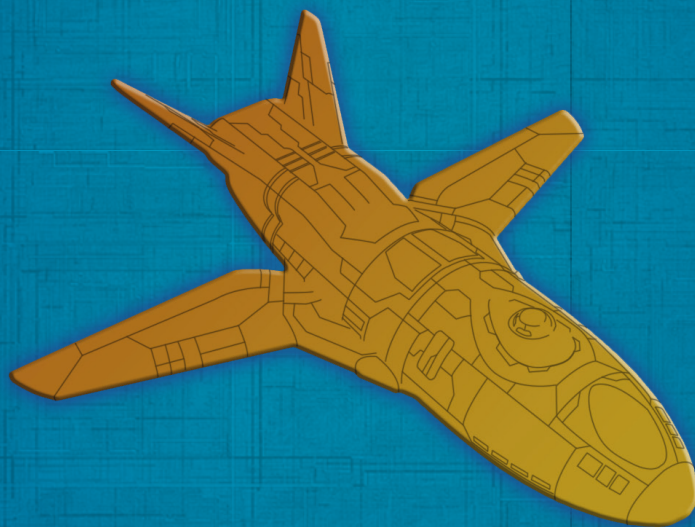


PIRATES OF DRINAX:

SHIPS

ENCOUNTERS



TRAVELLER

TRAVELLER

PIRATES OF DRINAX: SHIP'S ENCOUNTERS

CREDITS

CLASSIC TRAVELLER

Marc Miller

Author

Martin Dougherty

Developer

Matthew Sprange

Layout and Graphic Design

Amy Perrett, Sandrine Thirache

Interior Illustrations

Amy Perrett, Sandrine Thirache

TRAVELLER INNER CIRCLE

Andrew James Alan Welty, Colin Dunn, M. J. Dougherty,
Rob Eaglestone, Sam Wissa, Joshua Bell, Maksim Smelchak

Special Thanks

Marc Miller, Loren Wiseman

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	2
USING THIS BOOK	3
SHIPS INDEX	31

Traveller ©2017 Mongoose Publishing. All rights reserved. Reproduction of this work by any means without the written permission of the publisher is expressly forbidden. All significant characters, names, places, items, art and text herein are copyrighted by Mongoose Publishing.

This game product contains no Open Game Content. No portion of this work may be reproduced in any form without written permission. To learn more about the Open Game License, please go to www.mongoosepublishing.com.

This material is protected under the copyright laws of the United Kingdom and of the United States. This product is a work of fiction. Any similarity to actual people, organisations, places or events is purely coincidental.

Traveller is a trademark of Far Future Enterprises and is used under licence.

Printed in China



T R A V E L L E R INTRODUCTION

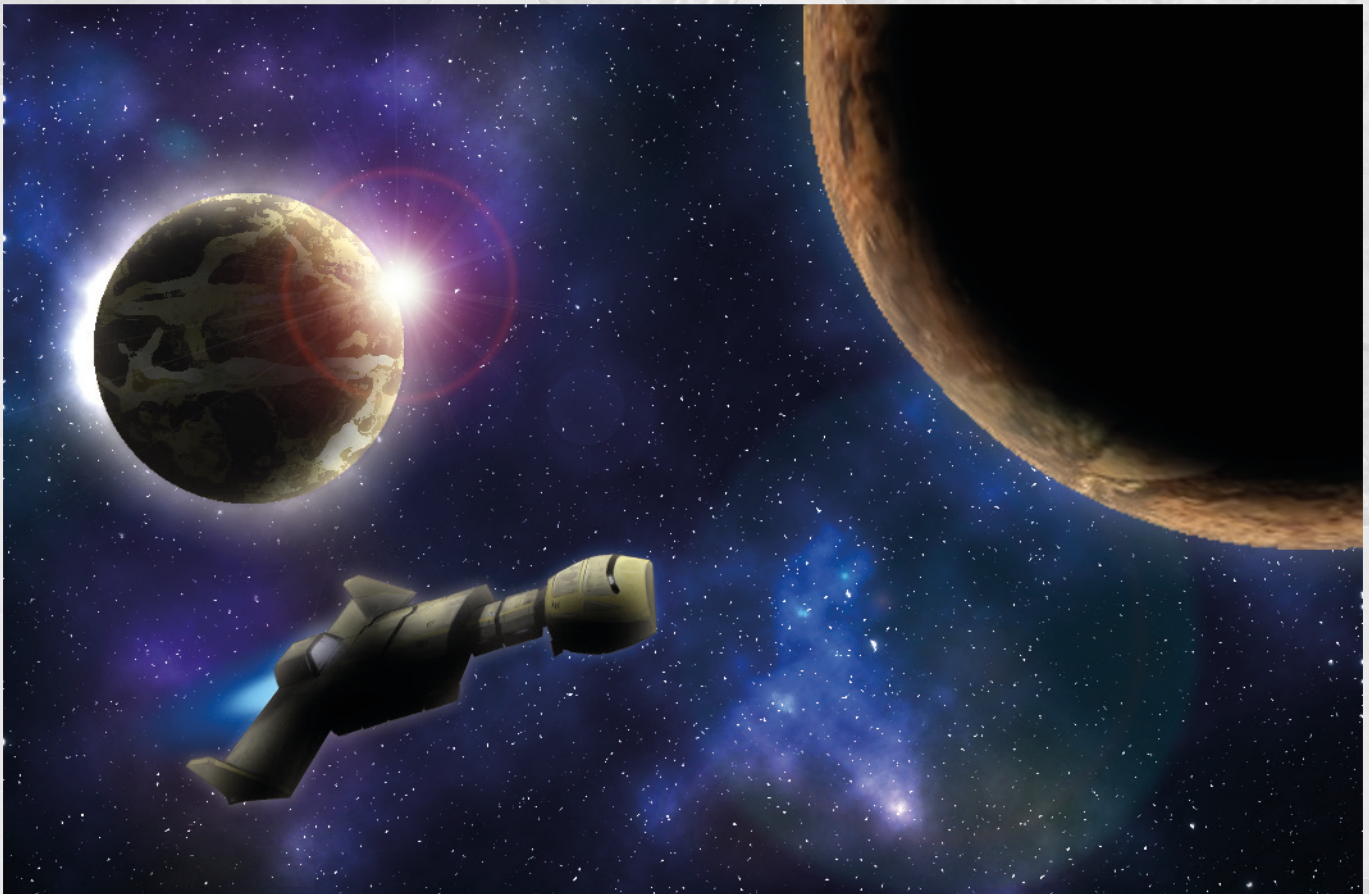
Ship Encounters presents a series of detailed ship encounters complete with mission, cargo and backstory. These ships can be used as repeat encounters in a starfaring campaign, or potential targets for pirates. Travellers who rescue a ship from attack might want to know who they have saved and what they were carrying; Travellers who are the attackers will definitely want to know what they have captured and what complications might ensue. *Ship Encounters* has the answers to all these questions.

Travellers jumping from one world to the next often take a passing interest in the starships going about their business in the local system. All of those ships have a story, a cargo and a mission. These ship encounters could affect the Travellers in many ways, ranging from an interesting story about an oddball vessel to a desperate fight against pirates. If the Travellers happen

to be those pirates, then the vessels in this book can be used to add depth, realism and the odd complication to the humdrum business of interstellar armed robbery.

These ship encounters can be added to an ongoing campaign to add flavor to a one-off encounter or inserted with a view to setting up a future adventure. Finding the wreck of a merchant ship is one thing. Finding a ship whose crew you had drinks with a few weeks ago is another. Astute Travellers might start asking questions like 'why is that particular ship here, of all places?' whilst larcenous ones might note a vessel as a potential target and begin plotting to capture it.

Though intended for use with the *Pirates of Drinax* campaign, the ships included in this book may be used in any adventure.



USING THIS BOOK

Data on these ship encounters is presented in the following format:

Summary Box: This contains information on the ship's name, type and armament, as well as data on the encounter such as the ship's direction (whether it is heading to or from the main port) and cargo.

Cargo: More details on the ship's cargo and any passengers of note.

Quirks: Anything unusual about the vessel or its mission, or about the way its crew might behave.

Complications: An indication of what might go wrong after the ship has been pirated or some other interaction has occurred.

Pirate Hunters' Response: If the vessel is of particular note to pirate hunters, their likely actions are noted here.

Any of these sections may be blank if there is nothing particularly unusual about the vessel. This does not mean it is completely vanilla-flavoured of course; nothing is ever completely bland. A blank section means, for example, that pirate hunters will not be any more concerned about this ship than any other – but they are still pirate hunters and may still take note of an attack. Likewise, a ship with no listed complications could still get the Travellers into all kinds of trouble if they are sighted attacking it. No listing means 'more or less as usual' rather than 'nothing happens at all'. If the Travellers make trouble for themselves, the referee should give them everything they deserve.

PIRATE HUNTER RESPONSES

Some of the actions that may be taken by pirate hunters are fairly standard, and explained here. More unusual responses are detailed in the encounter they relate to.

Information Bounty

The authorities or perhaps the attacked ship's owner puts out a bounty offering a reward for information about the incident. The sum offered is not large, but will induce a few in every port to start feeding information into the communications network, and eventually that information will be sifted and collated.

Much of it is nothing but rumour, and some is outright wrong, but over time the authorities will build a picture of what might have happened and who may be responsible. More importantly, they may be able to predict the pirate vessels' movements.

Each month after an information bounty is placed, the referee should roll 2D and consult the Information Bounties table. Once any result (Interception, Suspect List or Bounty Withdrawn) is rolled, the information bounty has no further effect.

Information Bounties

2D	Event
2-4	Bounty Withdrawn
9-11	Suspect List
12+	Interception

'Bounty Withdrawn' is self-explanatory.

A vessel placed on the Suspect List will be subject to more frequent searches by naval vessels, additional paperwork and hassles in better-quality ports (Class A-C ports that are not at least Tolerant towards pirates) and close questioning by officials. A vessel suspected of illegal activity tends to stay on the Suspect List forever, but in practice newer alerts tend to receive more attention. The period of enhanced scrutiny will therefore last 4D weeks after which the level of attention effectively reverts to normal. The fact that a vessel has been the subject of an alert will never go away, however, and occasionally the Travellers will have to deal with someone who is determined to prove they are felons.

Interception indicates the Travellers' movements are correctly predicted or that enough ships were sent looking for them that someone eventually gets lucky. The referee should roll 1D; on 1-4 the intercepting vessel is a mercenary or even another pirate crew after the bounty. Their vessel will be a well-armed civilian ship. On 5-6 the intercepting vessel is a small naval unit such as a Patrol Corvette. Either way, the intercepting vessel intends to kill or capture the Travellers and will attack at a suitable opportunity. If the

intercepting vessel is evaded, it will attempt pursuit for 2D weeks, jumping to nearby systems to try to regain contact, and then abandon the search.

Kill Bounty

A Kill Bounty is placed on individuals strongly suspected of being pirates, but who are not likely to be convicted or even caught. Bounty hunters can go places the Navy cannot, and can quietly take out those for whom there is not quite enough proof to formally execute. Once a Kill Bounty is placed on the Travellers, the referee should roll 2D each time they arrive at a starport or similar installation. On a 2D roll of 10+ there will be an attempt to kill one or more of them.

The means used to collect the Kill Bounty can vary considerably. An impromptu 'hey, it's them!' followed by a mobbing by a band of port workers is as likely as a carefully planned hit by a sniper or gunman. Drive-by shootings, bombs or even poison are all options. The bounty remains in force for 4D weeks, after which further attempts are unlikely. However, even years later there may be someone out there with out of date information; the Travellers' past could come back to haunt them long after they have become respectable.

Guardship

Piracy makes people nervous, and that is bad for trade. To reassure spacefarers and port operators – and maybe blast a pirate or two – the authorities deploy a guardship

at a nearby world picked by the referee. This is as likely to be a backwater as a major port – the latter typically has its own defences but a guardship would be a visible sign the authorities are doing something, whilst deploying a vessel to a backwater might actually be more effective but less visible.

The guardship might be a naval vessel detached from a squadron in the region or redeployed from its intended patrol, or it could be a mercenary vessel hired for the purpose. Deployment will last 6D weeks. The Travellers may hear about the new guardship whilst they are in another system, making it easy to avoid.

Personal Mission

A young naval officer makes it a personal mission to find and capture (or vaporise) the Travellers. If this officer is the captain of a small warship such as a *Gazelle*-class Close Escort or Patrol Corvette, then he will take his ship out looking for the Travellers. This typically means hanging around in backwater systems looking for trouble. If the officer is based at a port or with a task force, his options are more limited but he will use his influence to send others against the Travellers. This can be bad for the piracy business if the officer has a lot of influence or is of high rank – he may be able to convince his superiors or call in favours (or just issue orders) to flood the local systems with warships, at least for a short time. The referee should decide who this new zealot is and what he will do, ideally introducing him as an ongoing foe for the Travellers.



BLANK SLATE

TYPE-S SCOUT COURIER

Blank Slate (Traveller)

Captain: Ghathtagu 'Scout Josh' Azse

Hull: 40

MOR: 7

Encounter Distance:
45,000 km (Very Long)

Heading: Inbound

Time to Destination:
3 hours

Armament

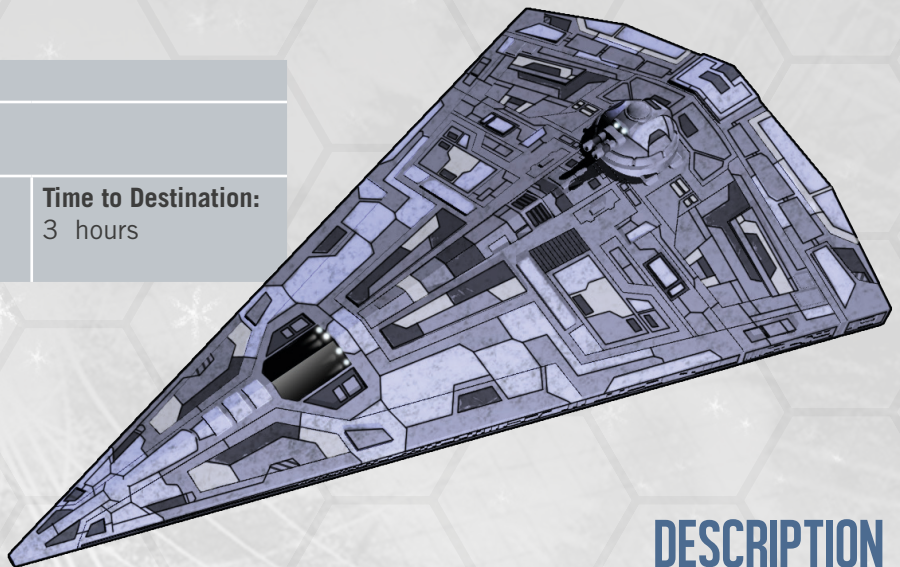
Single Turret: Sandcaster

Cargo

1 ton Freight

Passengers

None



DESCRIPTION

Blank Slate is a Type-S Scout/Courier owned by the Scout Service but currently assigned to a retired scout named Ghathtagu Azse. Better known as 'Scout Josh', he served for many years and is something of a legend among his fellow Scouts. Finally taking his overdue retirement, Josh went on Detached Duty and does not really expect to be recalled. Hence the name of his ship – he is finally his own person, free to wander around the sector and explore just for the fun of it rather than going wherever the Service ordered him.

Blank Slate has a very low overhead since her costs are met by the Scout Service, and Scout Josh makes what little money he needs by carrying a few small sundry packages or the occasional freight container. He is not a smuggler; he only carries legitimate items. In addition to being a legendary Scout and law-abiding citizen, Josh is an all-round good guy.

CARGO: At present Josh is carrying a standard freight container with the usual assortment of minor cargo aboard. Much of this is highly mundane stuff such as a few kilos of tinned apples and a shipment of garish plastic flip-flops. In short, *Blank Slate's* cargo is virtually worthless to pirates.

QUIRKS: Scout Josh has no offensive weapons but fancies himself as a real hotshot pilot. He sincerely believes he can get away from a pirate vessel under cover of his sandcaster, and he might even be able to do it. He is also entirely willing to put his unarmed ship between a pirate and its intended victim, and use his sandcaster to protect the target. Scout Josh is an arrogant, unarmed hero who will likely get himself killed trying to do the right thing.

COMPLICATIONS: Scout Josh *is* the complication. He will interfere in any attack he sees taking place. If he is robbed or harmed, even if he was doing something ill-advised like buzzing a pirate ship to spoil a gunners' aim, the starfaring community will be gravely offended. An Information Bounty will be posted for the crew

responsible, and even after it expires the pirates will occasionally be harassed or refused assistance even by quite shady characters – Josh is that well liked! If he is murdered for a shipment of tinned apples, the starfaring community will be incensed and a Kill Bounty will be placed on the pirates. In addition, at least one Detached Duty Scout in the area will make it a personal mission to collect information on the incident, identify those responsible and organise an attempt to take them out.

PIRATE HUNTERS' RESPONSE: There will be no formal response to an attack on Josh from pirate hunters, other than a statement of condemnation and sadness. However, other Detached Scouts will begin actively seeking information as noted above. If they are successful they will use all the influence the Scout Service can bring to bear to persuade the hunters to go after the target they have identified. An interception by 1-3 small warships (Patrol Corvettes or *Gazelle*-class Close Escorts more than likely) is virtually certain sooner or later.

RED ADDER

SERPENT CLASS SCOUT COURIER

Red Adder / Pij Bleshi' (Traveller)

Captain: Ansiesta labl

Hull: 40

MOR: 12

Encounter Distance:
55,000 km (Very Long)

Heading: Inbound

Time to Destination:
4.5 hours

Armament:

Dual Turret: Pulse Lasers

Cargo:

4 tons Common Consumables
2 tons Precious Metals

Passengers:

None



DESCRIPTION

Red Adder appears to be a standard *Serpent*-class Scout/Courier. However, it is in fact a Zhodani reconnaissance ship designated *Pij Bleshi'*.

Red Adder's mission is to gather information about the region and report back at intervals via a chain of fast courier ships eventually leading all the way back to the Zhodani Consulate. There is no particularly sinister intent here, in the sense that the crew are agents provocateur or saboteurs; they are simply naval intelligence personnel assigned to observe and report.

The vessel was obtained by roundabout means, and the intent is that at the end of its mission it will be sold on after being sanitised of all sensitive data. Hopefully the vessel will then go on to an innocent career in the region and nobody will ever suspect the data-gathering exercise that took place. Destruction of the *Red Adder* by pirates would also provide a suitable cover for the mission end, but there are no plans to curtail operations any time soon.

CARGO: *Red Adder* carries sufficient stores and spares for a long duration cruise, enabling her to observe a system without landing at its port. In addition, there are two cargo containers originally filled with bullion, jewellery and hard currency. Although now slightly depleted, this stash is still worth a great deal. It was intended to be used to buy friends, influence and information among the people of the region.

QUIRKS: *Red Adder* is a Zhodani naval intelligence ship crewed by skilled and determined personnel. They will fight hard to repel pirates, but might instead request a ceasefire and offer the attackers a container full of cash and gold in order to become informants – or rather ‘to share information on local shipping to mutual benefit’ as the offer is likely to be phrased. Additional payments will be made if the pirates produce good information.

COMPLICATIONS: Working with the intelligence personnel of a foreign power can be risky and might draw the attention of the authorities... though that might not really matter to pirates who are already on the most-wanted list. Shooting up a foreign naval intelligence ship might have all manner of repercussions. The incident could be misinterpreted back home, leading to escalated tensions with the Zhodani, or they might send more ships to hunt down what they incorrectly assume is a counter-intelligence vessel.

PIRATE HUNTERS' RESPONSE: No unusual response from pirate hunters.

NOSEFORGOLD

TYPE-J
SEEKER

Noseforgold (Traveller)

Captain: Just Sam

Hull: 40

MOR: 8

Encounter Distance:
35,000 km (Very Long)

Heading: Outbound
In-System

Time to Destination:
Unknown

Armament:

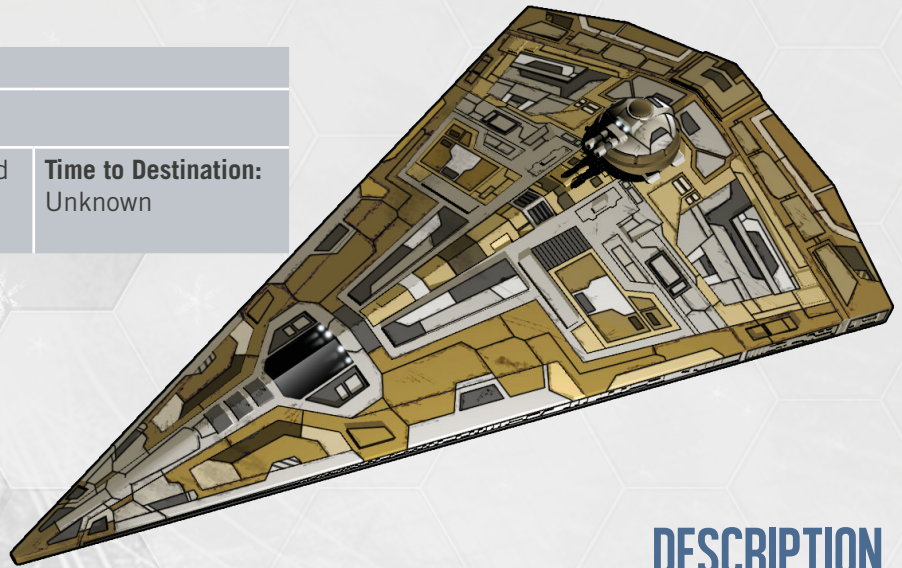
Single Turret: Mining Laser

Cargo:

3 tons Mining Equipment

Passengers:

None



DESCRIPTION

Noseforgold is a belter ship, owned and operated by an elderly prospector named Sam. Nobody knows if this is her first or last name, she is 'Just Sam' even on the ship's distinctly dubious papers and registry documents. Sam has been prospecting in the region for years, sometimes alone and sometimes with a small crew. She has made enough to keep her ship in good order and could retire if she wanted to, but she really wants no other life than that of the wandering prospector.

Sam has a clinical and impersonal hatred of pirates and raiders, all of whom she insists on referring to as 'claim-jumpers'. She will flee if attacked, attempting to use her mining laser to inflict damage, and if forced to surrender will receive the pirates aboard with disdain and contempt even if it gets her killed. Just Sam can be robbed, but she cannot be cowed.

CARGO: *Noseforgold* has just sold the rights to a claim and is headed back out to take a look at some other promising sites. She is carrying equipment for her own operations and also stores to be sold or passed on to other belter ships operating in the same area.

QUIRKS: *Noseforgold* has an in-system destination but has full fuel tanks and could jump if Just Sam wanted to. If necessary she will make a 'null jump', essentially entering jumpspace with her present location set as destination. After that, all she can do is hope the pirate ship believes she has jumped elsewhere and moves off, and does not happen to be in the area in a week's time.

COMPLICATIONS: *Noseforgold* is a belter ship, and beltlers look out for one another. They also tend to

operate in the less well trafficked areas of a system – the sort of places pirates go to hide. If pirates merely rob *Noseforgold*, the belter community will accept this as something bad that happened and get on with their lives, but if Just Sam is harmed they will begin watching for the perpetrator and feeding information to the authorities – who they normally have little to do with. The result will be a steady trickle of information equivalent to an Information Bounty.

PIRATE HUNTERS' RESPONSE: No unusual response from the pirate hunters.

MELDAS BAMA TETA KEHN

TYPE-S
SCOUT COURRIER

Meldas Bama Teta Kehn (Traveller)

Captain: Thanihryhmbakepe Dedherileh

Hull: 40

MOR: 4

Encounter Distance:
30,000 km (Very Long)

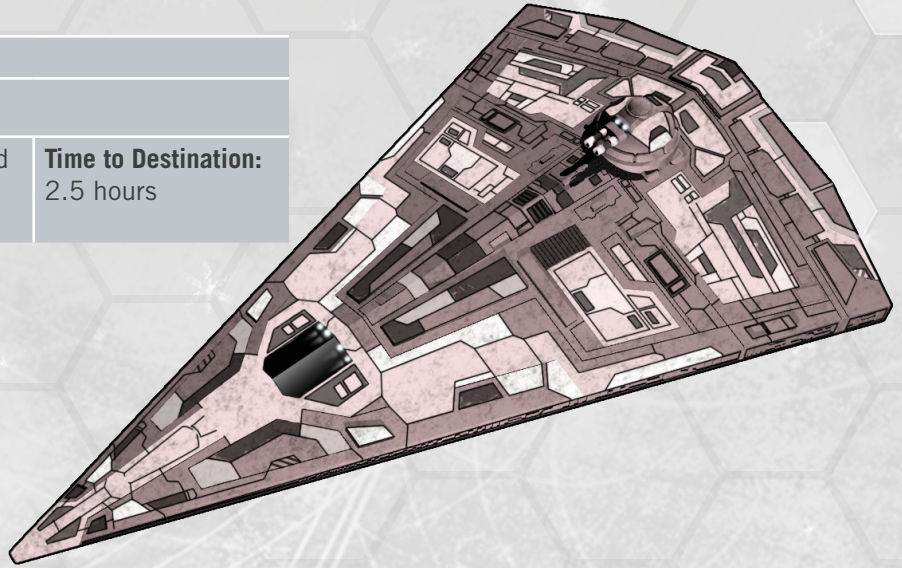
Heading: Outbound to Jump

Time to Destination:
2.5 hours

Armament:
None

Cargo:
3 tons Common Consumables
1 ton Advanced Electronics
1 ton Artefacts

Passengers:
None



DESCRIPTION

Meldas Bama Teta Kehn is a Darrian ship whose name is a quote from an obscure proverb. It translates roughly as ‘the universe awaits for those who go seeking’, and fits well enough with the ship’s activities. *Meldas Bama Teta Kehn* is operated by a Darrian scientist with an interest in vanished cultures. His small vessel has taken him all over the sector collecting a wide range of artefacts, many of which are from civilisations considered unimportant or uninteresting by most scientists.

Captain Dedherileh is no fighter, and will flee as soon as an attack begins. He will nervously surrender if given a reason to, but will try to convince pirates that his work is far too important to be disrupted by uneducated thugs going off with his priceless (but also kind of worthless) artefacts. Nor can he countenance letting his precious archaeological equipment be taken away. He may even physically resist, though this takes the form of ineffectual flapping of hands and maybe a feeble slap. It may be enough to get him shot however.

CARGO: *Meldas Bama Teta Kehn* is carrying cultural artefacts from a low-tech minor non-human species. They might be interesting to scientists but have little or no value on the open market as they consist mainly of broken pottery and crude metal tools. The equipment used to analyse these items is worth more, but only to a specialist buyer. Anyone else will offer only a token price as they will have to scrap the equipment for its components.

QUIRKS: *Meldas Bama Teta Kehn* surrenders readily enough but after this the pirates will have to deal with a haughty scientist who is so disconnected from the real

world that he forgets how much danger he is in, and who is sufficiently outraged at their actions to (at least) give them a good telling off even whilst he is being held at gunpoint.

COMPLICATIONS: There are no undue complications here, but potentially some embarrassment.

PIRATE HUNTERS’ RESPONSE: No unusual response from the pirate hunters.

TROJAN RANGER

TYPE-K SAFARI SHIP

Trojan Ranger (Traveller)

Captain: Lady Carneliana Hilfssen

Hull: 80

MOR: 10

Encounter Distance:
95,000 km
(Distant)

Heading: Outbound
In-System

Time to Destination:
Unknown

Armament:

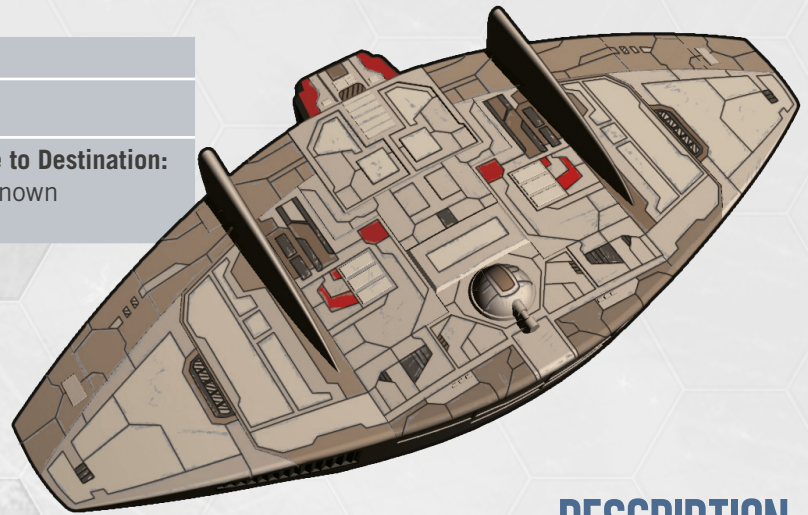
Dual Turret: Pulse Laser and Missile Rack

Cargo:

4 tons Stores and Supplies
12 tons Trophy Animals

Passengers:

4 High Passage



DESCRIPTION

Trojan Ranger is the private property of Lady Carneliana Hilfssen, a minor but well-connected noblewoman. Carneliana has no real responsibilities and likes to spend her time wandering around the sector shooting at or capturing dangerous wildlife. She often takes other nobles on these hunting trips, creating a network of powerful or at least rich friends. In addition to several dangerous animals, *Trojan Ranger* also has a hunting party of VIPs aboard, some of whom might be embarrassed or suffer harm to their political careers if they were caught aboard a hunting ship.

Trojan Ranger is detected at quite a long range, headed towards an outpost in a distant part of the system. She is supposed to meet another vessel there and transfer her cargo of captured animals – there is a market for exotic pets and what amounts to ‘living trophies’ among the rich and infamous in the sector. The crew will fight rather than surrender providing it looks like they have a chance, and there are some very powerful weapons aboard. Nothing of a military nature, but a double-barrelled rifle capable of knocking down a mammoth-sized creature can do an enormous amount of damage to an unwary pirate.

CARGO: *Trojan Ranger* is carrying no cargo as such, just supplies for her cruise. These do include luxury items like fine wine and expensive food, but not in the sort of bulk that can be sold on the open market. In the ship’s multi-environment tanks there are several dangerous predators of a species known formally as Dawson’s Burrower, but better known as Bushwhackers.

Bushwhackers are about the size of a lion and normally hunt in forests or overgrown terrain. They are ambush predators, preferring to scrape a hide in the loose soil and fallen leaves of the forest floor, and then pounce upon a victim by surprise. Aboard a ship or loose on an installation they are less dangerous since they are easy to spot, but Bushwhackers can still move fast and are both territorial and aggressive.

QUIRKS: Lady Carneliana is obsessed with hunters and hunting, and if forced to surrender by pirates

will actually be quite impressed with them... though that does not preclude the possibility of hunting the hunters. If she gets the chance, she will try to release the Bushwhackers or better, get the pirates to do it unknowingly. After that, it is all about the law of the jungle. She will be greatly amused to see predators running wild in the pirates’ ship, or even her own, and is willing to bear the risks such a gambit entails. Her crew and passengers will be less impressed by the situation.

COMPLICATIONS: Apart from possible resistance and predators running wild in both ships, there are no undue complications here. Selling the predators requires a specialist buyer.

PIRATE HUNTERS’ RESPONSE: No unusual response from the pirate hunters.

STARLIGHT VOYAGER

TYPE-Y
YACHT

Starlight Voyager (Traveller)

Captain: Carse Vaasirn		
Hull: 80	MOR: 4	
Encounter Distance: 5,000 km (Medium)	Heading: Inbound	Time to Destination: 3.5 hours

Armament:

None

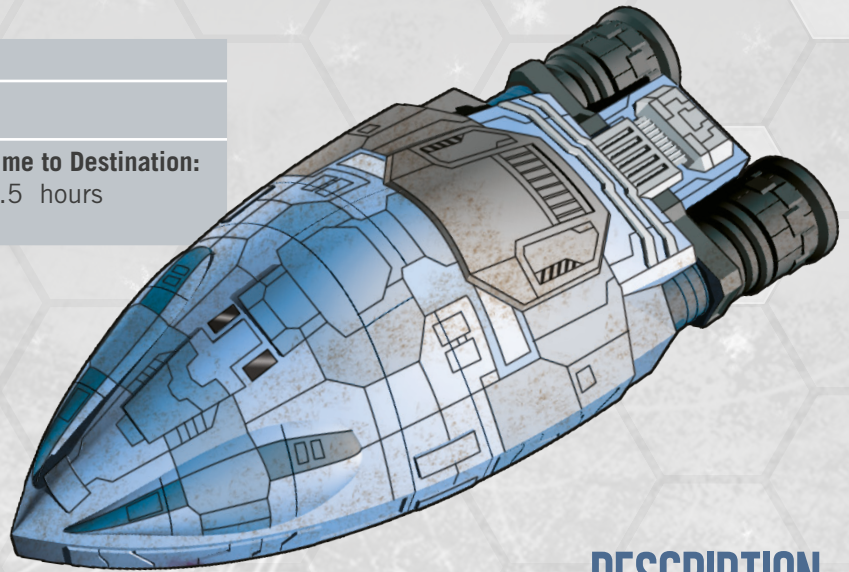
Cargo:

4 tons Luxury Goods

4 tons Freight

Passengers:

2 High Passage



DESCRIPTION

Starlight Voyager is encountered at extremely short range (as these things go) when she emerges from jump almost on top of the Travellers. She is headed for the mainworld on a less than optimal vector and immediately begins to manoeuvre onto a better approach with no regard to shipping in the area. This might be an indication that all is not well aboard.

Starlight Voyager is a privately owned yacht-for-hire, typically acting as a VIP transport for vacationers or those wishing to conduct business in style. However, she is old and decrepit. Her critical systems are badly in need of overhaul and whilst she maintains the veneer of luxury for her passengers, the illusion is wearing thin.

Carse Vaasirn, owner and operator of *Starlight Voyager*, simply cannot afford to keep her flying much longer, and is looking for a way out. This latest jump constitutes a not-quite-misjump and suggests time is running low. If challenged by pirates, Carse comes up with a half-baked idea – if he can get his ship blasted to the point where it needs extensive repairs, his insurers will pay for the work. And if his ship is written off, well, that is still a better outcome than being condemned at a spaceworthiness inspection and scrapped for lack of funds to make repairs. He has not thought this plan through, of course; it is simply a piece of opportunism.

CARGO: *Starlight Voyager* is carrying some freight and supplies to keep the VIP passengers happy.

QUIRKS: As noted above, *Starlight Voyager's* operator actually wants his ship fired upon, and will not surrender until he has taken enough damage to get an insurance payout. This requires putting up a fair amount of resistance in terms of evading and calling for help, but Carse will surrender readily once his ship has been hit a couple of times.

COMPLICATIONS: Unfortunately, one of the VIP passengers is killed (perhaps by secondary causes like a fire) by the pirate attack. This does not initially seem to have much in

the way of consequences as the death was caused by ship-to-ship combat rather than a deliberate murder. However, the deceased was a close friend of a pirate hunter.

PIRATE HUNTERS' RESPONSE: The pirate hunter is incensed, hurriedly gathering intelligence on the incident and then going after the suspected perpetrator. By shooting first and not bothering with questions at all, the pirate hunter ends up blasting a completely innocent merchant vessel. The pirate hunter is cashiered and disgraced, and eventually comes looking for vengeance. Meanwhile the pirates will eventually hear of what happened and may figure out their part in it.

Emma (Small Freighter)**Captain:** Nils Alfney**Hull:** 38**MOR:** 6**Encounter Distance:**
45,000 km (Very Long)**Heading:** Inbound from In-System**Time to Destination:**
2.5 hours**Armament:**

None

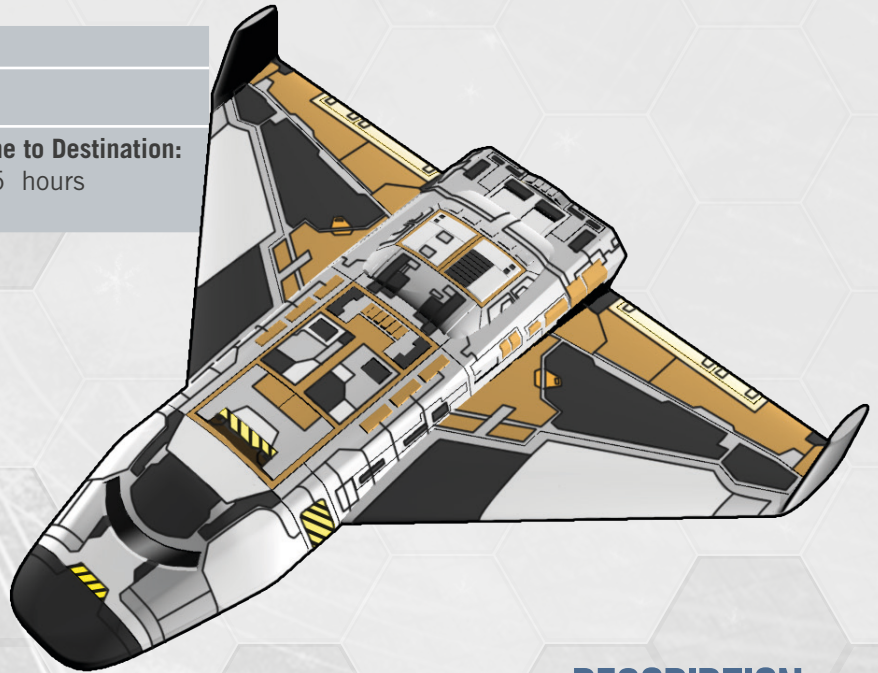
Cargo:

30 tons Uncommon Ore

5 tons Radioactives

Passengers:

None

**DESCRIPTION**

Emma is a typical 95-ton shuttle assigned to in-system transport runs. These involve lengthy transits through normal space which are both boring and tiring for the crew. *Emma* routinely makes a 4-day transit out to a mining station, stops over for a day or so, then returns. After this, her two-person crew tend to hit the bars and nightclubs pretty hard; being cooped up in a little shuttle for days on end is mentally exhausting.

As a result, *Emma's* crew are cranky and bad-tempered, and may make poor decisions. Among these will be the choice to evade the pirate ship and make for the safety of port. A shuttle is a small target and they have a fair amount of thrust available, so their chances look pretty good... or so they think.

CARGO: *Emma* is carrying standard-sized shipping containers filled with high-value metal and radioactive ore. Unfortunately, whilst the contents are more valuable than common rocks, the containers themselves are of shoddy construction and may come loose or even rupture during violent manoeuvres.

QUIRKS: As noted, the crew are tired and bad-tempered, and will probably try to evade rather than surrendering. This will escalate, with the shuttle performing ever more violent manoeuvres in an effort to validate the original decision to run by succeeding in making an escape. The end result of this may be

extremely hazardous turns or a high-speed dive into atmosphere which could damage the shuttle.

COMPLICATIONS: If an ore container ruptures, chunks of metal-rich and possibly radioactive rock will be flung around the shuttle's cargo area, causing additional damage to other containers and possibly the hull. Continued evasion could reduce the cargo to radioactive gravel or do crippling damage to the shuttle.

PIRATE HUNTERS' RESPONSE: No unusual response from the pirate hunters.

SAWNEENSON'S PRIDE

TYPE-A
FREE TRADER

Sawneenson's Pride (Small Merchant)

Captain: Bryn Sawneenson

Hull: 80

MOR: 10

Encounter Distance:
50,000 km
(Distant)

Heading: Inbound

Time to Destination:
3.5 hours

Armament:

2 Single Turrets: Beam Lasers

Cargo:

32 tons Polymers

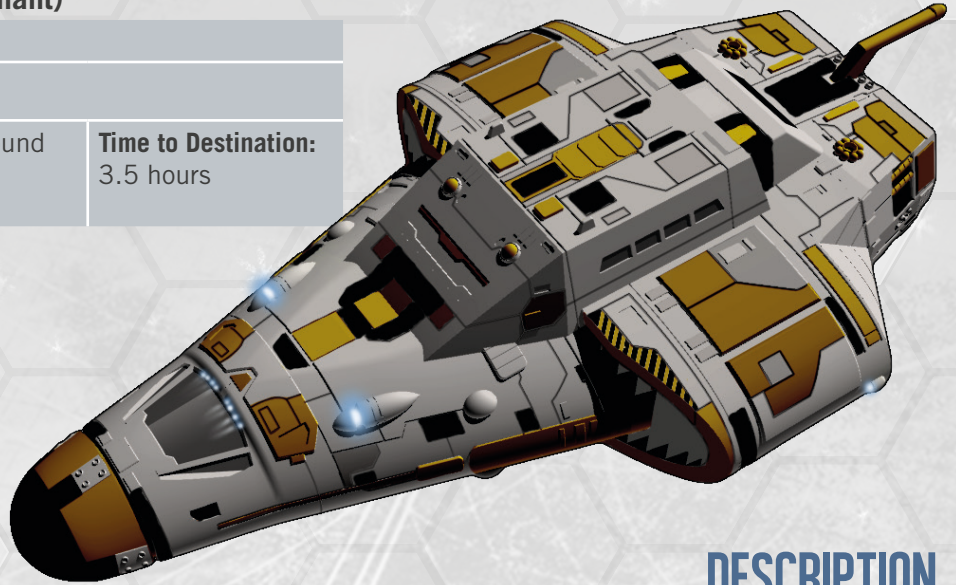
20 tons Common Consumables

16 tons Advanced Machine Parts

Passengers:

3 Mid Passage

2 Low Passage



DESCRIPTION

When *Sawneenson's Pride* is detected, she is coasting quietly rather than using her drives to accelerate and then decelerate, making her harder to detect but increasing the time to planetfall considerably. Most merchants run their drives all the way in since time is money; coasting is generally considered suspicious behaviour.

CARGO: In addition to the listed cargo there is also a small amount of contraband stashed in concealed smuggling compartments. This is mostly Crazywine, a mildly narcotic and highly addictive beverage banned on several worlds. Crazywine is undergoing something of an explosion in popularity among the rich and bored, and sells for upwards of Cr500 per bottle. There are about a hundred bottles stashed throughout the ship.

QUIRKS: At the point where *Sawneenson's Pride* is detected, her captain is involved in a blazing row with the engineer, and the whole crew is distracted by it. It is possible that another ship could intercept *Sawneenson's Pride* or attempt to contact her without getting a response. Even a warning shot might go unnoticed for a while. Once captain and crew do realise they have company, they seem annoyed by the intrusion more than anything else.

Demands for surrender will be met with indignation and then, oddly enough, a request for assistance. Captain Sawneenson does not act like a merchant skipper under threat; it is as if he has not noticed the 'pirates' part of the encounter. Or maybe he knows something the Travellers do not...?

Captain Sawneenson asks for assistance in making a repair to his manoeuvre drive, and airily dismisses continued attempts at piracy. He has a serious intermittent thrust variance, he says, and is on the verge of chucking his engineer out of an airlock. It will be quite difficult to get him to shut up long enough to hear threats, though if fired upon *Sawneenson's Pride* will resist as best she can. Her drives are actually in reasonable condition but are badly miscalibrated due to the chief engineer's new-found fondness for Crazywine.

COMPLICATIONS: Captain Sawneenson has a few friends who are outright pirates, and believes he is immune to attack by virtue of this association. If the ship is successfully pirated, the Travellers may later encounter irate friends of the captain, whilst an attempt to help him out might win them friends. On top of all that, pirating this vessel will net the Travellers a considerable amount of illegal narcotic wine – which has already caused problems aboard one ship!

PIRATE HUNTERS' RESPONSE: No unusual response from pirate hunters, but Sawneenson's pirate friends might seek revenge for an attack on his ship.

PUTTINALONG

TYPE-A
FREE TRADER

Puttinalong (Small Merchant)

Captain: Frei Hadsen		
Hull: 80	MOR: 8	
Encounter Distance: 35,000 km (Very Long)	Heading: Outbound to jump	Time to Destination: 1.5 hours

Armament:

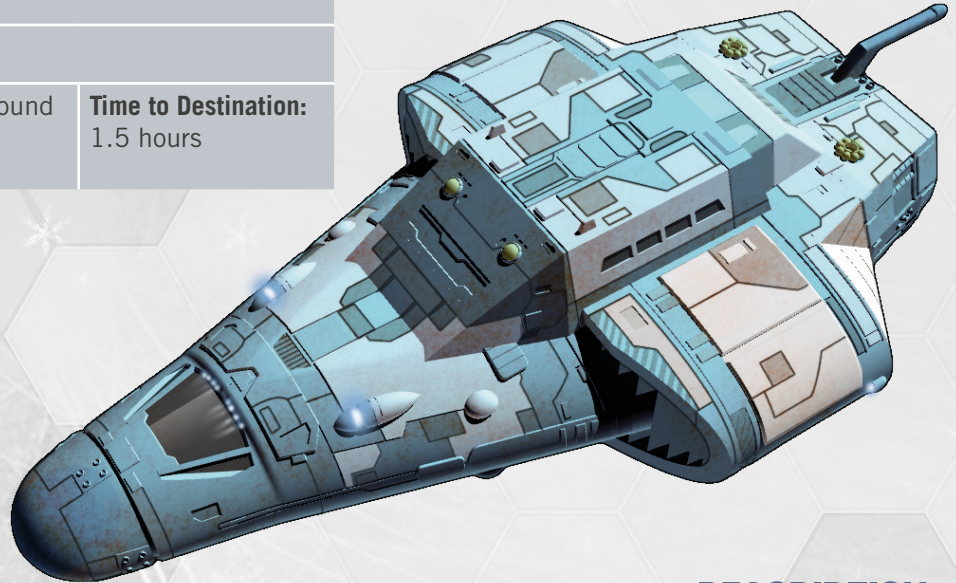
Single Turret: Beam Laser
Single Turret: Missile Rack

Cargo:

82 tons Freight
4 tons Luxury Goods

Passengers:

5 Mid Passage
11 Low Passage



DESCRIPTION

Puttinalong is a fairly ancient Free Trader whose skipper renamed her in reference both to her feeble drives and typically low earning capability. Captain Hadsen is enjoying a brief period of improved prosperity but does not expect her good fortune to last.

CARGO: *Puttinalong* is hauling a hold full of typical mixed freight containers. Her crew do not know what is in them and do not need to care much. She is also hauling a small speculative cargo her skipper picked up; four tons of what appears to be expensive designer apparel.

QUIRKS: Captain Hadsen will view a pirate attack fatalistically – things were going quite well, so the universe naturally sends pirates to bash her back down into poverty. She will resist of course, but *Puttinalong's* decrepit drive cannot manage more than about 0.8G for any length of time so escape is unlikely. After taking a few hits, Hadsen will offer to dump the cargo of clothing in return for being allowed to flee. The hangdog expressions of captain and crew might

make even career pirates feel bad about robbing such downtrodden people...

COMPLICATIONS: In fact, the expensive designer clothing is fake, produced by a large-scale operation on a nearby world at a fraction of the normal cost. The fakes look quite good but are shoddy and will quickly start to appear worn or even fall apart. This might upset the buyer, and in turn the pirates might feel that *Puttinalong* robbed them by passing off shoddy goods.

PIRATE HUNTERS' RESPONSE: No unusual response from pirate hunters.

PELZENTIN DELLA

TYPE-A
FREE TRADER

Pelzentin Della (Small Merchant)

Captain: Mannie Tsaiboud

Hull: 80

MOR: 5

Encounter Distance:
30,000 km (Very Long)

Heading: Outbound
In-System

Time to Destination:
4 hours

Armament:

Single Turret: Beam Laser

Cargo:

20 tons Advanced Manufactured Goods

25 tons Robots

29 tons Freight

1 ton Pirate Bait

Passengers:

2 Mid Passage



DESCRIPTION

Pelzentin Della is a fairly typical Free Trader to all outward appearances, and in this case appearances are not deceiving. She is more or less the ideal target for pirates; lightly armed and not too big, but able to carry a valuable cargo.

Although his ship carries a token armament, Captain Tsaiboud is unlikely to put up much resistance if attacked. He might prolong his fight if he thinks help is on the way, but so long as he thinks he can get away with just surrendering part of his cargo, he prefers to negotiate a surrender and thus avoid damage to his ship or casualties among her crew.

To this end, *Pelzentin Della* routinely carries a shipping container loaded with 'pirate bait', low-bulk, high-value items such as electronic components, ingots of useful alloys and the like. Captain Tsaiboud is of the opinion that pirates may be willing to take this bribe and leave him alone. He reasons that they will be satisfied with just one container since they can continue their piratical activities unimpeded. Sorting through several containers of assorted freight is a chore, he believes, and since all pirates are lazy good-for-nothings they will take the easy loot and leave him alone. His theory has never been tested.

CARGO: *Pelzentin Della* is carrying manufactured goods and industrial robots to a small outpost in the outsystem. From there, she will jump on to her next destination. The primary cargo is not owned by Captain Tsaiboud; he is freighting it for a flat fee and therefore really has little invested in it – in any sense of the word. He will not be too unhappy to part with some or all of it if he must.

QUIRKS: *Pelzentin Della* surrenders surprisingly quickly if pirates are willing to talk terms.

COMPLICATIONS: The robots and manufactured goods are the property of a corporation which expects its cargoes

to be delivered. Captain Tsaiboud will be blamed if any of it is taken (the corporation does not care about general freight or the pirate bait container) and find many clients unwilling to do business with him. A few months of poverty later, *Pelzentin Della* makes her first, inept, pirate attack.

PIRATE HUNTERS' RESPONSE: No unusual response from the pirate hunters themselves, but an Information Bounty is posted by the corporation if any of its equipment is stolen.

HANDOW'S SHIP

TYPE-A2
FAR TRADER

Handow's Ship (Small Merchant)

Captain: Handow 'The Dealer' Venquist

Hull: 80

MOR: 8

Encounter Distance:
30,000 km (Very Long)

Heading: Outbound
In-System

Time to Destination:
1.5 hours

Armament:

Dual Turret: Pulse Lasers

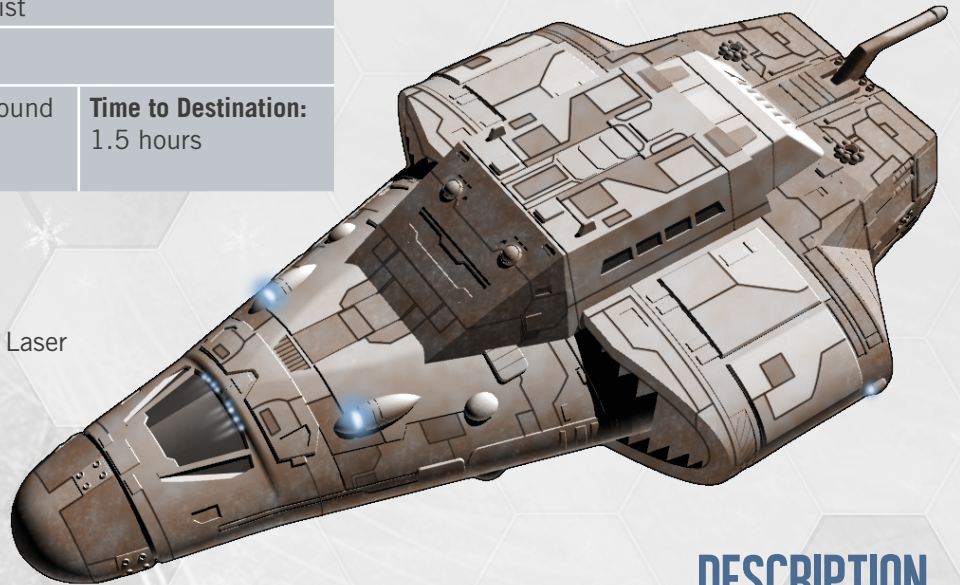
Dual Turret: Missile Rack and Beam Laser

Cargo:

None

Passengers:

None



DESCRIPTION

Handow's Ship is the property of Handow 'The Dealer' Venquist, whose name implies that he fancies himself as a freewheeling merchant. In fact, it refers to the fact that he deals in cargo and violence, for Handow Venquist is a career pirate. This is not his first ship, and its registry documents give an entirely different name, but it is one of the more successful pirate vessels in the region.

Handow's usual mode of operation is to open conversation with another ship in a friendly manner and then sort of let slip that his vessel is having difficulties. He usually claims to be in urgent need of some inexpensive and minor but necessary part, and tells a long-winded tale about how he has no spare component due to a set of amusing and unfortunate circumstances. Handow likes to amuse himself by seeing how outrageous he can make his tale.

If the other vessel falls for it, he invites them to dock so he can buy the 'necessary' spare part from them, and launches an assault from there. If that fails, then his tale at least buys time to manoeuvre closer and lock weapons on to the target. Handow has a policy that if he fires at all, he gives the target at least one salvo before demanding surrender. He does not care about casualties among his own crew or that of the target, and as a result has a quite high turnover in personnel. However, he has made a lot of money and those that survive a stint aboard his ship usually walk away with full pockets.

CARGO: None. Handow is in the market for someone else's cargo though...

QUIRKS: *Handow's Ship* is essentially a Q-ship like those used by some pirate hunters, only his prey is innocent merchant vessels.

COMPLICATIONS: If Handow is bested, he will become an enemy of the pirates and seek to destroy them. His pride will not permit a second-hand method like informing the authorities of their whereabouts; he will

seek them out and do the deed himself – though he is quite happy to team up with others to stack the odds. If encountered in a friendlier environment, Handow might even ask the pirates to help him bushwhack someone else who has wronged him.

PIRATE HUNTERS' RESPONSE: No unusual response from the pirate hunters.

SHEBIIGIBUKA DUAM

TYPE-A2
FAR TRADER

Shebiigibuka Duam (Small Merchant)

Captain: Lars Idais

Hull: 80

MOR: 8

Encounter Distance:
25,000 km (Very Long)

Heading: Inbound

Time to Destination:
1 hour

Armament:

2 Triple Turrets: Beam Lasers

Cargo:

8 tons Illegal Weapons

23 tons Advanced Weapons

34 tons Freight

Passengers:

None



DESCRIPTION

Shebiigibuka Duam appears to be a normal Type-A2 Far Trader, and to some extent this is true. However, she is under contract to the Imperial Navy to undertake a resupply run to forward-positioned warships. This is not uncommon; the navy supplements its own fleet of auxiliaries with trusted and well-armed independent vessels whenever the need arises.

Whilst a contracted auxiliary is not a navy ship as such, there is an understanding that the navy looks out for those entrusted with its supplies. This is partially self-interest of course but also a point of honour – being involved with the navy's supply chain means taking on an additional risk and becoming a sort of almost-comrades-in-arms.

CARGO: *Shebiigibuka Duam* is carrying an assortment of naval supplies ranging from food, spare uniforms and lubricants to care packages from home and a large crate entirely full of spanners. She is also carrying enough small arms and light support weapons to start a small war and, more importantly, enough missiles to quickly end it. Most of these have conventional warheads but there are two nuclear ship-to-ship missiles in the consignment. Captain Idais knows about them of course, and is very aware that they must not fall into the wrong hands.

QUIRKS: *Shebiigibuka Duam* is on the alert and her crew are well trained. They have no reason to believe anyone knows they are carrying military stores, but ships do get attacked at random and they are not in a position to simply hand over nuclear warheads the first time someone points a gun at them. They will fight hard to defend their cargo, and might even resort to telling an attacker they are on contract to the navy – attacking a naval supply ship will definitely get the attention of pirate hunters and may bring down more heat than the pirates can handle.

COMPLICATIONS: As noted, the vessel is on contract to the navy. Firing on it is not any worse offence than shooting at any other merchant ship, but if the pirates continue their attack after being told they are engaging a naval auxiliary they will be deemed to have attacked a naval vessel. This has no formal repercussions – pirates are already scum to be hunted down and spaced – but it will hurt the pride of the navy. Wanting to be seen to take care of their own or at least avenge attacks on them, the navy will increase its efforts to find the pirates, and some officers may make it a personal mission to bring them to justice.

PIRATE HUNTERS' RESPONSE: This attack will get the attention of pirate hunters in the region, resulting in the deployment of a guardship, issue of an Information Bounty and the beginning of a Personal Mission for an officer affected or offended by the incident. See page 3 for details of these actions.

CARNISE

TYPE-A2 FAR TRADER

Carnise (Small Merchant)

Captain: 'Honest' Narmure Recheille		
Hull: 80	MOR: 3	
Encounter Distance: 125,000 km (Distant)	Heading: Outbound to Jump	Time to Destination: 2.5 hours

Armament:
None

Cargo:
42 tons Petrochemicals
29 tons Freight

Passengers:
2 Mid Passage
4 Low Passage



DESCRIPTION

Carnise is fairly typical of the Far Traders plying the local spacelanes. She has a reputation for straight dealing and timely deliveries, and her crew are well liked in the ports they frequent. *Carnise* is not an especially prosperous ship, but makes a steady (if small) profit shipping general freight or industrial materials for a flat fee.

Carnise is detected at quite a long range, on an otherwise unremarkable vector. She is headed out to jump and, being unarmed, can do nothing but call for help and run for a safe jump point.

CARGO: There is nothing very unusual about the cargo *Carnise* is hauling. Some of it is typical freight-for fee containers with an assortment of items within. The remainder uses the same containers but inside them are industrial chemical tanks which hold liquid polymers used in the manufacturing industry. These are robust but might be ruptured by weapons fire hitting the cargo area, which would cause toxic chemicals to spill out into the cargo area. An unwary pirate crew opening these containers, especially if they are damaged, might be exposed.

QUIRKS: *Carnise* is a typical small merchant ship with an ordinary crew. The only real quirk here is that the crew are popular and have many friends in the ports of the region. Pirates who cause deaths among them could make a lot of enemies if their actions are discovered.

If not, the pirates might later hear about the demise of a much-lamented friend at the hands of unknown but widely hated raiders.

COMPLICATIONS: The long detection distance when *Carnise* is first picked up means it will be necessary to chase after her in a fairly blatant manner if the pirates want to take the prize before she jumps out. This might give away their identity to other ships nearby or even provoke a response from other merchant traffic – some of which may have a missile to spare.

PIRATE HUNTERS' RESPONSE: There will be no unusual response from the pirate hunters; *Carnise* is just another merchant ship to them.

UEKH ETASIEAHEARI

EAKHAU CLASS TRADER

Uekh Etasiaeheari (Medium Merchant)

Captain: Ehrae Awolr

Hull: 160

MOR: 13

Encounter Distance:
50,000 km
(Distant)

Heading: Outbound
to jump

Time to Destination:
2 hours

Armament:

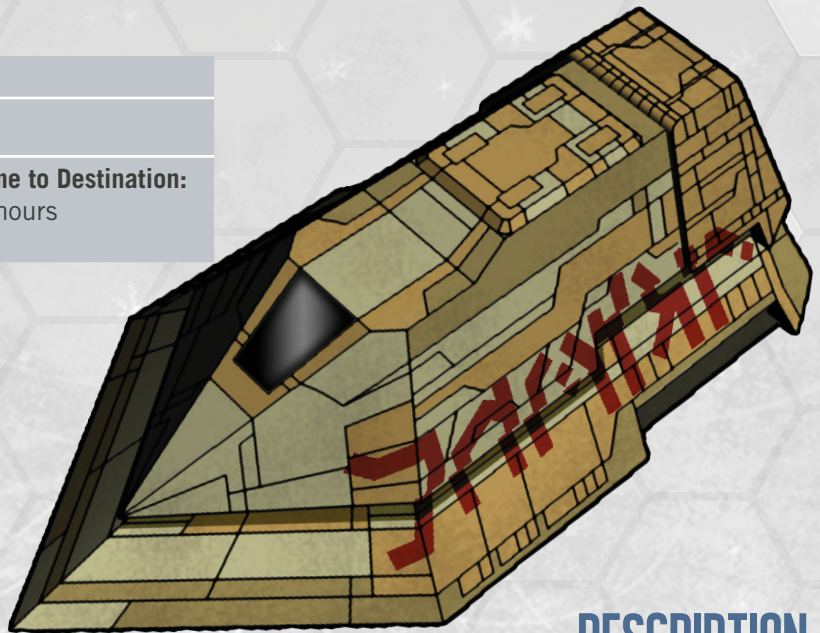
2 Dual Turrets: Beam Lasers
2 Dual Turrets: Sandcaster and Missile Rack

Cargo:

53 tons Luxury Consumables
44 tons Common Consumables
63 tons Advanced Manufactured Goods
9 tons Weapons

Passengers:

4 High Passage



DESCRIPTION

Uekh Etasiaeheari is an Aslan merchant ship, currently on her way to deliver a cargo of necessary items to various envoys and diplomats beyond the Hierate. Her crew are not naval personnel, but are competent and highly motivated. Not only would the failure of a prestigious mission like theirs be a personal disgrace and an embarrassment to their clan, but losing a fight where non-Aslan could witness it is all but unthinkable.

If attacked, *Uekh Etasiaeheari* will resist vigorously, but her crew have no interest in helping other vessels no matter what interstellar law might say. The strong prey on the weak, and there is nothing wrong with that. Indeed, *Uekh Etasiaeheari* might transmit a message of congratulation to pirates who make a well-executed attack in their vicinity, providing the victim fights back to at least some extent. Pirates may be puzzled to find their translation software thinks the 'angry challenge' coming in from the Aslan ship is in fact a warrior's salute... albeit a slightly condescending one that contains a lot of boasting about what would happen if the pirates attacked an Aslan ship.

CARGO: *Uekh Etasiaeheari* is carrying the sort of items an Aslan envoy needs to maintain his status – traditional clothing, weapons, luxury items and the very finest foods from back home – along with a few family members headed out to join their clan's envoy. Failure to deliver these necessary goods could result in the standing of the envoys – both compared to those of other clans and among the non-Aslan barbarians they are emissaries to – being reduced. Although the contents of the cargo might seem frivolous and certainly non-essential to non-Aslan thinking, the delivery is extremely important to the crew of *Uekh Etasiaeheari*.

QUIRKS: *Uekh Etasiaehear's* crew are arrogant and intolerant towards non-Aslan, and quite convinced they have the right to intrude on someone else's approach vector then fire warning shots to make them veer off. *Uekh Etasiaeheari* is also quite likely to fire without

warning on any ship that gets too close – no matter whose fault the incident is.

COMPLICATIONS: Firing on an Aslan ship would cause a diplomatic incident nobody wants. Smoothing over that incident would almost certainly require a strenuous effort to hunt down those involved. On the other hand, pirating an Aslan vessel sailing under a diplomatic flag would be a legend-making feat.

PIRATE HUNTERS' RESPONSE: If *Uekh Etasiaeheari* is fired on, pirate hunters will fall over themselves to be seen doing something about it. Ships will be sent to as many systems as possible, passing vessels will be stopped – and their crews questioned very closely – and portside inspections will be tightened. This will go on for several months.

ARDASIL CONVEYOR

TYPE-R
SUBSIDISED MERCHANT

Ardasil Conveyor (Medium Freighter)

Captain: Senior Shipboard Officer Kurgakikash Mila

Hull: 160

MOR: 9

Encounter Distance:
45,000 km (Very Long)

Heading: Inbound

Time to Destination:
4 hours

Armament:

Single Turret: Beam Laser

Cargo:

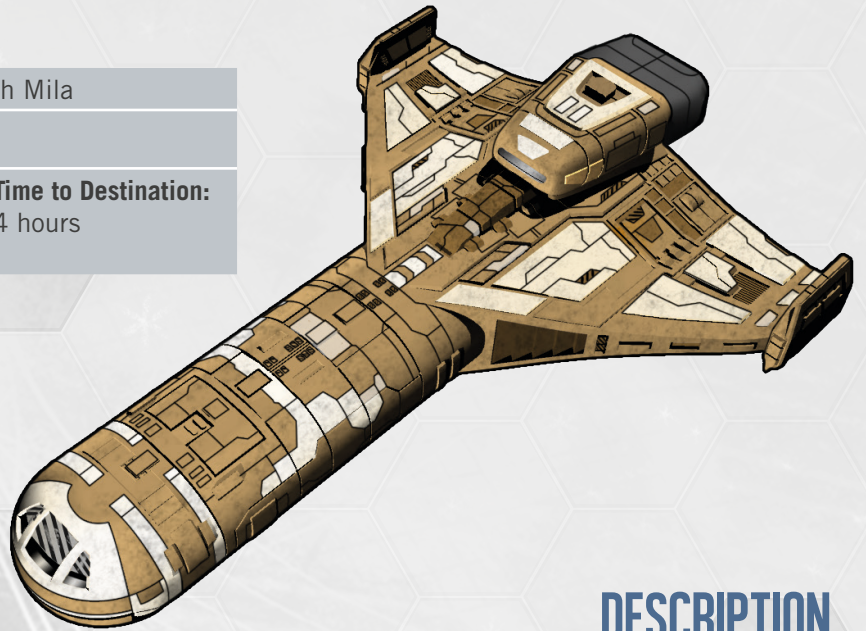
192 tons Live Animals

Passengers:

1 High Passage (Vet)

4 Mid Passage (Cattle Hands)

7 Low Passage



DESCRIPTION

Ardasil Conveyor is owned and operated by Yearle Spacelines Incorporated, a stuffy and bureaucracy-ridden company that does not even call its starship captains by a proper title. Instead they are referred to as Senior Shipboard Officers, just to make the point that they are nothing more than well-paid pawns in the corporate world.

Yearle Spacelines typically operates Subsidised Merchants and similar vessels on regular local routes or chartered freighting and passenger runs. It does not grant its officers the latitude to undertake speculative trade. This sometimes results in a vessel hauling cargo no captain who had a choice would take on.

CARGO: *Ardasil Conveyor* is carrying livestock; farm animals to be precise. The beasts are semi-sedated and docile but are still a little upset by a week in Jumpspace. This translates to even more mess than might be expected. The crew are, of course, thoroughly disgusted at having to haul such a labour-intensive cargo, but there is nothing they can do about it.

Ardasil Conveyor is carrying a vet and four cattle hands as well as an assortment of low-berth passengers. She is under charter to deliver viable breeding stock and personnel to look after them. This cargo is worth a great deal in terms of future income but not a tremendous amount right now.

QUIRKS: If *Ardasil Conveyor* comes under fire or manoeuvres violently, there might be a semi-stampede in the cargo bay which would result in injuries to the animals and perhaps crewmembers who were caught in the way. The cargo does contain several particularly high-value animals intended as breeding stock for the destination world; injuries to these would knock a significant percentage off the overall value of the cargo.

COMPLICATIONS: Yearle Spacelines has a less-than-robust policy towards pirates. Its ships all have at least token armament, but their crews are under orders to avoid damage to the vessel if possible. This translates to firing a couple of warning shots and then surrendering at the first opportunity. Yearle vessels are known to be easy pickings in terms of a one-off attack, but the company has another way of defending its vessels.

PIRATE HUNTERS' RESPONSE: Any attack on a Yearle vessel automatically results in an Information Bounty being posted, and the company has strong links with the Imperial Navy as well as law enforcement agencies. As soon as an attack occurs, Yearle officials will begin bending the ears of their local nobility, naval commanders and anyone else they can gain access to.

The result in this case is that within 2D weeks of this attack, a Patrol Corvette arrives in the system where it occurred and remains on guardship duty for a further 4D weeks.

IKURDAGUR

TYPE-R SUBSIDISED MERCHANT

Ikurdagur (Medium Freighter)

Captain: Lt-Commander Sir Wilhelm Amuiinzier

Hull: 160

MOR: 11

Encounter Distance:
65,000 km
(Distant)

Heading: Inbound

Time to Destination:
3.5 hours

Armament:

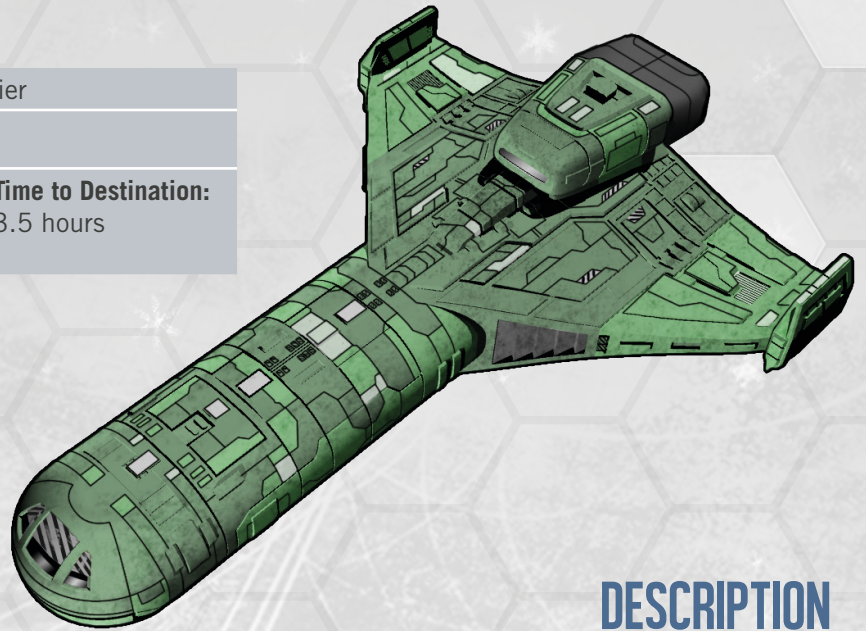
2 Triple Turrets: Beam Lasers (disguised as single turrets)
Armed Launch

Cargo:

Decoy Containers

Passengers:

None



DESCRIPTION

Ikurdagur is the present identity of a Q-ship operated by the Imperial Navy. Her mission is to be seen loading valuable cargoes and then heading for backwater systems where she can be readily bushwhacked. There, her heavy (for a merchant ship) armament and well-trained navy crew will force the surrender of any pirate vessel that attacks. Complete destruction of the attacker is considered to be almost as good.

Under the command of a well-connected young officer of noble family, *Ikurdagur* is adept at looking like a typical competent-but-nothing-special merchant ship. Her armament is disguised to look like single turrets, and she has additional capabilities. Among these is a boarding party which normally uses the ship's launch but can assault directly into a pirate ship that has been suckered into docking with a 'surrendered' merchant.

Ikurdagur also carries dummy cargo containers which are mostly empty. Some, however, are rigged with explosive charges surrounded by pre-fragmented projectiles. These can be triggered in an enemy cargo bay and will comprehensively wreck it along with other parts of the vessel, or can be detonated in space to attack a pirate ship trying to pick them up. Lieutenant Commander Amuiinzier favours a ruse whereby his ship flees from a pirate, dropping containers from the rear cargo doors whilst broadcasting a 'take this and let us go' message. If the pirates take the container it can be detonated inside their ship. If they continue pursuit, then the container can still do them damage from the outside. *Ikurdagur* will then come about and engage with her weapons whilst the marines force a boarding.

CARGO: No real cargo, but a hold full of dummy containers.

QUIRKS: Lieutenant-Commander Sir Wilhelm Amuiinzier is no glory-hound, but a stone-cold professional who hates pirates for professional rather than emotional reasons. He is a very dangerous opponent who is quite happy to sucker-punch his adversaries. He may take it upon himself to hunt a particular pirate vessel, changing the identity of *Ikurdagur* and trailing his coat in systems where the target vessel is known to operate.

COMPLICATIONS: *Ikurdagur* is a Q-ship, i.e. a dangerous vessel disguised as a harmless merchant.

PIRATE HUNTERS' RESPONSE: If *Ikurdagur* were to be destroyed, it would seem like just another pirate attack to most, but the loss of such a vessel would be of grave concern to pirate hunters. An Information Bounty would be posted, and at least one small naval vessel would be detailed to sweep the area for 6D weeks. A non-fatal engagement is all in a day's work to a Q-ship crew, though Lt-Commander Amuiinzier would make it a point to hunt down the attackers and eliminate or capture them, purely out of professional pride and the need to eradicate a dangerous piratical threat.

CALLSIGN ALPHA

TYPE-R
SUBSIDISED MERCHANT

Callsign Alpha (Rich Freighter)

Captain: Joharn Ishinko

Hull: 160

MOR: 12

Encounter Distance:
55,000 km
(Distant)

Heading: Inbound

Time to Destination:
2.5 hours

Armament:

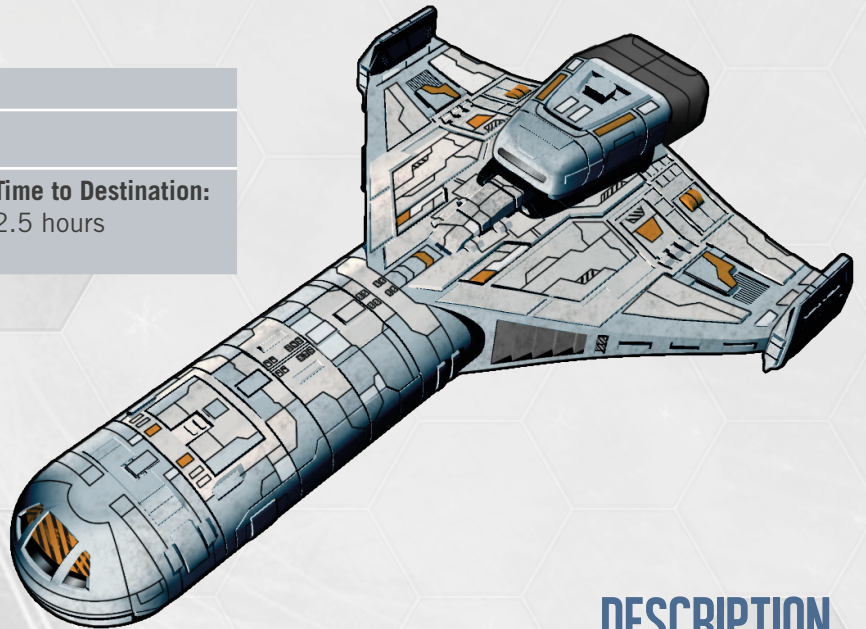
Dual Turret: Pulse Lasers
Dual Turret: Missile Racks

Cargo:

78 tons Vehicles
90 tons Precious Metals
5 tons Mail

Passengers:

None



DESCRIPTION

Callsign Alpha is the primary asset of Callsign Cargo Solutions, a small but highly professional shipping firm. All Callsign vessels are equipped to carry mail and secure cargo, with an armoured safe and at least modest armament. *Callsign Alpha* does not carry passengers, instead using her extra staterooms to accommodate security personnel and gunners. Her crew are sharp and on the ball, and make no secret of their ship's armament.

Callsign Alpha will issue a sharp instruction to any vessel coming close, ordering them to keep their distance. This is backed up by the launch of a 'firecracker' missile – a small warhead for warning-shot purposes only. If this is ignored, *Callsign Alpha* will make signal that she is under threat and veer off, even if it is not obvious that an attack is about to happen. This hair-trigger response has become notorious in some ports, but it may have prevented previous attempts at piracy. If an incoming vessel still looks remotely like a threat, *Callsign Alpha* will open fire before being fired upon, at the same time broadcasting a distress call and legal justification for her actions. Her 'I am under attack by a raider' signal is non-standard and includes relevant quotes from interstellar case law justifying a robust pre-emptive response.

CARGO: *Callsign Alpha* is carrying an expensive cargo of precious metal ingots and grav vehicles, plus custom components and spares for them. In addition, it has a mailsafe full of small packages bound for worlds on its route.

QUIRKS: Callsign Cargo Solutions has a very hard-nosed policy towards shipping risks. Its vessels and crews are well-trained and well-armed, and recruitment favours former naval and military personnel. The firm takes the view that if someone else is less able to protect themselves, it is their lookout. Callsign ships will not make any effort to assist other vessels under attack or in distress unless they must. They will comply with interstellar law, but wherever possible will use clauses that permit non-action if it would place the ship in undue danger to justify leaving others to their fate. Callsign ships and crews are

not well-liked as a result, but have chosen to be self-reliant – weaponry is a surer defence than goodwill.

COMPLICATIONS: *Callsign Alpha* is a mail ship. Most worlds subscribing to a mail service have an obligation to hunt those who attack the mail carriers or to take steps to protect them. If pirates take cargo but leave the mail alone, there will be no additional complications but if they do, they will make an enemy of a local noble who was shipping several 'art objects of questionable moral value' and will want to ensure nobody reveals his secret taste for such things.

PIRATE HUNTERS' RESPONSE: If the mail is interfered with, an Information Bounty will be placed in addition to the complication noted above.

PRINCELY CHALLENGER

TYPE-M
LINER

Princely Challenger (Liner)

Captain: Mila H		
Hull: 240	MOR: 7	
Encounter Distance: 145,000 km (Distant)	Heading: Inbound	Time to Destination: 6 hours

Armament:

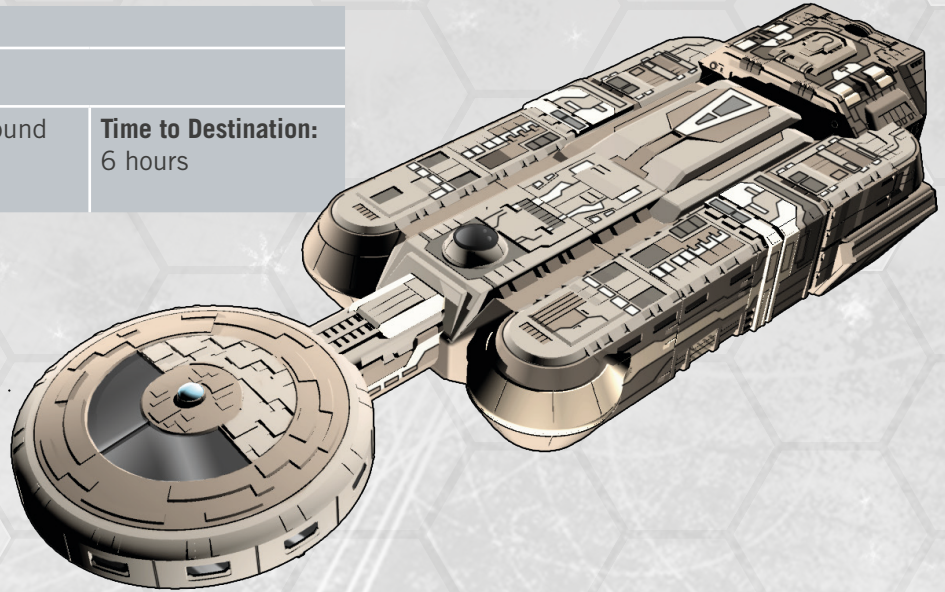
2 Single Turrets: Beam Laser

Cargo:

68 tons Freight
5 tons Luxury Goods
40 tons Advanced Vehicles

Passengers:

17 High Passage
9 Mid Passage
12 Low Passage



DESCRIPTION

Princely Challenger is owned and operated by her captain, whose surname really is just 'H'. She is quite an old vessel but has been well maintained and remains in good condition. However, in recent months her crew have had several mishaps and internal disputes with the result that she is no longer a happy or well-run ship.

Princely Challenger's latest misadventure (before running into pirates) was a badly calculated jump that brought her out well short of the mainworld and necessitated a longer than usual transit to the starport. This in turn strained relations among her bridge officers and between the passengers and stewards.

CARGO: *Princely Challenger* is carrying several prestige grav vehicles for a client who is planning to run a car show, along with various luxury items associated with the show. There are also numerous standard freight containers aboard, some of which are for the use of high passengers and contain their personal effects and any minor cargo they brought with them.

QUIRKS: The upshot of the situation aboard is that while *Princely Challenger* is unlikely to put up more than a token fight before surrendering, tempers are very frayed and any boarding could go badly wrong. Almost anything could happen, from a disaffected crewmember suddenly asking to be taken with the pirates (but then possibly changing her mind later) to an angry passenger trying to jump the boarding party.

Astute boarders might spot something is awry before the situation gets out of hand; they will at least sense the tension aboard but may dismiss this as stress associated with being robbed at gunpoint.

COMPLICATIONS: All manner of complications could arise from the situation aboard *Princely Challenger*. In addition, the car show host will be displeased and may target Captain H rather than the pirates, perhaps forcing her out of business or into a less reputable market sector.

PIRATE HUNTERS' RESPONSE: No unusual response.

JCV ARYM ESSDEN

TYPE-M
LINER

JCV Arym Essden (Liner)

Captain: Arym Essden

Hull: 240

MOR: 13

Encounter Distance:
65,000 km
(Distant)

Heading: Inbound

Time to Destination:
4 hours

Armament:

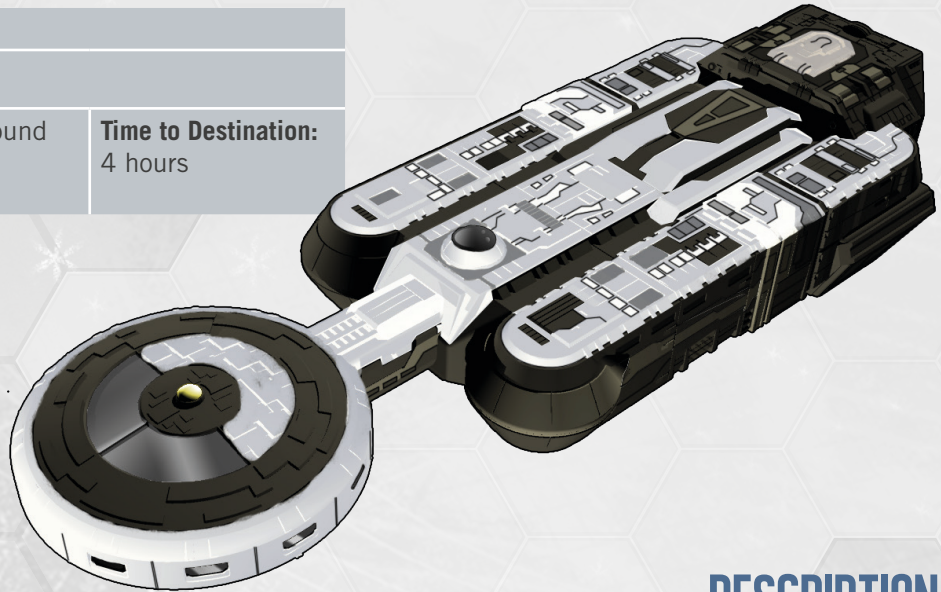
2 Dual Turrets: Beam Lasers
2 Single Turrets: Missile Rack

Cargo:

82 tons Advanced Weapons
20 tons Advanced
Manufactured Goods

Passengers:

34 Military Personnel



DESCRIPTION

JCV Arym Essden's name comes from that of her owner-operator, with a JCV prefix which simply means 'Jump-Capable Vessel'. *JCV Arym Essden* was built as a liner and served as one for many years, but she is no longer a passenger ship as such. Instead she is on a (very) long-term charter to Dyksson's Rifles, a platoon-sized mercenary outfit equipped to TL9 standards.

Dyksson's Rifles are not pirate hunters, but would be quite happy to bag a pirate vessel and claim the bounty. Their commander and Captain Essden might – if the circumstances looked favourable – try to draw in a pirate ship and counter-board it. *JCV Arym Essden* also has a decent armament and could beat off an attack if no ambush proves possible. Her crew would fight hard if attacked, attempting to flee behind salvos of missiles, but are not willing to make a suicidal last stand.

CARGO: The personal possessions and military equipment of an entire platoon is aboard this vessel, along with over thirty professional soldiers berthed two to a cabin. Most of the military equipment is low-value material such as rations, boots and spare uniforms but there are quite a lot of infantry small arms and support weapons, plus enough ammunition to fight a war.

QUIRKS: This is not a liner at all; it is a mercenary transport.

COMPLICATIONS: If the pirates succeed in robbing Dyksson's Rifles, the unit's reputation will be seriously

damaged. This might be in part restored by taking vengeance on the pirates. Both the mercenaries and Captain Essden will become staunch foes of the pirates.

PIRATE HUNTERS' RESPONSE: No unusual response from the existing pirate hunters, but the pirates will gain new enemies who will actively hunt them.

MENDINA

TYPE-R SUBSIDISED MERCHANT

Mendina (Unusual Vessel)

Captain: 'Grim Jack' Zanya

Hull: 160

MOR: 9

Encounter Distance:
40,000 km (Very Long)

Heading: Outbound to
Jump

Time to Destination:
2 hours

Armament:

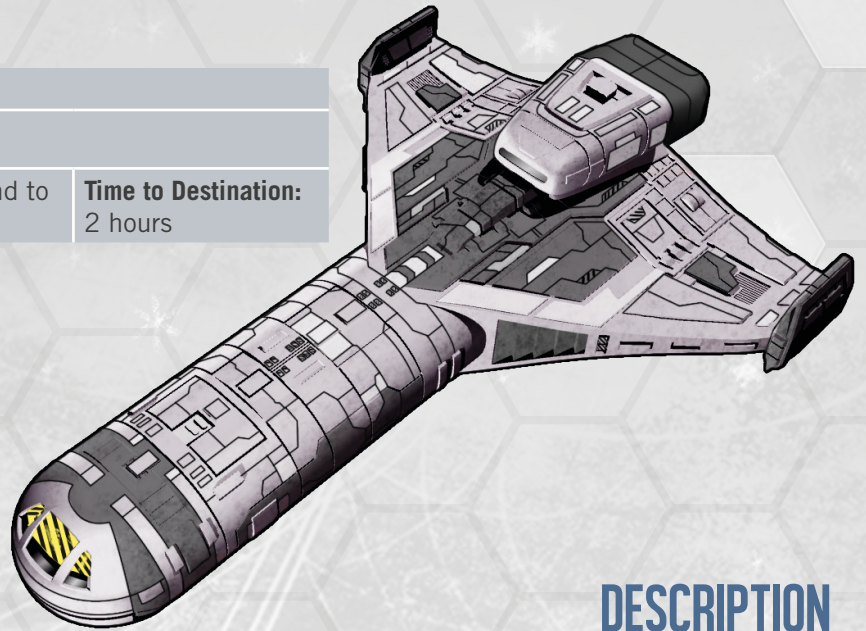
Single Turret: Pulse Laser
Dual Turret: Beam Lasers

Cargo:

12 tons Precious Metals
10 tons Advanced Electronics
38 tons Common Consumables

Passengers:

6 Low Passage (Prisoners)



DESCRIPTION

Mendina looks and, for the most part, behaves, like a typical Subsidised Merchant. She is, however, the current vessel used by 'Grim Jack' Zanya. Despite his deliberately threatening name, Grim Jack is surprisingly ethical for a pirate. He is ruthless and will carry out anything he threatens, but is not unnecessarily cruel and treats piracy as a business. As far as he is concerned, an agreement to surrender and hand over cargo is a form of contract, and he despises anyone (victim or pirate) who fails to keep their end of the deal or attempts any form of treachery.

Grim Jack also hates sloppy or needlessly violent pirates, as they attract the attention of the authorities. He is in the piracy business for the long haul and whilst competition is fine, actions that damage 'the industry' are not acceptable. Any and all means can be used to eliminate such competitors, including a tip-off to the authorities. This policy is accepted and even respected by some other pirates, but Grim Jack is the subject of numerous grudges. These are mainly held by bloodthirsty ravagers of a sort that do not last long in the business but cause untold troubles for their more cautious and professional peers.

Mendina is always on the lookout for ways to turn a profit, some of which can be quite inventive. She has been known to draw in other pirate vessels by looking like a soft target and then either ambush them or get them to chase her onto the guns of a waiting system defence boat. Most worlds grant a share of the bounty on a pirate vessel to all ships that engaged it, even if all they did was run towards the system defence flotilla whilst firing wildly. Grim Jack will happily use this tactic on pirates who attack his vessel.

CARGO: *Mendina* is running light, with plenty of hold space available. Much of what she is carrying is general supplies for the ship and her hidden base on an outsystem planetoid, but she does have several containers of high-value loot including precious metals, electronics and starship components. She is also carrying six prisoners intended for ransom. These are Aslan, members of a diplomatic delegation. Grim Jack does not normally use the ransom system, preferring to just take cargo, but these Aslan offended him by attempting to resist his boarding party after their ship had surrendered.

QUIRKS: *Mendina* is a pirate vessel and may deliberately 'trail her coat' to provoke an attack and ambush unwary pirates, or draw them into an ambush so she can share the bounty.

COMPLICATIONS: Apart from the fact that this is a pirate ship carrying Aslan prisoners, none.

PIRATE HUNTERS' RESPONSE: There is bounty on the head of Grim Jack (MCr1), and Cr10000 just for the name of his current ship. The authorities will drag their feet about paying, but eventually the money will come in.

EMUAR

TYPE-T PATROL CORVETTE

Emuar (Naval Patrol)

Captain: Lt Commander Mitchell Argane

Hull: 160

MOR: 9

Encounter Distance:
35,000 km (Very Long)

Heading:
Indeterminate

Time to Destination:
Unknown

Armament:

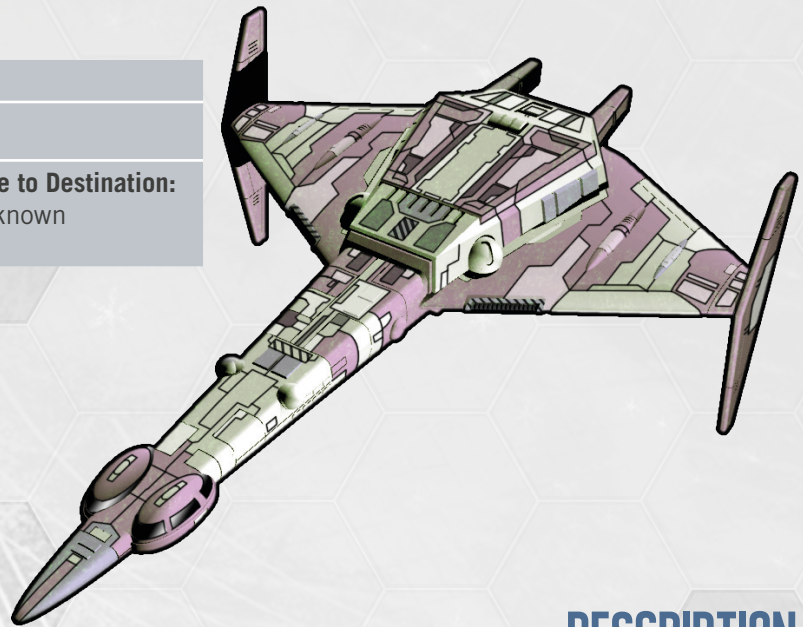
2 Triple Turrets: Pulse Lasers
2 Triple Turrets: Missile Racks

Cargo:

None

Passengers:

None



DESCRIPTION

Emuar is a navy ship conducting a routine commerce protection patrol. She will sometimes accompany a merchant vessel (whether or not the merchant skipper wants it) or form an impromptu convoy to her next destination. At other times, she can be encountered patrolling off a mainworld or landed at its port to give her crew shore leave.

Emuar and her crew will always follow strict naval protocol. This could be a benefit to the pirates, or not depending on circumstances. *Emuar* cannot act without clear justification, but does have the right to stop and search any suspect vessel unless there are agreements in place to restrict this. The navy does not make deals with pirates of course, but some shipping lines and world governments have negotiated special privileges for their vessels including immunity from routine search. Similarly, some shipping operators have priority status in terms of protection and escort. This could be used to lure *Emuar* off station or distract her crew.

The naval attitude towards pirates is to attempt capture rather than kill them, not least since live pirates will often trade information for their lives. Although piracy carries the death penalty, this is often commuted - sometimes on a rather cynical 'set reduction per comrade turned in' basis. Someone who reveals the location of a major pirate base might walk away from custody with a pardon and a (usually pretty small) bag of credits.

Emuar recently made a good set of captures. The prisoners are held on one of the planets nearby, waiting for a transport vessel to take them to a naval base for trial and (probably) execution.

CARGO: None.

QUIRKS: None as such; *Emuar* is a by-the-book naval ship.

COMPLICATIONS: Pirate captives awaiting transport might know about the activities of others. Preventing them reaching a naval base – one way or another – may be wise.

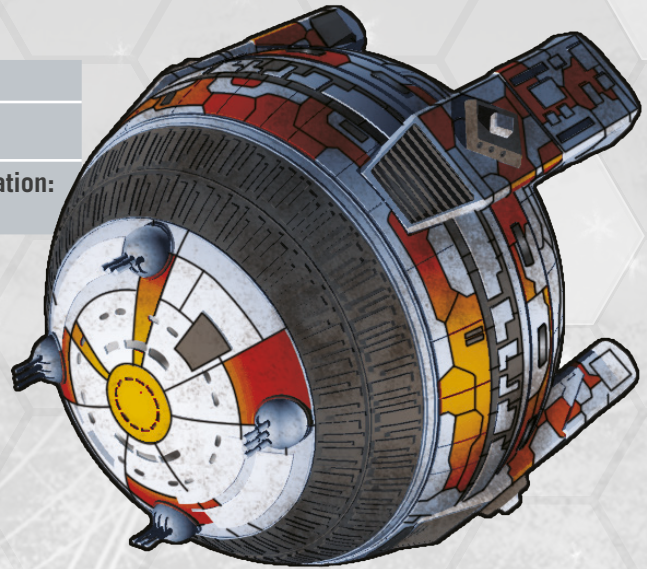
PIRATE HUNTERS' RESPONSE: If a naval ship is destroyed or goes missing, a major search will be launched. At least a handful of small combat vessels will be deployed to the area for a period of 4D weeks. Pirates who intercept the transport of prisoners will also become priority targets for pirate hunters.

Hero (Unusual Vessel)**Captain:** Jenaime Ygrant**Hull:** 320**MOR:** 10**Encounter Distance:**
55,000 km (Distant)**Heading:** Outbound
In-System**Time to Destination:**
Unknown**Armament:**4 Dual Turrets: Pulse Lasers
2 Dual Turrets: Missile Racks
2 Dual Turrets: Sandcasters**Cargo:**

None

Passengers:

Marine Platoon

**DESCRIPTION**

Hero is a mercenary vessel whose operators have found a niche in the anti-piracy role. The ship itself is a potent pirate-killer and escort vessel, and its platoon of marines can be deployed either to provide security to a client or crush a pirate base.

Although she makes most of her income fighting pirates, *Hero* does not have a completely clean record. Some of the 'pirate bases' she has raided have turned out to be innocent outposts. She has at times taken a contract from one pirate group to attack another, and has arrangements with some pirate vessels to avoid conflict. If she came upon one of these vessels by accident, the deal is that *Hero* will chase off the pirate with some strangely inaccurate gunnery, and if she knows where the pirate vessel is, she will discreetly be somewhere else.

However, Captain Ygrant cannot risk her ship's reputation by allowing an attack to take place right under her nose, so pirates who are too blatant will be attacked. Since she cannot afford to have prisoners telling the authorities about the deal, Ygrant will pound such a vessel into wreckage whether or not it tries to surrender. She would take the surrender of a previously unknown pirate however; those who do not have a deal with her cannot reveal it – and might even be offered one. If so, the pirates would be let go in return for a large bribe and a monthly 'retainer' to *Hero's* account.

In short, *Hero* makes a fair amount of money running a protection racket with pirates as the target, and uses pirate-hunting as an excuse to raid outposts from time to time. She may or may not have looted innocent merchant ships as well; some of the justifications her captain has posted for attacking a 'suspected pirate' do not bear close scrutiny.

The authorities on some worlds are aware of this vessel's shady reputation, but there is no proof and in any case, *Hero* does actually deal with at least some pirates. She thus does more good than harm... probably.

CARGO: None.

QUIRKS: *Hero* is cruising around, actively seeking excuses to attack vessels whose actions indicate an inclination towards piracy. Her crew are plugged into the grapevine and hear rumours the authorities do not. The rumour that a ship *may* be a pirate is good enough for Captain Ygrant.

COMPLICATIONS: *Hero* has a powerful armament and a hair-trigger attitude... and her captain is corrupt as well.

PIRATE HUNTERS' RESPONSE: No unusual response from pirate hunters.

SOAAD (System Defence Boat)

Captain: Lt Poia Muuru

Hull: 80

MOR: 9

Encounter Distance:
30,000 km (Very Long)

Heading:
Indeterminate

Time to Destination:
Unknown

Armament:

Triple Turret: Beam Lasers
Triple Turret: Missile Racks

Cargo:

None

Passengers:

None



DESCRIPTION

SOAAD is a privately-owned system defence boat. Her name, allegedly, is an acronym for Sower Of Alarm And Despondency, though this has not been confirmed by her operators. This is the mercenary unit Kuuliishe Security Services, which specialises in starship, starport and commercial security operations. The company has a handful of combat craft, mostly fighters, and provides security detachments to starports unable to field their own.

Kuuliishe Security Services has a good reputation for dependability and willingness to fight, and is frequently hired by governments feeling threatened by a rise in piracy. In this case, SOAAD has been deployed to improve orbital security and – ideally – nail one or more pirate ships. A reputation as a bad place to engage in piracy is the best defence a world can have, and so on the current deployment SOAAD is playing a long game rather than just advertising her presence as a deterrent.

SOAAD has a variable transponder and routinely pretends to be a port shuttle, a repair tug or a small merchant vessel. Visual contact would immediately identify her as a system defence boat, and careful analysis of her emissions will indicate she is no shuttle. However, this requires the pirate vessel to come relatively close.

SOAAD's typical mode of operation is just to stooze about looking innocent in the hope that pirates attack traffic coming in or out of the system, and then blast them. There is the possibility that she might be targeted by unwary pirates, a possibility her commanding officer finds both delightful and hilarious. Thus far, she has had no success in her present deployment and her crew are becoming bored.

CARGO: None.

QUIRKS: SOAAD is not a law enforcement or naval vessel; she is a contracted pirate-killer. Her crew have no interest in boarding ships to look for contraband; they are simply waiting for known pirates to enter the system or previously unidentified ones to reveal themselves. They are also not especially interested in receiving a surrender – the bounty is the same for a captured ship as a shattered one, and there is less paperwork if nobody survives aboard the target vessel.

COMPLICATIONS: SOAAD could be a complication in an attack on a merchant vessel, or the pirates might fall for her fake transponder and find themselves in combat against a dangerous opponent.

PIRATE HUNTERS' RESPONSE: No unusual response from pirate hunters, but Kuuliishe Security Services will post a Kill Bounty on anyone who destroys one of its vessels.

CONVOY DW-744

TYPE:
VARIOUS

Convoy DW-744 (Convoy)

Captain: Commander Harnon Pellique

Hull: Various

MOR: 10

Encounter Distance:
30,000 km (Very Long)

Heading: Inbound

Time to Destination:
5 hours

Armament:

Varies

Cargo:

See Below

Passengers:

Varies



DESCRIPTION

Convoy DW-744 officially consists of three Type-A2 Far Traders (*Shaasimiir*, *Clunket* and *Farjump*) along with the Subsidised Liner *Graceful Lady*. These vessels are proceeding under the escort of the Patrol Corvette *Templeton* and have picked up additional local vessels en route. This is not uncommon; independent merchant ships often join a convoy if one is passing through; many captains consider it is better to wait for a day or two whilst the convoy assembles and proceed in safety than go it alone when protection is available.

At present the Subsidised Merchant *Quarnast Reach* is proceeding with the convoy, and has proven far more trouble than she is worth. *Quarnast Reach* has a captain who dislikes authority and deliberately ignores instructions just to show how independent he is, but at the same time demands the navy protect his vessel. He and Commander Pellique have already fallen out several times, and *Quarnast Reach* is on the verge of being ordered to leave the convoy.

Because of *Quarnast Reach's* wayward behaviour, the convoy has made a rather uncoordinated jump, arriving scattered over many thousands of kilometres and possibly several hours in time. This means pirates may detect what appears to be a lone merchant ship emerging from jump, only to have others pop out as they make their attack. The escorting Patrol Corvette might emerge right on top of the pirates or be too distant to help – it might even not emerge until after the attack, which would result in problems for Commander Pellique.

CARGO: *Clunket* is carrying stores for the Patrol Corvette in addition to her own cargo, whilst the other ships are fully 'private'. This is not a high-value military convoy; it is simply a group of merchant ships being given naval protection as they pass through a potentially hazardous area. Cargoes aboard the merchant ships thus vary from general freight to moderate or even some high-value trade goods.

QUIRKS: As noted, the convoy is scattered. It may not be immediately apparent that it *is* a convoy.

COMPLICATIONS: The merchant ships will support one another, and try to huddle together for protection. *Graceful Lady* has the best armament – a couple of mixed missile and laser turrets – and will try to protect the others if the corvette has not yet arrived. *Shaasimiir* is unarmed; the others have at least a token weapons fit.

Any defence of the convoy will be complicated by the behaviour of *Quarnast Reach*, which will try to hide behind or among the other vessels, ignores instructions or turns the wrong way, and generally makes life more difficult for the people she is expecting to save her. This behaviour is not deliberate as such, it is simply the action of a scared merchant captain who thinks he knows better than naval officers, and who will put the safety of his own ship well ahead of any concept of the common good.

PIRATE HUNTERS' RESPONSE: Pirating a ship under convoy protection is a blatant and cheeky action. Pirate hunters will take note and at least post an Information Bounty to find out who would dare to attempt something like this.

KERRELBLOSSOM

CHRYSANTHEMUM DESTROYER ESCORT

Kerrelblossom (Naval Vessel)

Captain: Commander Margaret Pallix

Hull: 400

MOR: 11

Encounter Distance:
65,000 km
(Distant)

Heading: Local Patrol

Time to Destination:
Unknown

Armament:

1 Fusion Barbette, 2 Particle Barbettes
2 Triple Turrets: Missile Racks
5 Triple Turrets: Sandcasters

Cargo:

Naval Supplies (including
approximately 100 missiles)

Passengers:

None



DESCRIPTION

Kerrelblossom is a naval vessel on routine patrol, which is not purely about piracy suppression but certainly includes this within the operational remit. *Kerrelblossom's* mission has thus far been a lengthy round of flag-showing and deterrence – smartly uniformed crewmembers in port and a warship in orbit helps remind everyone that the Imperial Navy is not far away. It is not possible to judge how effective this is in terms of deterring piracy, but it is dull for the crew. After a long period away from home, mostly cooped up in a starship, crew efficiency starts to wane.

The answer to this, at least according to Commander Pallix, is to thoroughly enforce discipline and the careful following of regulations, and keep the crew busy with 'navy work'. This translates into stopping and searching as many craft as possible, looking for contraband or irregularities in paperwork. As a result of this combination of zeal and weariness, boarding parties are thorough but complacent, and can be deceived quite easily so long as everything looks to be above board. Of course, the Travellers may not know that.

Commander Pallix has also implemented a policy of actively searching for pirates, responding to reports of an attack by moving her ship to the affected system or a nearby one she thinks a pirate might head for next. Thus far, she has drawn a blank, and is itching to catch *someone* doing *something* illegal before her cruise ends – if only to give her crew the feeling they have made a difference. Pallix is too professional to allow her desire for action to affect her objectivity, but it does mean that if she has clear evidence she will be heavy-handed. She may decide to actively pursue or hunt a pirate vessel that comes to her notice, and one that escapes from her ship will become an active target.

CARGO: *Kerrelblossom* is carrying stores for her mission. This includes a great deal of valuable weaponry and ammunition, including one hundred naval missiles. Whilst it is unlikely that she could be pirated, she does receive supply ships from time to time. These carry spare missiles to replace any expended during the patrol.

QUIRKS: As noted, *Kerrelblossom* is not specifically hunting pirates, but they would be an excellent outlet for the crew's desire for something more interesting than patrol duty. A pirate vessel might think it has been uncovered for what it is when *Kerrelblossom* orders it to heave-to for boarding,

when in fact the destroyer is just searching random vessels to give her crew something to do.

COMPLICATIONS: *Kerrelblossom* is a potential enemy for the pirates, or might respond to a distress call.

PIRATE HUNTERS' RESPONSE: The destruction of a naval ship (or its supply vessels) will result in several more being sent to the area to search for the attackers. These will certainly include destroyers and possibly larger vessels too.

INDEX

Destroyer Escort: Kerrelblossom	30	Safari Ship: Trojan Ranger	9
Far Trader: Carnise	17	Scout Courier: Blank Slate	5
Far Trader: Handow's Ship	15	Scout courier: Meldas Bama Teta Kehn	8
Far Trader: Shebiigibuka Duam	16	Scout Courier: Red Adder	6
Free Trader: Pelzentin Della	14	Seeker: Noseforgold	7
Free Trader: Puttinalong	13	Shuttle: Emma	11
Free Trader: Sawnenson's Pride	12	Subsidised Merchant: Ardasil Conveyor	19
Guardship	4	Subsidised Merchant: Callsign Alpha	21
Information Bounty	3	Subsidised Merchant: Ikurdagur	20
Kill Bounty	4	Subsidised Merchant: Mendina	24
Liner: JCV Arym Essden	23	System Defense Boat: S.O.A.A.D.	27
Liner: Princely Challenger	22	Trader: Uekh Etasiaheari	18
Mercenary Cruiser: Hero	26	Various: Convoy DW-744	28
Patrol Corvette: Emuar	25	Yacht: Starlight Voyager	10
Personal Mission	4		
Pirate Hunter Responses	3		

