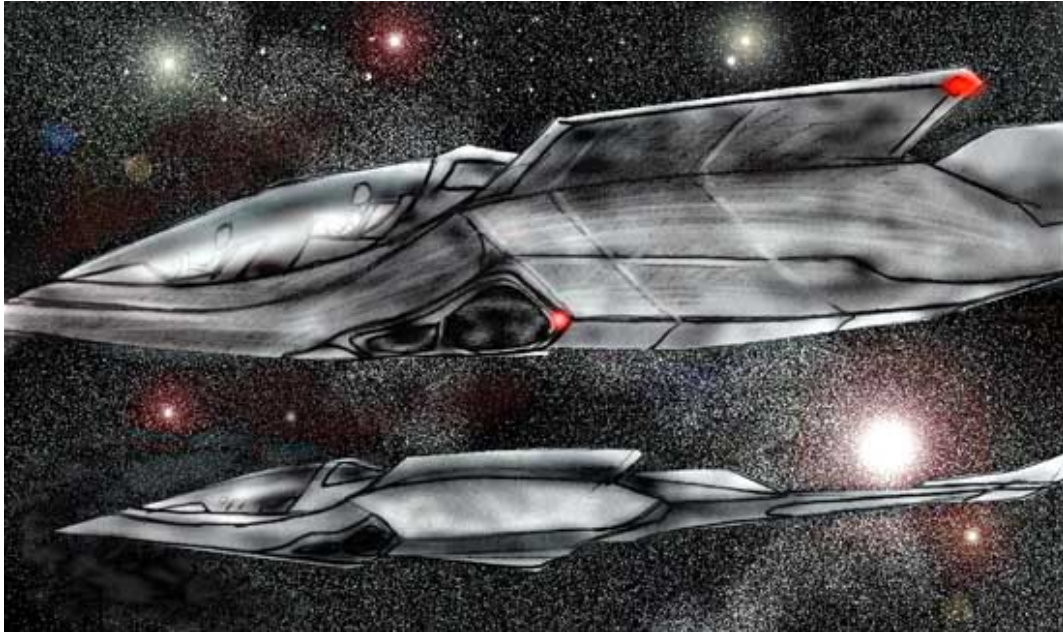


ANDROMEDA 2500™

FIRST MISSION:

PART 1 - RECOVERY



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First Mission Part 1: Recovery

The purpose of this preliminary mission is to give new Players a chance to become familiar with the Game World of Andromeda 2500. It also allows new characters to test their limits and discover their weaknesses to be addressed in the future. This adventure should also help create the idea of the CAT team as a cohesive group with complimentary talents and abilities. It should also demonstrate that characters with extreme specializations might only be useful some of the time. This adventure is also a good illustration of how versatile this game can be. It can be approached from numerous angles and can be successfully completed in very different ways.

If you intend to play this adventure, do not read it!

It is preferable that a more experienced Game Master run this first adventure. This mission is very important because it establishes some significant plot lines and reveals critical information that is integral to the nature and assignments of the Covert Assault Team in the future. New GMs can still do a great job, but should familiarize themselves with the *Combat* book; specifically, the information contained in the “Adventure Rules” section.

Adventure Summary:

Approximate Playing Time: 4-8 Hours

of Players: 2-6

Target Character Level: 1

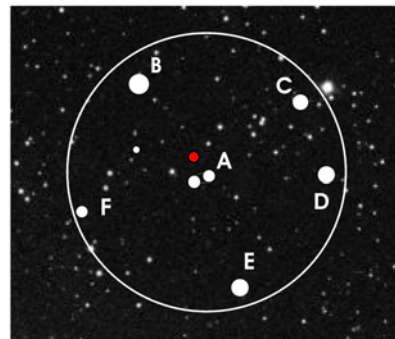
Experience Awarded: 300-600+

Mission Summary:

Goal: Initially, to recover the captured UTF ship and pilots and prevent the UTF ship en route from being captured as well.

Once the Mercantile 5 is boarded and the NightCrawlers are encountered (one way or another) then the goal will shift to preventing the exchange of merchandise and prisoners with the Black Market.

Setting: .2 light years from New Terra in an empty part of Local Space. This is outside of both the Emyrean and K’Baln systems. The Mercantile 5 is drifting at this location. The NightCrawler base is located on a large asteroid about a day away from this location at sub-light speed.



Background-GM: The NightCrawlers (NCs) are a very efficient and effective crime organization. Their activities in this region of space have caught the attention of the Black Market (BM). As such, the Black Market has made an offer to merge with the NightCrawlers if they can deliver a particular group of vessels at a specified time. The

successful completion of this transaction will allow the NCs to run this region of space in conjunction with the BM and revenues generated from illegal activities will be split between them. The deal is lucrative for both parties and therefore the success of this endeavor is of extreme importance.

The BM intends to sell the hijacked vessels to one of their clients who are willing to pay handsomely for the entire list delivered at one time. The BM gets all the profit with little effort and the NCs get accepted into the BM organization. The identity of the BM clients is revealed upon their arrival at the NC base (or through other means depending on how the adventure unfolds) to be Stadarians. The BM is unaware, as are the NCs – although even if they were they probably wouldn't care. The Stadarians are mildly interested in some of the ships on the list, but are most concerned in obtaining the two UTF military scout ships of which only one is left to be captured. They will also pay extra if the UTF crew is kept alive. Since the first UTF spacecraft crew is dead, the NCs will take extra care to capture the next ones alive.

It took about 8 months to gather ten of the twelve ships on the BM list. The last two were the most difficult – the UTF military craft. One was taken two weeks ago using the same trap setup employed in this adventure, but the two crew members were killed by the NCs. This time the NCs have placed two children on the Mercantile 5 to slow down the UTF crew in hopes of surprising them.

The current situation is that the Mercantile 5 is adrift in space and

transmitting a distress signal, which was picked up by the UTF military. The signal was not urgent so they only dispatched a standard sub-light reconnaissance ship (2 crew) to respond to the situation. It will take only 5 days for the vessel to arrive at its maximum speed of 90C (it is relatively close). The CAT team will be able to rendezvous with the Mercantile 5 in the Stealth Hyperspace Shuttle (SHS) in about 6 hours. **It is critical that they somehow resolve the situation before the UTF ship arrives.**

What attracted CAT's attention is that the same ship issued a similar distress signal 2 weeks ago in a different area of space – one that could not have been reached except at hyperspace speed. The signal was altered to mask its origins so that it would appear like a completely different vessel. The UTF did not notice and so a similar recon vessel was dispatched 2 weeks ago to the previous location and has not been heard from since. It was sent from a different outpost and the lack of communication has not drawn any undue suspicion yet because of the distance and travel time involved. The current outpost just sent their ship to investigate the new signal and that was what triggered CAT's computer system to generate an alert. The CAT AI system monitors all civilian and military communication looking for anomalies and unusual situations that require CAT intervention.

The Mercantile 5

The Mercantile 5 is a new transport vessel built by the Mercantile Corporation. It runs people, equipment, and smaller vessels from the Empyrean and K'Baln systems to the farthest Outer

Colonies in UTF Local Space. It is capable of hyperspace speed and is one of the fastest commercial transports in operation. The Mercantile Corporation learned of its disappearance 4 weeks ago and has sent its own investigative team to locate it. That team has been sent on a wild goose chase by the BM in a completely different area of Local Space (part of the bargain between the BM and NCs).

The ship was fully loaded with 180 passengers, 30 crew, and lots of cargo. The cargo will be a source of debate between the BM and NCs upon their arrival because the NCs will try and downplay the contents, of which the BM is very aware. The NCs have actually already sold off a good portion of the contents for a hefty profit. The Mercantile 5 is in perfect condition and has only minor damage to the bridge, most of which is superficial and staged by the NCs. Three sets of devices are hidden to alert the NCs one the vessel has been boarded. First, all the outer airlocks are rigged to transmit an encrypted hyperspace signal if they are opened. Second, the bridge is wired so that any attempted access to the ship's computer system will trigger a similar signal. Lastly, the door to the compartment where the children are tied up is also alarmed to trigger another signal to alert the NCs.

The Plot Line

The NCs are only about 2 hours away and will respond swiftly once any signal is activated. They are far enough away that they would not show up on any long-range scans until they were about 20 minutes out. The Mercantile 5's sensors have been rigged to not detect

them, but the SHS will have no problem identifying them. The Mercantile 5 will also jam all communications once the signal is activated within the area (extending out about 20 minutes at 90C). This includes communications to the SHS unless arrangements were made ahead of time, or Special Abilities are used. Visual communication would be possible although time consuming. The first thing the NCs will do upon arrival is attempt to secure the boarding vessel, which they will not detect (SHS). Then they will board themselves and subdue the trespassers with Stun weapons. The plan would be to return to the NC base at that time, leaving the Mercantile 5 in orbit around the asteroid and taking the prisoners to the surface. There they would contact the BM, who are already on their way because they know the NCs have one UTF ship and suspect them of selling the contents of the Mercantile 5.

Besides their obvious interest in delivering the shipment of space vessels to their clients, the BM is most interested in a sample of the UTF stealth technology on which the CAT SHS is based (the BM has no knowledge of CAT). This technology is being transported to one of the UTF's research facilities on Outer Colony Arcadius II. The BM's understanding of the transaction is that all the contents of the recovered vehicles are to be delivered to them. The NCs have altered some of the ship manifests to disguise their selling off some of the more valuable pieces of cargo.

The BMs are arriving unexpectedly with their clients to receive the merchandise personally. **There are 2 BM representatives with 3 BM guards as well as the 3 Stadarians.** If the

characters have not interfered too much the NC base commander will meet the new arrivals with an appropriate entourage and lead them to the Meeting room in the inner ring of the base. They will try and stall the BM representatives as long as possible while their people finish altering the last of the ship manifests. The Stadarians will want to see the merchandise immediately and will get irate quickly. They will also be very interested in the crew of the first UTF ship captured and will be upset when they learn that the crew is dead. In fact, the bodies of the crew are still on the Mercantile 5 as a diversionary tactic when the new ship arrives. The NCs hope to create an emotional response in the new crew to move quickly and abandon some of their security protocol. This is in hopes that they do not discover the tampered computer systems and hidden signal traps.

The CAT team, if they have not already done so, will need to intervene somewhere near this point. If they do not the BM and NC representatives will get angrier and a reasonable computer search will reveal the NCs treachery. The Stadarians will be very impatient (and not having been searched at any point) and will not hesitate to kill everyone on the base. There are 2 Ascendants in the group of 3 Stadarians, so their confidence level is high. The Stadarians are also aware of the stealth technology because of their infiltration inside the BM and they are very interested in acquiring it. Through their own research they will be able to detect the hyperspace signal and will know it is on the base – through the SHS which will presumably be parked somewhere nearby at the time. The actual technology will still be packed in crates

and not operative. The Stadarian's ability to detect the signal is very limited and only works if they know where to look, in this case near the base. They want to expand their ability to find shielded vessels and hope to do so with the UTF shipment.

Once the team has stopped the NC/BM plot they can notify CAT headquarters that will alert the UTF through their standard unnecessary method to come and clean up. They will respond in hyperspace military craft so the CAT team will have to leave rapidly. If they manage to capture any Stadarian without them disintegrating they can take them back in the single suspension chamber on the SHS. Additional experience should be rewarded if they are able to take a Stadarian alive – even more if it is one of the Ascendants (unlikely).

Background-Player: The information in this section should be delivered to the players during a mission briefing for their characters. They should be sent on their way immediately and will have ample time to develop their plans during the 6 hour flight to the Mercantile 5. They can assess the situation upon their arrival and decide how to proceed then.

Major Aaron Greenberg, CAT's immediate supervisor, will brief the team on the current situation and what their mission goals will be. He will not accompany them.

1) Give a brief narrative summary of the events listed below based on the GM Background Info.

- CAT knows the Mercantile is a trap because of its use in the previous distress call 2 weeks ago. CAT does not know why it

- is being used as a trap or who is behind it. They are aware of significant criminal activity in the area recently and numerous space vessel hijackings all over Local Space. The war with the Stadarians has limited the UTF's response time and capability to handle such criminal activity.
- The vessel contains a sample of the stealth technology used in the SHS. It was being shipped covertly to one of the outer colonies for further testing. Somehow the BM is aware of it and wants it badly. The NCs will not have sold it yet because they are not aware of its value because it is concealed in non-descript crates. The UTF is unaware of the shipment, of course, and CAT does not want it to fall into the wrong hands. When the ship went missing originally CAT dispatched a low level intel team to discover its location, but they have followed the same misguided path the UTF did and have since been recalled. The stealth technology cannot be released to the BM and should be destroyed if necessary, but only after all other options are attempted.
 - They must handle the situation before the next UTF ship arrives and they must maintain their covert status as long as possible. They can tell any recovered hostages that they work for the UTF and use on of their standard identification protocols to support the deception.
 - Communication with CAT HQ will not be possible during the adventure and can only occur at

the end of the adventure when the team has control of or destroyed the NC base. The communication equipment on the base would have to be completely shut down to allow for the SHS to transmit to HQ.

- Engaging the enemy (whoever they are) in the SHS is not advised. It is a one of a kind craft and although it is well armed, vehicle combat should be a last resort.

Mission Phases: This particular mission has several distinct phases that correspond to the various objectives to be accomplished. There are numerous ways that the characters can stop the NCs and prevent the Stadarians from obtaining the UTF ship and stealth technology. Depending on how the team is organized and the particular skill/ability set of the members something in between a covert infiltration and direct assault will occur. The direct assault is obviously less desirable because then the BM/Stadarian group will know something is wrong when they arrive. Anything the characters can do to maintain the illusion of a smoothly running NC base is critical to gaining as much information as possible – experience should be rewarded accordingly. Often times this first adventure is split into multiple gaming sessions (2 on average) depending on how long the characters spend investigating the Mercantile 5. It will be sooner than later if they trigger the alarm.

Phase 1: Rendezvous with Transport

This is the initial objective of the mission. The characters can plan their strategy while they travel in the SHS and you can have them arrive once they feel prepared. A rough blueprint of the Mercantile 5 will be available to them in the Mission Information Package (see attached). This should be helpful in formulating the plan. If the Players take too long then cut the off.

When they enter the sector that contains the Mercantile 5 they can begin their scanning but will turn up nothing. The NCs are on the other side of the sector out of range unless the team is extraordinarily cautious and searches a very wide area. To keep the plot on target, do not let them detect the NC ships.

As they come close to the Mercantile 5 they will notice that it looks perfectly normal. It is drifting but the internal systems, such as lighting and life support, are functioning. The SHS is equipped with spacesuits that the team can use if they want to. They can enter the ship through any of the landing pads. The autopilot on the SHS can be programmed to move it a safe distance away and be recalled on command or the characters can leave one member onboard. If they leave someone on board then that person can coordinate movement and remain in contact as long as they don't trip the alarm. Once the alarm is tripped, the jamming signal (unless disabled) will prevent any communication.

The alarm triggers on the outer airlocks can be disabled relatively easy given CAT's level of training. Several

different skills can be employed as well as Special Abilities (Bionics is especially handy for this – *e.g.* Electronic Disrupter). Detecting the alarm is the problem. If the Players think to look for it, an Awareness roll will do the trick as well as numerous skills. An Awareness Roll (rolling a character's Awareness or lower – see the GMs section of the *Combat* book) with a penalty of –2 is sufficient. If they do not think to look then you should roll once for the character with the highest Awareness to see if he gets a sudden inspiration to search. If that fails then the NCs will come quickly. The same procedure can be followed for the other triggers as well – the bridge computer and the door to the Engine Control Room where the children are tied up.

Phase 2: Explore Transport

Once the characters are inside they will have to look around the Mercantile 5 to see what happened. Depending on which direction they travel they will pick up different clues – see the Mercantile 5 Layout below. Everything on the ship will look fine except for some scarring on the walls near the bridge caused by energy weapons discharging. The air is breathable and all systems are functioning except propulsion. Propulsion is disabled at the bridge and by a device planted in one of the engines (easily removable but well hidden). See the individual descriptions of the ship locations for more information.

Phase 3: Arrival of NightCrawler Ships

In order to prevent the UTF ship from being captured the team will have to activate one of the triggers. If they do not set it off upon entering the ship then

they will do it after a thorough search and assessment of the information. It will take the NC ships (3 in all) about 20 minutes to arrive. They will come in from the same direction and then break pattern. One small fighter will stand off and the other two (one fighter and one shuttle) will circle the Mercantile 5 looking for ships and scanning for signs of life. They will have a remote link to the bridge and can use the internal sensors to determine who is inside, unless the team has disabled the computer.

Then two ships will land at the main landing pad and enter the vessel. Depending on what the characters have done they will either engage them on the ship or search the area and return to their base to report in. If the characters know the NC ships are coming and chose to stay on board the Mercantile 5 they should have no problem taking out the crew of the medium sized NC shuttle. The NCs will not be able to detect the SHS unless the characters do something to make themselves known.

At least the one NC fighter that does not land should make it back to base so the characters can follow it.

In combat, the advantage lies with the SHS initially but it will not take long for the NC ship computers to triangulate the SHS position and fight back. As stated in the mission briefing, a direct assault is not advised. The players best option is to follow the NC ships back to their base and infiltrate it however they choose. The NC ships will fly into Vehicle Bay 1 and report directly to the Meeting Room to explain what they found to one of the command personnel.

Phase 4: NightCrawler Base

The base is camouflaged to blend into the gray rockiness of the asteroid it sits on. Without a detailed scan or by following the NC ship it would be hard to detect. It is not protected by any electronic means, just a good paintjob. Descriptions of the different areas within the base are listed below. You can show the characters the drawing of the outside of the base when they approach. The interior schematic should only be revealed if they manage to hack into the NC computer system to access it.

There are a couple of different ways to enter the NC base. The most obvious is through one of the four sections connected to the main base. The easiest to penetrate is the food storage area, which is frequently accessed to take bulk storage to the external storage areas. Vehicle Bay 2 is heavily guarded because that is where the current hostages are being held in makeshift pens. Vehicle Bay 1 is where the NC ship lands. The Main Hangar is very secure because that is where all the captured vessels are being held and examined.

The main base cannot be accessed directly unless Special Abilities are employed (or some other extraordinary method). Depending on how the characters are doing at this point you may want to give them a hint as to how much activity can be perceived through a normal scan – the least amount of activity is in the food storage area. The base does not have any protective shields up because they have not perceived any threat and the location of their base is a secret.

Once they are inside the base they will need to blend somehow to discover what is going on. The alternative is a covert or overt military strike. Either way will probably work as long as the characters avoid getting killed. The low level NCs are basically spineless if isolated and the base commanders, like any good pirate, will spill the beans if they think they can be spared and perhaps profit from their information. All data received should be suspect. As long as the command structure is in place, however, the NCs are very efficient and their military-like command structure is effective. A direct assault will produce a rapid response and externally the base is well armed. All NCs carry a sidearm and heavy weapons would be deployed from the Weapons room if an alert is activated.

Regardless of how they proceed, the following **mission objectives** lay before them. The existence of the Stadarians will not be discovered until they arrive at the base. Their presence should make the CAT team later their plans. Any character with IR vision will be able to detect the Stadarians, as only the Ascendants are equipped with body heat modulators. The other two Stadarians were not issued the modulators because this mission was not deemed to be a significant threat. Remember, the Stadarians are confident they can kill everyone on the base by themselves. A **fourth Stadarian** is waiting on the Stadarian shuttle (disguised as a commercial vessel) for defensive purposes. Through later missions the characters will discover that 5 is the normal number of individuals in a Stadarian cell. The fifth member is the subject of the next adventure, First Mission: Part 2 – Immobilize.

Phase 5: 1st Mission Objectives – Part 1

These are the objective the CAT team needs to accomplish. The last objective involving the Stadarians will lead into the 2nd Part of this adventure. However, the team will have to return to CAT HQ to physically recover, be debriefed, and resupplied for their next mission.

- Board the Mercantile 5 to figure out what happened to it.
- Save the two children held captive in the Engine Control Room of the Mercantile 5. The children can remain in the SHS during the mission – they should be sedated for their own good.
- Stop the next UTF military ship from being captured by disabling the NightCrawlers somehow.
- Stop the NightCrawlers from joining the Black Market, thereby decreasing both groups power in the area.
- Stop the Stadarians from taking possession of the stealth technology – destroying the technology if necessary.
- Stop the Stadarians from acquiring the UTF military ship and the bodies of the crew.
- Turn over the hostages and hijacked ships to the UTF so they can be released/returned to their owners.

Conclusion: Experience and recovered equipment awarded should be based on how well the characters achieved their mission objectives. Somewhere between **300-600 Experience Points** would be appropriate based on their group accomplishments. If the mission is split in two phases (before or after the assault on the NC base), half of the points can

be given out at that time. Award an additional **100 EXP** if they capture a Stadarian alive. An EXP bonus is a standard reward if they acquire any new information about the Stadarians that is helpful to CAT and the UTF.

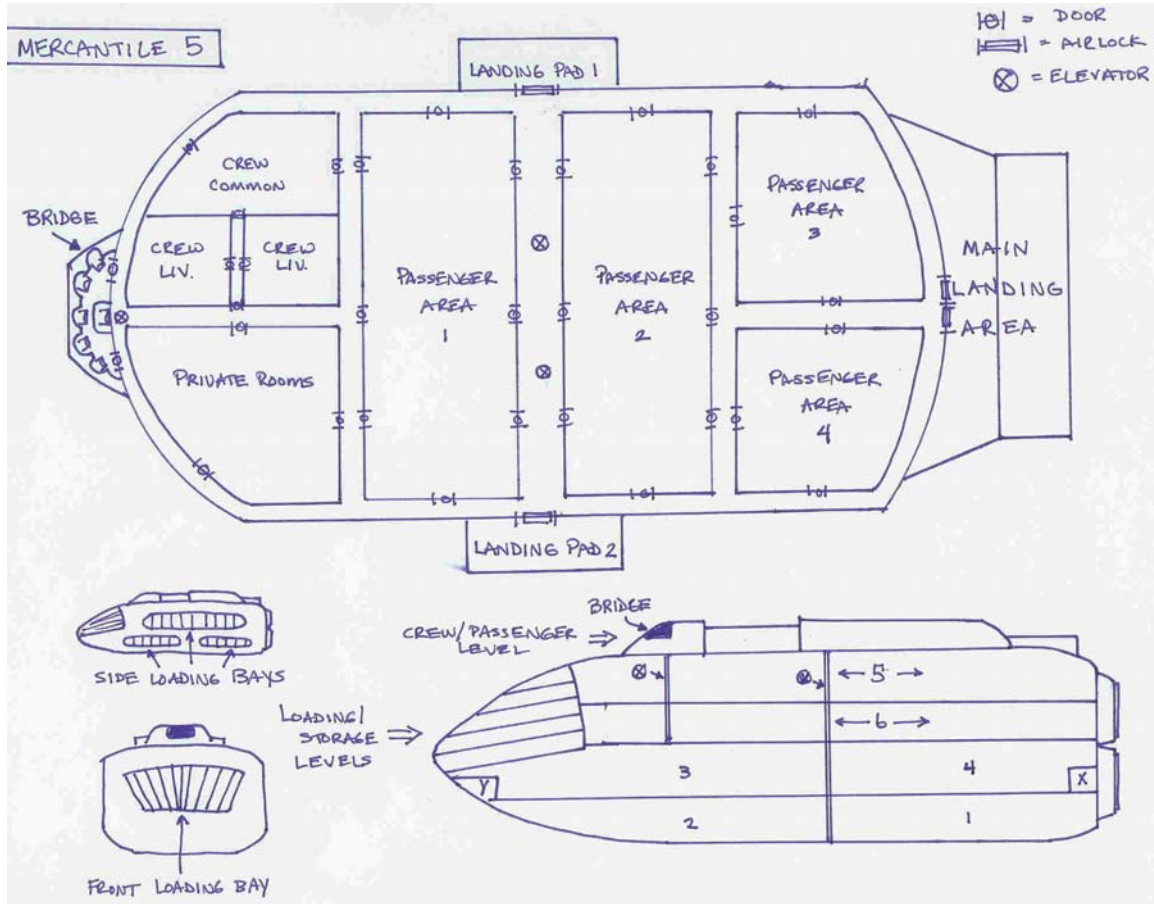
If the players think about it and ask CAT HQ, they can **keep one of the small NC ships** for their team's use when the SHS is not available. If they do not ask then it will be absorbed into CAT's arsenal. From the credits recovered from the NCs, most of which will go to fund the CAT program, the characters will also receive **1,000 credits** as a bonus. This will be in addition to any credits received from leveling. The characters will also be allowed to **keep a reasonable amount of weapons and equipment** recovered from the NCs – GM discretion.

As stated at the end of Phase 4, this mission leads directly into another adventure. Information recovered from the Stadarians and from the BM regarding the rendezvous point on Trillian will lead to a 5th member of the group. A cursory search of UTF records will indicate that all 5 lived together and 3 of them worked in different random low-level jobs. The locations of these menial jobs is of importance and will lead the characters on an interesting trail that will reveal a great deal about how the Stadarians are operating within the UTF.

First Mission: Part 2 – Immobilize will be available for download at www.andromeda2500.com for free in August 2004. **Sign up** for e-mail notifications whenever new adventures and game updates are made available.

GM Supplemental Material

Mercantile 5 Layout



Mercantile 5 Layout Key:

Command/Passenger Level

Bridge: This area lies in the front of the upper section of the Mercantile 5. It contains all the necessary systems to control every function of the ship, with the exception of the cargo loading system (see Y). The Captain's chair is on a raised dais in the back of the bridge and there are four control areas directly in front of the dais. The four control areas are (from top to bottom): **Weapon & Defensive Systems**, **Communications**, **Navigation**, and the

Internal Control Systems (life support, engineering, propulsion, etc). There are two doors that enter the bridge –both are unlocked. All **doors** on the ship slide into the wall when opened, unless otherwise stated.

There are some energy weapon discharge scars on the walls of the bridge and some blood in several of the chairs. The Captain's dais is clean. The **computer systems** will seem to operate

normally with the exception of propulsion, which is offline. The characters will be able to use the ship's internal camera systems to look at every level of the ship except the two that are blacked out – see below.

Any attempt to access the propulsion system on the bridge or view into the engine room will trigger the **hidden alert**. An Awareness roll will suffice to find the trigger, underneath one of the main consoles, if the players are actively looking. A bonus of +2 should be given if they already disabled the airlock alarms. You can tell the player searching that they sense a 'subroutine' that will activate if they search any further.

The internal systems will provide information on every level of the ship except two: the **Engine Control Room (Area X)** and the **Crew Living Quarters**. **Propulsion** is disabled both at the bridge and at the Propulsion Control Center in the **Engine Room (Area 1)**. Even if they get the system repaired on the bridge they will have to go to Engineering to restore power to the engines.

Accessing the **Mercantile 5's logs** will show they have been deleted after being copied. No information will be recoverable from the ship's log. Redundant systems have also been deleted. The ship's main **viewscreen** will operate normally and their **sensors** will appear to be working. They have been rigged to not detect the approach of the NightCrawler vessels.

Remember, in Andromeda 2500 sensors amount to not much more than laser radar combined with some chemical

analysis on spectral patterns and return very little information. If a ship's energy shield is not up then some limited penetration of the hull by the laser radar will yield a reasonably good 3-D image and will detect motion through Doppler shifts. Modern laser radar will be able to penetrate a hull to a depth of about 10 meters. An active energy shield, no matter how weak, will disrupt this ability.

Crew Common Area: This is a lounge and recreation area for the crew. It contains comfortable furniture, common meeting areas, community game stations, and even some exercise equipment. Nothing in this area is amiss. The room is empty.

Crew Living Area: These doors to these two areas will be locked. They can be opened with little effort by a variety of means. Inside the lights have been disabled and once the doors are opened a terrible smell will emanate from the rooms. Inside one room are seven bodies of the Mercantile 5 crew and both **UTF crewmembers** from the first UTF vessel. The other room will contain civilian casualties, six in number. The bodies have been carelessly strewn about the room. The two UTF crewmembers will have been thoroughly searched. Initial evidence shows that one of them may have been tortured before they died of wounds sustained in a firefight. All bodies will have been stripped of anything valuable.

Private Room (Passengers): This room is filled with 15 individual cabins for the wealthiest travelers. Each cabin has its own lavatory and food preparation facilities. All the cabins will show signs of having been ransacked and all

valuables will be missing. Several doors will have been kicked in and signs of violence (blood smears, tissue residue) will be easily apparent. If the characters take the time to check they will find the **ship's manifest** has been downloaded and deleted and all passenger records are missing.

Passenger Areas 1 & 2: This is simply a large room with 100 individual seats grouped in twos, threes, and fours. There are even some tables in between seat benches. It is an open seating area. All seats are equipped with restraints for hyperspace acceleration and deceleration. The seats would be littered with clothing and other items following an obvious search.

Note: Passengers must be properly secured in their seats during hyperspace acceleration and deceleration. The chairs emit EM fields that reduce the G-forces caused by entering and leaving hyperspace. Individuals not sitting in one of the seats can be seriously injured or killed. It is the most important safety measure on hyperspace transports.

Passenger Areas 3 & 4: These areas contain private rooms, but they are not as nice as those in the front of the passenger area. They would be in similar shape and all the rooms would have been looted.

Landing Pads 1 & 2: These are identical landing pads on either side of the Mercantile 5 that are designed to handle a single craft of small to medium size. The outer airlocks are behind security doors that can be opened from the inside or out. The outer airlock doors are the ones that are secretly wired to trigger the NC alarm. Once the doors

are opened the airlock can connect to most vessels to allow for normal environmental conditions to arriving passengers.

The outer airlock doors are set with the **hidden trigger** that will activate the NC signal. They can be detected by a number of methods if the characters are on the lookout. If they are completely oblivious, simply make an Awareness roll for the character with the highest Awareness score (-2 penalty). If they are detected then any character with an applicable skill or special ability can disable them. Disabling this first trigger will not affect the other signal devices. The characters will, however, get a +2 bonus to their Awareness roll when detecting/disabling them in the future once they are aware of the first one.

Failing to detect and disable the trigger will activate the device. Give the players two to three chances to disable the device if they have multiple ways to do so. If they are not successful, the final attempt should activate the alarm. If the device is activated it will immediately trigger a device on the bridge (buried deep in the main computer) that will jam ALL communication within the area. It will also alert the NightCrawlers that the ship has been compromised. They will arrive at the Mercantile 5 in 20 minutes.

Main Landing Area: Medium and Large vehicles will have to use this landing area to dock with the Mercantile 5. The airlocks in this area are equipped with the same security doors as the side landing areas. The main landing airlock is also wired with the NC signal device as well (same as above).

Elevators: The elevators are simple and plain and verbally communicate the floor numbers and level names as they travel up and down. They will not be locked and will function perfectly.

There should be no difficulty using them unless you see a reason to make the adventure more challenging.

Cargo/Storage Area

Front Loading Bay: These massive doors open when the ship is in dock. Large cargo can easily be loaded aboard through this opening. It cannot be opened while the ship is out of space dock except in an emergency. There is no way to pressurize the cargo area if these doors are opened.

Loading Dock Control Center (Area Y): This room in the front of the ship is where all the loading and unloading of cargo is controlled. All logistical systems used in organizing and monitoring the storage areas is also contained in here.

Side Loading Bays: There are three doors on either side of the Mercantile 5 that are able to open to assist in the loading of small and medium sized cargo. They are able to be opened while the ship is out of space dock as long as the cargo is secured and the interior rooms are sealed. The security doors are controlled from the Loading Dock Control Center (Area Y).

Cargo Areas (2-6): All of the cargo areas are empty. Everything that was originally on board has been offloaded by the NightCrawlers. Each cargo area is very large – almost 100 meters long, 50 meters wide, and 40 meters high. There will be various compartments and loosely hanging straps once used to tie down equipment. Scattered around the cargo areas will be equipment lockers

that contain tools and other supplies to assist with loading and unloading. Some of the tools will still be there, but most will have been taken.

Engine Room (Area 1): This area is located at the back of the lowest level of the Mercantile 5. It is filled with all types of machinery and propulsion systems. All of the equipment will be in perfect working order but will not function because of a device implanted in the main engine system that prevents initial M/AM ignition. Other than figuring out that the propulsion system has been tampered with, nothing of any value will be discovered in this area.

If there are any characters with applicable mechanics skill they can attempt to remove the device, but it will be buried very deeply. It will take hours to reach it removing various components unless special abilities are employed. This is one of the areas that characters can spend a lot of time searching for nothing. Try not to let them linger forever here. Perhaps let them hear a noise from the level above if they have not been to the Engine Control Room.

Engine Control Room (Area X): When the characters approach this room they will notice that the access door has been welded shut down the middle. The room itself is a square about 20 meters on each side. There are no windows in the room. There is an energy field active within the

room that will prohibit any scanning into the room and prevents any sound from escaping. Even Necrons will be unable to use their Subsonic Imaging to see inside. Once the characters manage to open the doors the field will be deactivated. All systems within the room will be fully functional.

Inside the room the lights will be off but as soon as the door is penetrated even slightly the characters will hear the screaming of children of inside. Once light enters the room they will see two children (10-year old human girl, Samantha, and an 8-year old Grimalkin boy, N'Ruan) tied to a support pole in the middle of the room. The children will be hysterical and it will take the skill persuasion (count as hostile targets) or other special abilities to quiet them. Sedatives from a standard first aid kit would at least make the screaming stop. The children will be filthy since they have been tied up for two days without being able to leave to go to the bathroom. They will be also be starving since they were not left any food. Their appearance is meant to be startling since the NightCrawlers intend it to throw off the UTF crew that is coming. The NCs were willing to leave the children for as long as 5 days in the darkened room.

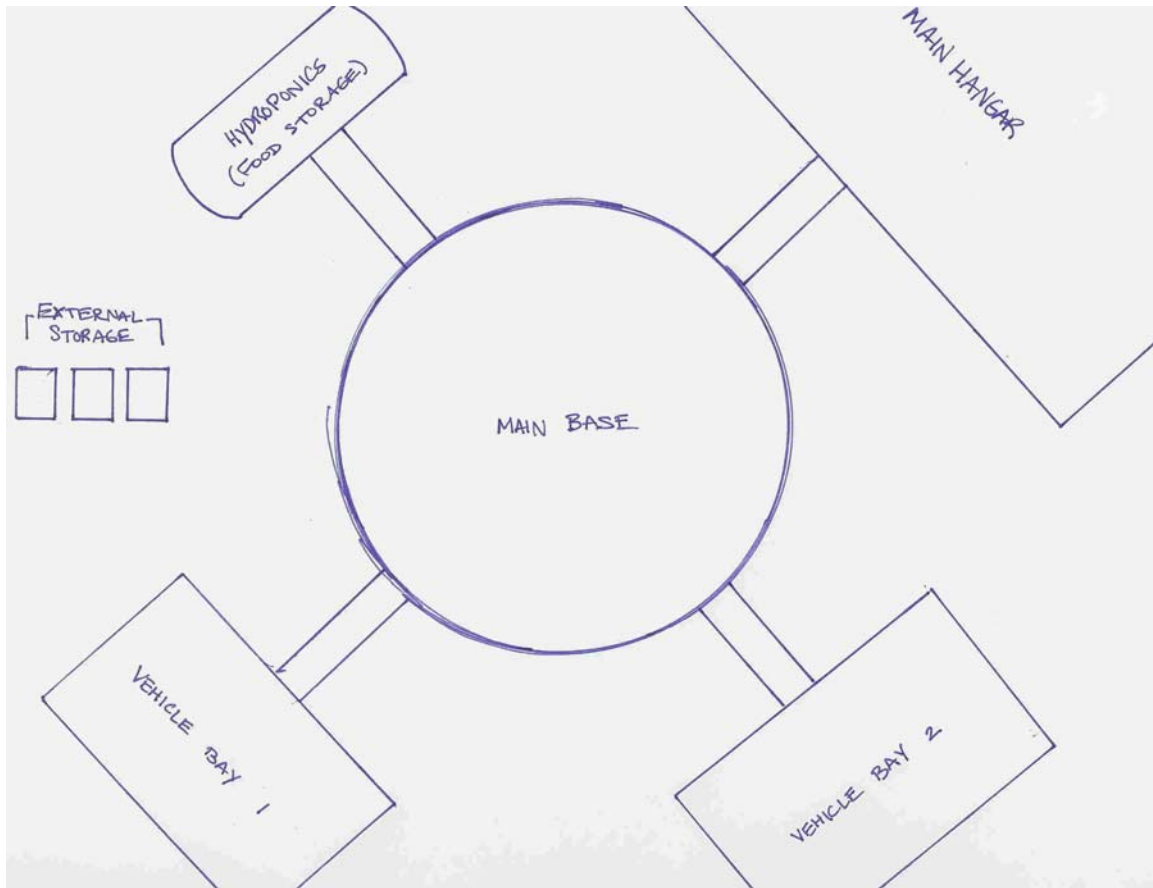
Tied to the children is what appears to be a very complicated bomb made from nitroplastic. There will be enough explosives to take out the entire room but not penetrate the hull. Duplicate

systems exist on the bridge so the ship will still function. The children cannot be removed without the bomb being deactivated. This is another NC diversion meant to slow whoever boards the ship so that they can be surprised more easily once the NC ships arrive. The explosive device is unnecessarily complicated for no other reason than to make it hard to diffuse (Comp Level 6).

Once the children are free they can be stored in the spare seats on the SHS, but should be sedated for their own good until the mission is completed. Their parents are currently held hostage at the NC base.

As GM you can decide whether or not to make the bomb a fake or not – base it on the skill level of the characters and players involved. The children should be saved and if the characters are too willing to sacrifice or leave them remind them they are the good guys and CAT HQ would want the children to be recovered. It will be easy to tell them a story to cover CAT's identity.

NightCrawler Base Layout



Base Layout Key:

The characters need to enter the base as discretely as possible. If they go for a complete assault they must disable the command center as quickly as possible or the NCs will use hostages as shields, start killing them, and activate all the base defense systems. This will make the CAT team's job very difficult. Try to subtly discourage them from running in stupidly unless they have a good plan to make it to the command center quickly and have the ability to bypass the security measures.

Main Base: The main NC Base is a large dome connected to four external buildings by access tubes secured by

airlocks at both ends. The base is approximately 100 meters in diameter and is well armed and has a strong Energy Shield (500 SP). The weapon systems will not be on standby and the shield will not be active since the NCs have no reason to suspect discovery. The entire base is painted to match the asteroid and is almost unnoticeable – the characters will be able to watch the NC ship(s) land, which will make it easy to find. Details of the interior of the base are outlined below.

Vehicle Bay 1: This is where the NCs keep their own ships. It will contain 5 small fighters, 3 shuttles, and one large

heavily armed vessel designed to look like an ordinary cargo ship. There will be 10-15 NC pilots and mechanics in this room at any one time working on their vehicles. If the characters engaged the NC boarding party the returning ship(s) will cause the hangar to be on alert as the NCs will send a larger group to investigate and secure the Mercantile 5. This is not a good room to try and get into in any sort of covert manner.

Vehicle Bay 2: This is where the NCs are currently holding their hostages. Makeshift cages will be set up to house the captives from the various hijacked ships. All the men will be segregated and kept under more security than the women and children. At this point the prisoners will have been treated relatively well and at least will have been fed. Lavatory trips will be scheduled and the prisoners will go in groups of two (individually for the men) under armed escort.

There are 250 hostages in total. 25 NC are assigned to maintain order and manage the logistics of housing the prisoners. Only about 15 will be in Vehicle Bay 2 at any one time. They will be armed with a knife, energy pistol, and stun rifle (carried).

Main Hangar: This is an enormous room where all the vehicles captured by the NCs are stored. Several engineers and guards will be in the room doing various tasks. One side of hangar will be filled with cargo that has been

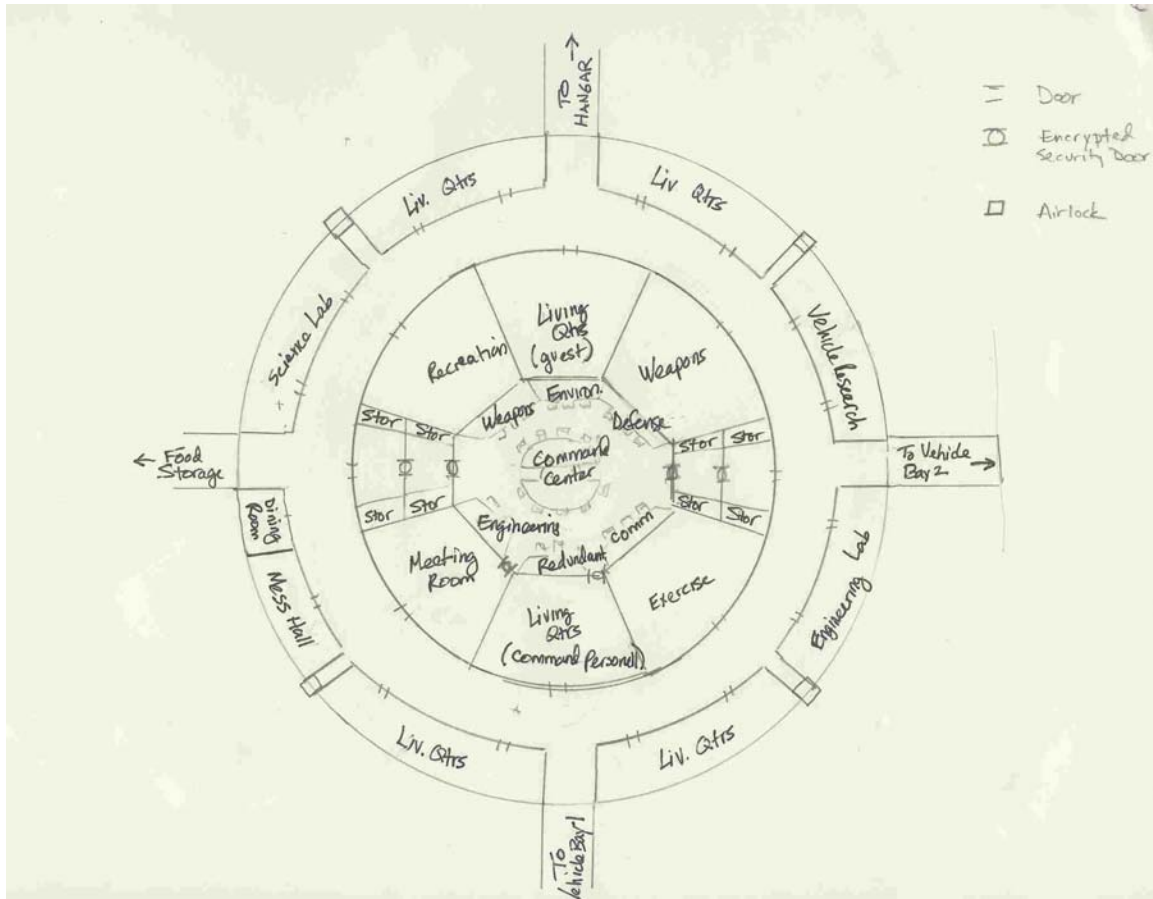
organized for the BM representatives to review. All the cargo that has been removed has either been sold or is stashed in the external storage area.

Food Storage (Hydroponics): The hydroponics room is the best way for the characters to infiltrate the NC base. Under normal circumstances it does not house any guards and only 3 or 4 low-level NCs will be in the room at any one time taking care of the food. Fresh fruits and vegetables are constantly being grown and combined with stored foodstuffs to be taken to the mess hall. The room is full of trees and will make an excellent hiding place for gear, or even the characters for short periods of time. The outer airlocks are frequently used since food waste is taken to a dumpsite within walking distance (thrown down a large cavern).

Walking on the asteroid is slow since it has only .6 Terran gravity.

External Storage: Three large storage tanks are located just outside the NC base. They are marked **FUEL**, but only two of them actually contain spare fuel (used in some older vehicles for backup systems). The third is packed with stolen merchandise obtained from the hijacked ships. The only way to reach them is to walk (in a spacesuit). The NCs hope the BM will not hassle with going all the way out to check.

NightCrawler Main Base



Base Crew Compliment:

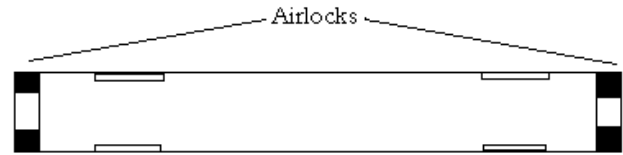
- 1 Base Commander (Leucen Jordan, Human)
- 4 Lt. Commanders (Humans)
- 10 Officers (2 Andarians, 2 Grimalkins, 6 Humans)
- 10 Pilots (Humans)
- 50 Guards (20 Garians, 30 Humans)
- 1 Chief Scientist (Dr. Flavian, Necron)
- 9 Scientists/Researchers (2 Necrons, 7 Humans)
- 15 Workers (2 Andarians, 2 Grimalkins, 3 Garians, 8 Humans)



Total = 100

Main Base Layout Key:

Airlock/Transfer Tunnels: These are the tunnels that connect the Main Base with the 4 outer buildings. For security purposes, they have airlocks at either end. The tunnels are relatively plain and have only limited storage on the walls. There are no windows.



Inner Ring

Living Quarters (Guest): There are four of these rooms in the NC base that are lavishly appointed and reserved for the NC's special guests – such as the BM representatives.

Weapons: The Weapon Room not only contains the cache of weapons for the entire NC base, but also a training area. The weapon storage is mounted on the inner wall and will be locked. The training area includes a holographic targeting range.

Exercise Room: This room contains numerous pieces of exercise equipment, including an elaborate treadmill equipped with holographic projectors. Anyone using the device can choose from several surroundings all of which match the speed and incline of the treadmill.

Living Quarters (Command Personnel): The command personnel have much nicer quarters than the crew and includes a central lounge area. There are 5 rooms in all, the largest belonging to the base commander. They will store much of their personal effects in these rooms, which can only be accessed by command-level staff. The base commander will have a personal computer that contains a log with daily

entries that will spell out the entire NC plan (including trying to sell equipment out from under the BM).

Meeting Room: This well-appointed room is very spacious and trimmed elegantly with magnite and hardwood accents. Several viewscreens are imbedded in the wall and there is a computer terminal on the main conference table. The large table in the middle of the room seats up to 20 people comfortably. There are 10 additional chairs that line the outer walls for support staff.

Recreation Room: This room is open to all staff and guests. It is filled with numerous electronic and computer games. There is also an antique billiards table and several other leisure sport games. Several couches and chairs are located in the middle of the room for individuals interested just in conversation.

Secured Entry Areas: Access to the command center is restricted so that all individuals must pass through the secured entry areas. In addition, the command personnel can access the meeting room and command living quarters (one way access). To enter the command center, individuals must pass

through two sets of security doors. The first door uses a keycard system for access. Cards are only assigned to base staff that require access to the area. The second security door uses a retina scan to verify identity and authenticate security clearance. The entry areas, like the rest of the base are monitored at the command center through a closed-circuit digital camera system embedded in the wall (it is not visible to the naked eye).

Command Center: This is the heart of the NC base and all critical functions are controlled from this area. In the center of the room is a large conference table split in two so individuals can pass in the middle. This is where the command personnel and other senior staff hold meetings regarding important base operations. Any private discussions between the commanders occur in the command personnel lounge.

Surrounding the inner conference table are the command modules. Each one controls a different aspect of base operations and there is one **Redundant** control panel that can run them all in case the primary systems fail. The five control areas are: **Weapon Systems** (external and internal), **Environmental Systems** (internal control systems), **Defense Systems** (external and internal including cameras), **Engineering**

(control and monitoring of most base electrical and mechanical systems), and **Communications** (internal and external).

Access to the command center is only through the secured entry areas. The command center can close any of the security doors located throughout the base (about every 20 meters for safety purposes) as well as the security doors. From the command center the command personnel can also access the meeting room and their private living quarters. These doors cannot be opened from the other side.

If the characters perform any kind of assault on the NC base, the command personnel will all retreat to the command center. In addition, they will activate the base lockdown and all secure areas will be sealed off until the situation is under control. The research labs, weapons and meeting rooms will be sealed. Access can be restored by the command center if they are able to confirm visually that those areas are not compromised. The four external transfer tunnels will also be locked down. Communication between the different areas of the base will be unaffected. All guards will draw weapons and several will carry Laser Rifles.

Outer Ring

A large enough explosion can breach the **Outer Ring** exterior walls. If they are penetrated in any way, the particular room affected will be immediately cutoff from the rest of the base until the breach can be sealed. The room will immediately depressurize and all contents will be blown into the non-

atmosphere of the asteroid. They will not float away, however, because of the asteroid's gravitational field. Death will be imminent for all unprotected individuals. See "Oxygen Deprivation" in the *Combat* book for more details.

Living Quarters: There are four of these rooms and all are identical for all practical purposes. They will be filled with bunk beds and storage lockers and will closely resemble a military barracks. Numerous items of interest can be found if all the lockers are searched: credits, weapons, equipment, etc. There will always be several individuals sleeping in the beds since the shifts in the base are round the clock. Unless an alarm is raised all will be easily surprised if the characters chose to attack.

Note: The night crew is significantly smaller than their daytime counterparts.

Vehicle Research Lab: This is the lab where the Necron scientist, Dr. Flavian, is currently attempting to copy any unique technology from the ships captured. Dr. Flavian will be working frantically to finish his assignment before the BM arrives. The lab will be equipped with state of the art technology that allows the captured ships to be scanned in detail without having to be dismantled. If the characters take the time to search the records or monitor the use of the system they will notice that it is far beyond the scanning capability of the UTF military. This was Dr. Flavian's unique contribution to the NCs. Any character with an Electronics, Mechanical Engineering, or similar skill will have a chance to detect the value of the technology.

This technology will be very useful to CAT and **50 additional EP** should be rewarded if they figure this out and recover the blueprints or a sample of the system.

Note: Necrons are the least likely race in the UTF to be involved in illegal

activity. On Trillian, Necrons who break the law receive massive punishments and are looked upon as outcasts from society. As such, any Necron within the CAT will be personally affronted to see a fellow Necron helping a group such as the NightCrawlers. Necron criminals are relatively rare, but just like any other race many have a price. Their intelligence and creativity usually make them highly prized and very expensive. The fact that a group this size has three Necrons is extremely unusual and speaks to the amount of money the NCs have spent. The NC commanders will boast about their 3 Necrons on staff to the BM when they arrive.

Engineering Lab: This lab has two main functions: it is where all the base engineering design and repair takes place, and the technology recovered by Dr; Flavian's team is duplicated. It is headed by one of the two Necron scientists and will be staffed with an additional 3 human assistants (2 are on staff at all times). Numerous mechanical devices will be found in this room for the manufacturing and repair of almost any type of device. Half the systems will be set up to handle base requirements and the rest will be for the reproduction of pirated technology.

Mess Hall/Dining Room: This large room operates continually all day and feeds the entire base staff as well as the prisoners (which has required all mess hall staff to work additional hours – a point of contention among those affected). It consists two long tables with seating capacities of 25 per table. The kitchen is located at one end of the room and the private dining room on the other. The dining room is for command personnel and guests and has its own

entrance. It is a lavishly appointed room with a large round table and can hold up to 15 people. It is always set and ready to be used at a moment's notice. The mess hall staff will also deliver food to the command personnel private quarters upon request.

Science Lab: The science lab is where all scientific analysis and experiments not performed in other areas of the base occur. It is headed by the last Necron scientist and is staffed by four human scientists, of which two or three are on duty based on the time of day. This is one of the busiest rooms on the base as NC staff members are always bringing supplies in and out of the laboratory; as many as 6 additional crew will be in the lab any time of the day. Numerous pieces of analytical equipment will be found in this lab and will run the gamete of scientific specialties, from genetics to astrophysics. There are five distinct work areas are: Biological & Medical Sciences, Electronics, Computer Engineering, Vehicle & Mechanical Engineering, and Physical Sciences (Geology, Physics, etc.).

Dr. Flavian's personal office (and modest sleeping quarters) will also be located in this lab and he will spend most of his nights within it pouring over data. From this location he can monitor all the experiments occurring anywhere within the NC base. If the characters are able to download all the information in his computer system (very advanced encoded password system – CL 8), they will be able to get the same **50 EP bonus** as if they had recovered the scanning technology from the Vehicle Research Lab.

Individual Statistics

These are the individual stats for the human NC base personnel (unless stated otherwise). They are described by work function and individual statistics can be modified for race. As an example, just add a few points to the Health and Toughness of the Andarians and Garians. See the “GM Controlled Characters” section in the *Combat* book for more specifics. In combat, fine details become irrelevant – never spend a lot of time making a GM character that will probably be killed in one or two shots.

Command Personnel (5)

Strength: 10	Reaction Time: 20
Intelligence: 11	Speed Rank: 2
Endurance: 8	No. of Attacks: 2
Dexterity: 10	H2H Dam: 2d6
Health: 25	Height: 1.8 m
Toughness: 15	Weight: 80 kg
Accuracy: 14	Armor: 2
Defense: 14	
Awareness: 12	

Weapons: Laser Pistol (3 attacks, +4 Prob. to hit), Survival Knife
Equipment: Command Level Key Card, Communicator

Officers (10)

Strength: 8	Reaction Time: 16
Intelligence: 7	Speed Rank: 2
Endurance: 8	No. of Attacks: 2
Dexterity: 10	H2H Dam: 2d6
Health: 20	Height: 1.8 m
Toughness: 10	Weight: 80 kg
Accuracy: 10	Armor: 1
Defense: 10	
Awareness: 10	

Weapons: Laser Pistol, Survival Knife
Equipment: Officer Level Key Card (all areas but command), Communicator

Dr. Flavian (Necron)

Strength: 5	Reaction Time: 19
Intelligence: 14	Speed Rank: 2
Endurance: 6	No. of Attacks: 1
Dexterity: 6	H2H Dam: 1d6
Health: 18	Height: 1.2 m
Toughness: 7	Weight: 50 kg
Accuracy: 6	Armor: 0
Defense: 6	
Awareness: 18	

Weapons: None
Equipment: Officer Level Key Card, Communicator, Mini-Computer

Scientists/Researchers (9)

Strength: 6	Reaction Time: 12
Intelligence: 12	Speed Rank: 2
Endurance: 6	No. of Attacks: 1
Dexterity: 6	H2H Dam: 1d6
Health: 16	Height: 1.7 m
Toughness: 6	Weight: 70 kg
Accuracy: 8	Armor: 0
Defense: 8	
Awareness: 14	

Weapons: None
Equipment: Research Level Key Card (all science areas and general access), Communicator

Guards (50)

Strength: 10	Reaction Time: 15
Intelligence: 6	Speed Rank: 2
Endurance: 10	No. of Attacks: 1
Dexterity: 9	H2H Dam: 1d6
Health: 20	Height: 1.9 m
Toughness: 10	Weight: 85 kg
Accuracy: 8	Armor: 2
Defense: 8	
Awareness: 8	

Weapons: Stun Pistol, Energy Pistol, Survival Knife, Energy Grenades (2)
Equipment: Security Level Key Card (all areas but command), Communicator

Workers (15)

Strength: 6	Reaction Time: 14
Intelligence: 6	Speed Rank: 2
Endurance: 6	No. of Attacks: 1
Dexterity: 6	H2H Dam: 1d6
Health: 15	Height: 1.8 m
Toughness: 8	Weight: 70 kg
Accuracy: 8	Armor: 0
Defense: 8	
Awareness: 9	
Weapons: None	
Equipment: General Access Key Card (common areas only), Communicator	

Pilots (10)

Strength: 10	Reaction Time: 20
Intelligence: 10	Speed Rank: 2
Endurance: 9	No. of Attacks: 2
Dexterity: 12	H2H Dam: 2d6
Health: 22	Height: 1.9 m
Toughness: 12	Weight: 80 kg
Accuracy: 13	Armor: 1
Defense: 13	
Awareness: 14	
Weapons: Energy Pistol, Survival Knife	
Equipment: Security Level Key Card, Communicator	

Vehicle Statistics

These are the individual stats for the CAT Stealth Hyperspace Shuttle, UTF Deep Space Fighter, and the NC vehicles located within the base. Make any modifications you deem necessary if the characters engage in significant vehicle combat.

Stealth Hyperspace Shuttle

Vehicle Data

Vehicle type: Prototype
Movement type: M/AM
Speed: Top: 50 H
Cruise: 90C (sub-light)
Max. Altitude: N/A
Maneuverability: 12
Fuel: 10 years
Computer: AI
Crew: 1
Passengers: 8

Structural Data

Structural Points: 1,500
Armor Points: 250
Energy shield: 300 pts
Length: 18 m
Width: 4 m
Weight: 5,000 metric tons
Maximum load: 5,000 kg

Weapon Systems: Plasma Gatling Cannons x 3, Laser-Guided Missiles (6)

Notes: There is currently only one SHS in operation exclusively by CAT. The stealth and hyperspace technology is experimental, but has operated perfectly up to this point. It has room for 9 people and has a relatively large storage area (2 meters high, 3 meters wide, and 2 meters deep), which contains one suspension chamber. This chamber will keep one humanoid in suspended animation for up to six months. The stealth technology makes it invisible to the naked eye and

all known scanners. The location of the SHS can be extrapolated by AI-equipped vehicles if its weapons are used.

UTF Deep Space Fighters (2)

Vehicle Data

Vehicle type: Combat spacecraft
Movement type: Fusion jet (within atmosphere) and M/AM (in space)
Speed: Top: 90C
Cruise: 75C
Max. Altitude: N/A
Maneuverability: 16
Fuel: 1 year
Computer: AI
Crew: 2
Passengers: 0

Structural Data

Structural Points: 1,000
Armor Points: 150
Energy shield: 100 pts
Length: 14 m
Width: 8 m wingspan
Weight: 2,000 metric tons
Maximum load: 1,000 kg

Weapon Systems: Energy cannons x 2, Plasma Gatling cannon

Notes: These are modified versions of the normal UTF Space Fighter equipped for deep space missions. One of these fighters is in the possession of the NCs, the other is in transport to rendezvous with the Mercantile 5.

NightCrawler Surface Transports (4)

Vehicle Data

Vehicle type: Ground (Wheeled)

Movement type: Wheeled

Speed:

Top: 200 km/h

Cruise: 120 km/h

Max. altitude: --

Maneuverability: 18

Fuel: 17 hours

Computer: Manual

Crew: 1

Passengers: 4

Structural Data

Structural Points: 200

Armor Points: 25

Energy shield: None

Length: 4.5 m

Width: 2 m

Weight: 1,300 kg

Max load: 900 kg

Notes: These vehicles are used for traveling long distances on the asteroid where the NC base is located. Since the base has been completed they are not used very often.

NightCrawler Fighters (5)

Vehicle Data

Vehicle type: Combat spacecraft

Movement type: Fusion jet

Speed: Top: 50C

Cruise: 25C

Max. Altitude: N/A

Maneuverability: 18

Fuel: 3 years

Computer: AI

Crew: 1

Passengers: 1

Structural Data

Structural Points: 1,200

Armor Points: 180

Energy shield: 150 pts

Length: 15 m

Width: 9 m wingspan

Weight: 4,000 metric tons

Maximum load: 2,000 kg

Weapon Systems: Energy cannons x 2, Plasma Gatling Cannon

Notes: These vessels are slightly larger and more powerful than the UTF version.

NightCrawler Shuttles (3)

Vehicle Data

Vehicle type: Spacecraft

Movement type: Fusion

Speed:

Top: 60C

Cruise: 30C

Max altitude: N/A

Maneuverability: 20

Fuel: 5 years

Computer: AI

Crew: 2

Passengers: 15

Structural Data

Structural Points: 1,800

Armor Points: 150

Energy shield: None

Length: 25 m

Width: 5 m

Weight: 9,000 metric tons

Maximum load: 10,000 kg

Weapon Systems: Energy cannons x 2

Notes: These converted interstellar shuttles are smaller and more maneuverable than their commercial counterparts.

NightCrawler Combat Craft (1)

Vehicle Data

Vehicle type: Spacecraft, large

Movement type: M/AM

Speed: Top: 40C

Cruise: 20C

Max altitude: N/A

Maneuverability: 23

Fuel: 5 years

Computer: AI

Crew: 5

Passengers: 10

Structural Data

Structural Points: 3,000

Armor Points: 400

Energy shield: 400 pts

Length: 40 m

Width: 12 m

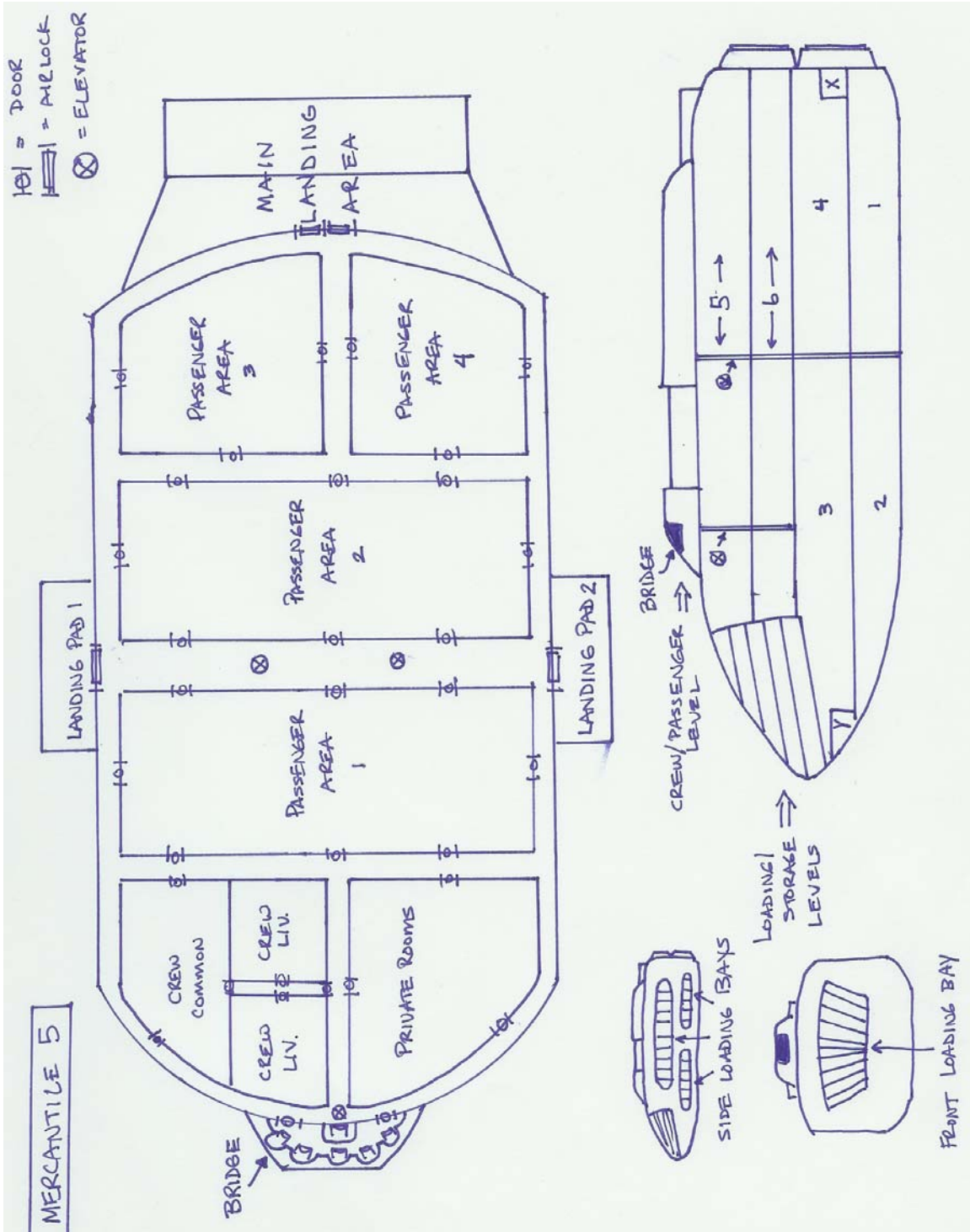
Weight: 15,000 metric tons

Maximum Load: 25,000 kg

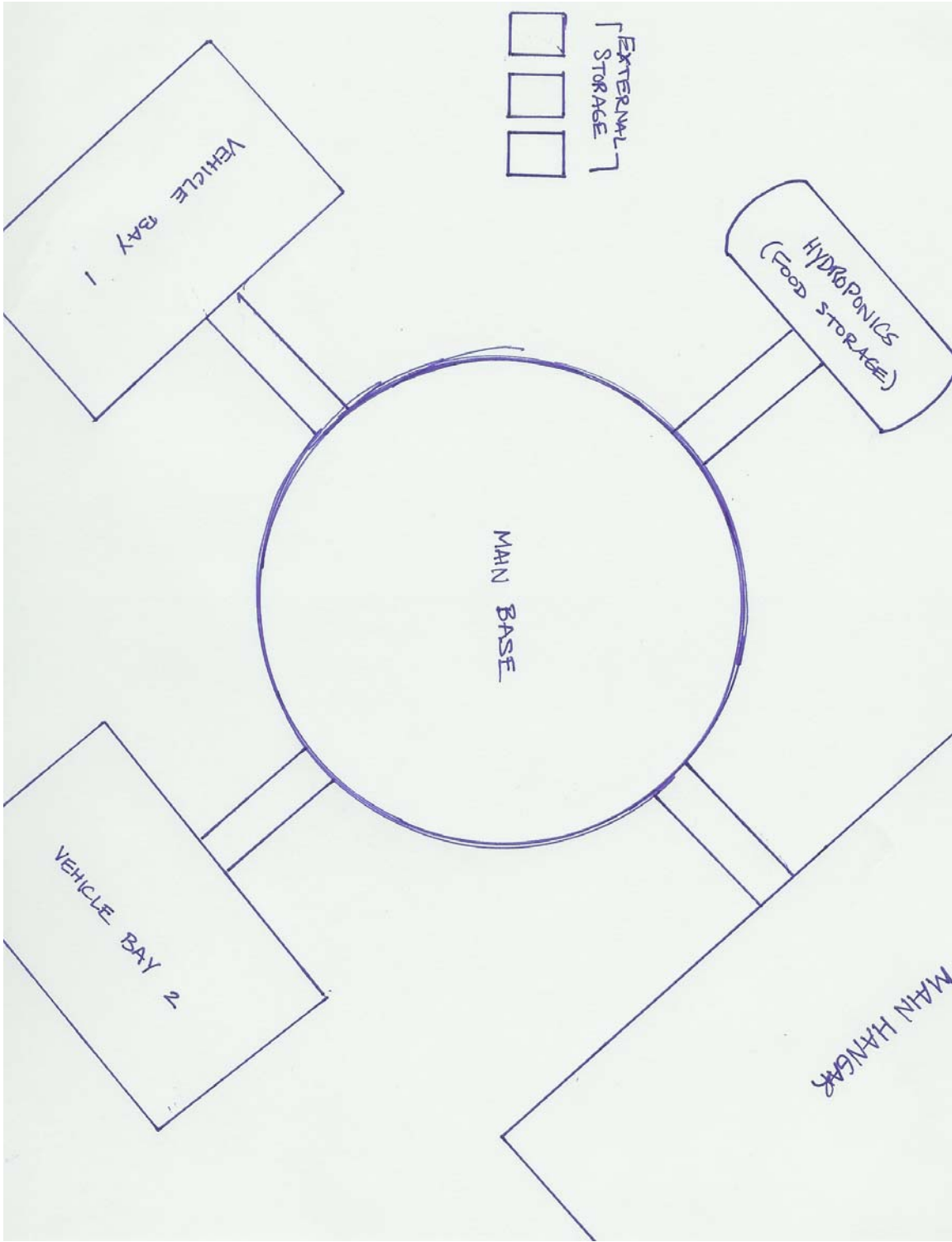
Weapon Systems: Inferno beams (2), Plasma Gatling Cannons (4), Nuclear Rifle, Laser-Guided Missiles (40)

Notes: This vessel is disguised as a normal interstellar cargo ship. All weapon systems are retractable and undetectable when not deployed.

Player Handout #1



Player Handout #2



Player Handout #3

