning and/or agility and lets you start with three extra hits on your sensor.

**Engineering**

This gives you the ability to operate and conduct repairs on various pieces of equipment from a Star Ship's engine to a Saloon's beer pumps. Note: it might be a good idea to have your own In-Character toolkit. This skill also lets you use advanced technical pieces of equipment. This skill also gives you the chance to do research to invent new machines and methodologies.

NOTE: This skill is also based on your background, if you are a civilian then you may not be able to fix a dropship as quickly as a Marines Engineer.

**Forgery**

This skill gives you the ability to forge and to reproduce various pieces of documentation within the game, you should consult the GM team with details of how and where you would like to utilise this skill.

**Forensics**

This is used in the analysis of a potential crime scene, this would involve dusting for fingerprints, collection of DNS and other samples. If this skill is used in concert with other similar skills (such as Biology or Chemistry) then you will get an enhanced result.

**History**

This gives you historical knowledge of various incidents and events that could prove useful. This lets you ask the refs about such events. If the history is not related to your skill tree then you might not get as complete an answer.

**Instinct**

When you absolutely aren't sure what to do and need to make a judgment call then you can let

your instincts take over and ask a ref for a hint. This skill should only be used sporadically, the more you rely on your instincts then they may let you down at a critical moment. This should only be used once per game session.

**Interrogation**

When questioning another character, this skill enables you to influence them into giving the truth but this must be roleplayed to have the greatest effect and a GM should also be present to judge it.

**Med-Tech**

This skill lets you light and moderate wounds.

See the GM running the game for more information on which particular medical is being used.

**Physics**

This lets you ask the GM Physics related questions regarding phenomenon both known and unknown.

**Pick Lock**

This skill enables you to open doors and bypass security systems. The exact system as to how this skill will work in game will be given out at the game (this could vary from being given a bunch of random keys and you have to find the right one to being given a card with a list of possible combinations on for a combination lock). No matter which system is used you must have some kind of prop to represent your lock picking tools.

**Pilot**

This skill represents your ability to drive/fly respective vehicles within the sphere of your character tree.

**Pistol**

This skill means you have been trained in the usage of a Pistol-sized firearm and are able to comfortably use one. With this skill the pistol used must be semi-automatic (only fires once when the trigger is pulled) and can only do 1 point of damage.

If you have a multi-function pistol of some kind then this needs to be cleared with the GM's of the event you want to use it on.

### Rifle

This skill indicates a level of training with more advanced weaponry. As this is an advanceable skill, the various levels are as follows: -

1. Basic: A Rifle/SMG sized weapon capable of automatic fire only doing 1 point of damage. A shotgun style weapon capable of doing three points of damage but the weapon must have a cycle time of at least 5 seconds between shots.
2. Skilled: A Rifle/SMG sized weapon capable of automatic fire and doing two points of damage.
3. Advanced: A Rifle sized weapon capable of two plus points of damage (a sniper rifle would be an example of this) these weapons should be cleared with the GM of the games you intend to use them on.

NOTE: Damage levels of all weapons are subject to change at the GM's discretion.

The skill cost per tree: -

	Basic	Skilled	Advanced
Civilian	2	3	N/A
Marines	2	2	2
Corp/Gov	3	3	N/A

### Search

This skill means you are able to search a character and unless they have the conceal item skill then all items should be produced.

### Subdue

If you are able to get behind someone then you can effectively use the butt of your weapon to knock them out, this done by calling "Subdue" and tapping the target on the shoulder, NOTE: this is not a coup-de-grace, so stealth is not necessary, but you must be behind your target. The subdued target is then rendered unconscious for approximately 5 minutes and should be role-played accordingly.

### Surgeon

This means you have proper medical training and are able to repair serious and critical wounds and diagnose other medical ailments. Please check with your GM for more details as to how the medical system works.

## Laser-Tag Combat

Combat is resolved using the Laser-Tag Combat system. This comprises the following elements: -

- All participants wear what is generally referred to as a “sensor”. This is a self-contained unit, worn on the head that allows hits to be taken from any direction. When a suitable Laser-Tag weapon, hits a sensor then it will make a noise and also flash it’s the built-in LEDs.
- Your sensor will have two buttons on it, a sliding switch to turn it on and off and a push button with which you can set the number of hits, use to reset it, etc.
- Each sensor has a configurable number of “hits” that indicate how resilient your character is to damage, this number can vary and might depend upon what skills your character has. When you have lost all of your hits, your character has been incapacitated and their status needs resolution before you can continue.
- The gun you have fires Infra-Red light (like a TV remote control and like your local Laser-Quest (the laser is mainly for show)) and you should aim it at the head of the person you are trying to shoot down as all sensors are head mounted.

### Basic Sensor Operation

- To set the number of hits on a sensor perform the following: -
  - Turn the unit on (usually a sliding switch) whilst holding down the reset button (usually the only other button), let the button go and then press it a number of times equal to the number of hits you have, the sensor will beep when you press the button so you know you have pressed it. When you have pressed the button the appropriate number of times, wait a few moments and then the sensor will play a siren and after that it is ready for use.
  - During the game, if you press the button again it will play a number of beeps equal to how many hits

the sensor has left before it is “dead”.

- To reset the sensor
  - Turning the sensor on whilst pressing the push button will clear the sensor of any previous configuration.
- Silence the Death Siren
  - When you have lost all of your hits, the sensor will emit a continuous siren and the LED lights stay on, this can be silenced by momentarily pressing the push button, this will turn the siren off but the LED’s will stay on.
- When you have been seen to by a medic-character and there is a time delay before your character is active again you can then give the button another momentary press, the sensor should then beep and it will start to count, and will beep the number of minutes since you pressed the button. Once you have pressed the button, when four minutes have passed the sensor will beep four times and so on.

### Game Calls

- Time-In, this is also usually accompanied by a long whistle/air horn blast, this means that the game is now in session and you are In Character (IC).
- Time-Out, this is usually accompanied by a long whistle/air horn blasé, that means that the game has stopped and you are out of character (OOC).
- Man Down, this is usually accompanied by three short whistle blow/air horn and indicates that the game has stopped due to a real emergency, cease the game and approach where the signal is coming from.
- Time Freeze, when this is called this represents an event happening instantaneously so you should close your eyes and hum loudly until you hear the call to continue gameplay.

## Appendix A: MILITARY OF THE HIGH FRONTIER OVERVIEW

### COLONIAL MILITARY FORCES INTRODUCTION

Large scale warfare in the colonies is relatively rare. Whilst Earth nations have gone to war in space, these have been minor territorial skirmishes, largely over disputed planets with rich resources, and have been settled relatively quickly with mediation from the UN and the ICC.

Low intensity warfare, colonial secessionism, terrorism and proxy attacks by Corporate forces against rival companies are much more common, and all have to be dealt with by Colonial ground forces raised from Earth. Combatants in inter-corporate conflicts try to keep these disputes discrete to avoid attracting the attention of the ICC and National Governments, but where this fails, government Army and Marine forces often have to intervene.

### XENOFAUNA CONTROL

Humanity has yet to have contacted any intelligent Alien races (despite rumours circulating to the contrary), but many planets contain less developed alien fauna. Some of these lower forms of animal life are inherently hostile and pose a threat to both personnel and property. As a result, pest control operations to remove indigenous predators and vermin are common missions for both National and Corporate Security forces. Such 'Bug Hunts' are messy, time consuming and frustrating, but seldom pose much danger to well-equipped troops.

### FORCE COMPOSITION

The ability to move forces quickly and easily to hot spots is vital, and so most Colonial units rely primarily on infantry components, with light air portable vehicles to support them. These are largely wheeled or tracked Armoured Fighting Vehicles that combine transport and firepower in an efficient and easy to transport package. Artillery and air support roles are usually combined in the 'Dropships' or Combat Shuttles all units require to ferry them to and from the planet surface.

### EARTH NATIONAL GOVERNMENTS

The impetus for space exploration and expansion has largely been driven by commercial organisations and Multinational Corporations in their rush to exploit the natural resources of the galaxy. National Governments have, to an extent, been forced to play catch up, if only to try to keep an eye on what Corporations are doing out in the furthest reaches of the galaxy.

Many governments are expending more money than they can afford on this new space race, and that includes maintaining military forces for use in the off-world colonies. Service in colonial forces is seldom glamorous or well paid. Funding, particularly for infantry is tight, and equipment is often ageing or inferior to that used by Corporate security forces. Some countries like the US have resorted to conscription to fill its ranks, while others like the Soviet Union and Germany still maintain a program of National Service. Only a few nations such as the UK employ purely professional armies of volunteers, and these are smaller as a result.

### SOVIET UNION

The Soviet Naval Infantry (also known as 'The Black Death') or Soviet Marines, (or 'Naval Infantry' as they are more correctly known), form the spearhead of the Soviet Navy, and have been at the forefront of revolutionary warfare since 1917.

Soviet doctrine differs from the US and other forces in that they favour quantity over quality. The size of the Soviet Union means that the Red Navy and Naval Infantry can deploy large numbers of personnel at will. Naval Infantry units also employ more heavy armour and artillery in combat operations, leading to the design of the huge 'Zubr' Class drop ships, capable of carrying multiple tanks and hundreds of troops.

This larger and more unwieldy force structure means Soviet forces are slower to deploy than the more agile and lightly equipped US Colonial Marines, but when they do arrive they are more than equipped to deliver an overwhelming hammer blow.

In a throwback to World War 2, the Naval Infantry has returned to the all-black combat uniform that led to them being named 'The Black Death' by the Germans. However, it is likely that the decision to use black has more to do with concealing the dirt and oil stains accumulated on the notoriously badly constructed and grimy Soviet Naval vessels...

#### UNITED KINGDOM

The Colonial Royal Marines, 'By Land, By Space', a small nation seen by much of the rest of the world as 'punching above its weight', the UK has been ambitious, and some might say reckless, in pushing further out in to the galaxy in search of resources to support its flagging economy.

Although the Royal Navy is small in comparison to its American and Soviet counterparts, its aggressive and adventurous traditions have pushed it to explore further even than many Corporate exploitation vessels. This has led to the establishment of some far-flung colonies which are out of contact with Earth for years at a time.

The Royal Marines remain the planetary fighting arm of the senior service and are specialists in hostile environment combat. The UK maintains only three RM units; 40, 42 and 45 Commando. Troops from these Commandos are regularly seconded to form smaller 'Naval Parties' on Royal Navy star ships, or to serve as garrisons on far flung colonial outposts.

The modest size of the Royal Navy often makes it difficult to deploy Royal Marines on short notice, and so the British government often makes use of an ancient legal measure called 'STUFT' (Ships Taken Up From Trade). Using this law the government can draft in civilian starships registered in the UK and co-opt them to move the Royal Marines to their destination. This has led to the Royal Marines being known as the 'uber commandos' (although never within earshot...)

#### FEDERAL EUROPEAN REPUBLIC

The European Republic utilises the multinational CFB (Colonial Forces Brigade) to police and protect worlds and colonies in the European sphere. Each

nations military operates independently to secure their own territory, but can call on other nations in the Republic to assist in larger operations if within their treaty obligations. The two largest forces operating in space are from France and Germany:

#### France: Légion Coloniale 'Marche ou crève'

Established in 1831 to police its earth-bound colonies, the Légion étrangère (Foreign Legion) was the obvious choice to protect French possessions in outer space. Renamed the Légion Coloniale, it now serves as the prime projection of power in the French sector.

The Légion is a well-balanced rapid deployment force, focused around mechanised infantry in their unique 6 wheeled armoured fighting vehicles. The Légion is unusual as it accepts recruits from any nation, and even more unusual as recruits swear allegiance to 'The Légion' rather than France itself. This has instilled a fierce loyalty and esprit de corps that occasionally causes friction with other European units.

#### Germany: Fallschirmjäger 'Green Devils'

The Fallschirmjäger, (Paratroopers) have been Germany's primary rapid deployment force for over a century. Re-trained and re-equipped for extra-solar operations, they exhibit a daring and aggression that can at times appear foolhardy.

More lightly armed and equipped than many other CFB forces, the Fallschirmjäger pride themselves in being able to deploy to trouble spots quicker than virtually any other colonial force, using small but very fast Kriegsmarine Strike Cruisers.

The Fallschirmjäger often employ 'drop pods' for assault landings. Each tiny reentry vehicle can carry up to 5 troops and deliver them on to a planet surface in an alarming but efficient way. All Fallschirmjäger light vehicles, (like the Wiesel-4 AFV), can also be delivered planet side by Drop Pod, and recovered along with the infantry by traditional Dropship.

#### MULTINATIONAL CORPORATIONS

Corporations have always employed security personnel, but the fierce intercorporate

competition in the off-world colonies has led to the creation of paramilitary forces that can rival Army or Marine units.

Corporate Security Operators are responsible for general safety and security at Company facilities, the prevention of industrial espionage and protection of Intellectual Property. Off world, they ensure Corporate facilities remain free of xenofauna and in some cases provide the police force to control employees in far flung Colonies. Corporate Security is also tasked with protecting planetary claims and mineral deposits from claim jumping rivals.

Corporate Security Forces have to be more versatile than their Army and Marine Corps counterparts, since their job descriptions and postings can vary wildly. A Corporate Security Operator might have to be in a suit and tie one day as close protection for a VIP, and in SWAT gear the next day to conduct a hostage rescue. In many cases, the smaller the Security Force, the better trained and more versatile they have to be.

Bigger Multinationals like Weyland Yutani and Con-Am maintain large standing Security Forces. Whilst these are described as an internal security organisation, they are in fact a paramilitary private army.

Corporate Security Operators have access to the latest state of the art weapons and equipment. Their pay and pension plans are far better than the government could offer, and this can attract applicants who might otherwise enlist in the Army or Marines.

Likewise, many Corporate Security Operators are ex-forces or ex-lawenforcement, who can bring their experience and skills to the private sector for a high level of financial gain.

### PRIVATE MILITARY CONTRACTORS

For smaller Corporations who cannot afford to maintain their own standing Security Force, it makes more financial sense to hire external organisations, known as Private Military Contractors. A far cry from the 'mercenaries' of

centuries gone by, PMCs nowadays have to be (on the surface at least) well trained, professional and responsible, to ensure repeat business and good PR.

PMC companies must be government licensed to operate in the Colonies, although many 'fly by night' PMC firms can acquire licenses by bribery using some of the more 'amenable' governments like Panama and Lichtenstein.

Private Military Contractors offer the same services as Corporate Security, but sometimes with staff of a mixed quality. Most PMC companies are staffed by experienced ex-forces or ex-law enforcement, but some companies do hire contractors of dubious quality.

The size of a PMC Company varies. The more reputable might have 300 contractors on staff, and be able to field their own AFVs and Aircraft. Others might only have 50 employees, and rely on their employer to provide transportation, uniforms and weapons.

In general, PMC companies rely on their Corporate employers to provide interstellar transportation to and from the Colonies.

### RAVENWOOD

American based Ravenwood Contractors is probably the biggest PMC company in existence, and certainly the most expensive to hire. Floated on the Stock market in 2179, Ravenwood employ 700 Contractors and medical and technical support staff. They even own and operate a single ex-USCM Conegstoga class transport, making them the only PMC organisation with true independent interstellar capability.

Ravenwood has extensive contacts within both the US Government and Corporate spheres, and usually has multiple contracts in operation at the same time. It has never been called on to deploy its entire force in one place before, but if called on, it would surely be a force to be reckoned with.

## Appendix B: BOOM! Demolition rules

Only a character with the DEMOLITIONS SKILL can emplace and remove explosives. All explosives must be phys-repped non-explosive dummies. Real pyros may only be used with the explicit consent of the GM.

*Demo rules are optional and may be considered in or out of use as a GM dictates.*

### DEMOLITONS KIT CONTENTS

#### 1: The Charge

The 'Charge Demolition, Plastic, C4, M112', or C4 block is a generic unit of explosive. More exotic designs can be produced by players as long as they are roughly the same size/bulk. A single C4 charge measures 2 x 1.5 x 11 inches and can be made from wood sprayed green with a label. Drill a hole in one end to hold the detonator.

#### 2: The Detonator or blasting cap

Phys-repped by a bolt or tube of metal. This is what initiates the explosion. Ideally should be carried in a separate box. Detonators should only be attached to the charge when the charge is emplaced, not carried around connected. (A referee can rule that an unsafe device has exploded on the character).

#### 3: Det Cord

For direct detonation. Use String, cord, wire, clothesline whatever. Bright colours are good to avoid a tripping hazard. Up to 30 yards is a good length.

#### 4: Detonation Device.

This can be a simple push button or plunger, a timer (egg timer), or a radio control device.

#### 5: Tools.

A useful techy tool kit for a demo expert would be tape (Gaffer/electrical), a multi tool, screwdrivers and so on.

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### JUDGING EXPLOSIVES USE

- 1 Block: Destroys Wood. (Interior door, stockade fence etc).

- 2 Blocks: Destroys Concrete (wall, bridge support etc).
- 3 Blocks: Destroys Steel (Armour plate, Spacecraft hull etc.).
- 4 Blocks: Destroys something Alien or exotic (at Referees discretion).

### ROLE-PLAYING DEMOLITIONS

#### 1: Direct Detonation

Emplace charges. Insert Detonator. Uncoil and attach det cord to the detonator and connect the other end to your plunger/switch. Shout "FIRE IN THE HOLE!" 3 TIMES and then shout "BANG!". The obstacle is destroyed.

#### 2: Time Delay Detonation (TIMER)

Emplace charges. Insert Detonator and attach timer to the charge. Set timer and retire at a saunter. When the timer buzzer sounds, the obstacle is destroyed.

#### 3: Radio Detonation (Ref Needed)

Emplace charges. Insert Detonator. Attach Radio receiver unit to charge. This must be a small box with an LED in it to alert players that the charge is radio controlled. Switch on LED unit and retire. With a radio transmitter prop you can detonate the charge from anywhere on site (referee needed for this).

### THE BOOM.

This is either a ref or player shouting "BANG!", and declaring the item destroyed or an area out of play. Any PC or NPC within 10 yards of the explosion loses all their hits and goes down.

### DEFUSING AND REMOVING.

Only a character with DEMOLITIONS skill can defuse an explosive once planted. Anyone without the skill will detonate the explosive if they try.

## Version Control

- Version 2.0
  - Initial Release