

SPECIFICATIONS

GALLIARD APPLIED SYSTEMS BWV-AT-01 "BACH"

HEIGHT
WEIGHT
728 cm
24680 kg
GA-GN-86 FORTE
FCS-DS G-3
40 mm Ph

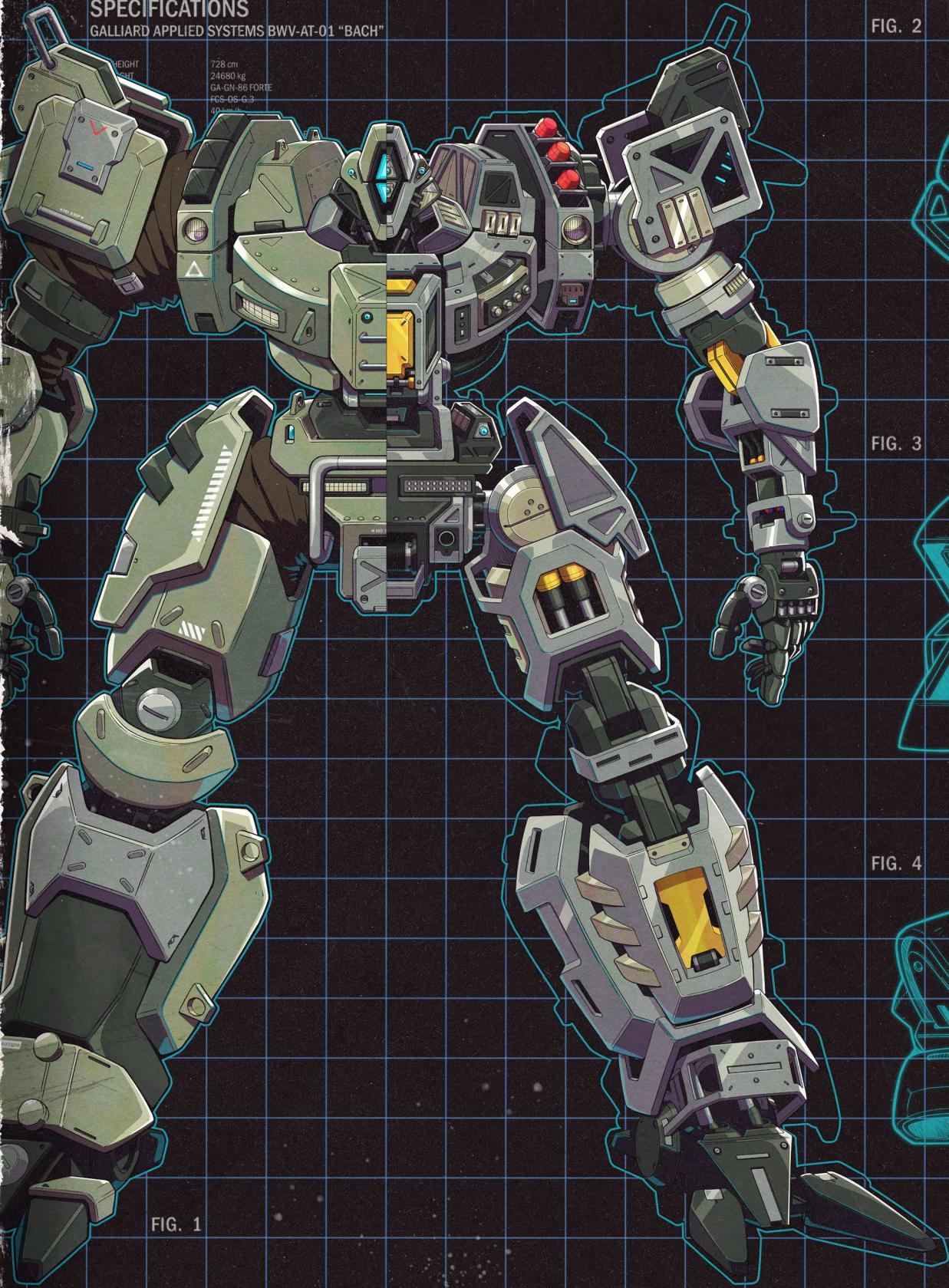


FIG. 2



FIG. 3

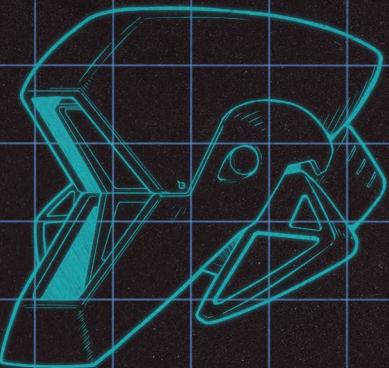


FIG. 4

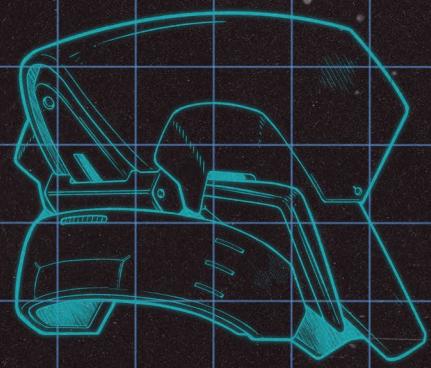


FIG. 1

LANCER: NPCS REBAKED

ARMORED COMBATANT RECOGNITION AND SPECIFICATION GUIDE

LANCER

REBAKED NPCS

BY Kai Tave

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SPECIAL THANKS TO the many pilots and GMs on the PilotNET Discord server who provided feedback and stories from their games during playtesting.

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LANCER

NPCS REBAKED

— POWERED BY —

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L I N L E K

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INTRODUCTION

Welcome to *Lancer: NPCs Rebaked*. This supplement is intended to give GMs an assortment of NPC options that can replace or exist alongside those found in the *Lancer* core rulebook, with an eye towards transparency, ease of use, readily graspable tactics, and memorable challenges for their players to be pitted against.

To forestall any confusion, it should be immediately clarified that this is not an official first-party *Lancer* supplement. *Lancer: NPCs Rebaked* is a third-party supplement based entirely on my own personal experiences and ideas regarding *Lancer*'s NPC design, and it should not be considered official material or a secret "*Lancer 1.5 edition*" or anything along those lines.

This supplement is, in part, comprised of material taken from the *Lancer* core rulebook with my own changes and adjustments made, in various places and in various degrees. All material reproduced here is done so with permission from Tom Bloom and Massif Press.

So what does this supplement entail, exactly?

Lancer: NPCs Rebaked features the following:

- New NPC Structure Damage and Overheating tables, designed for those NPCs that aren't standard enemies but also aren't **ULTRAS** either, made to be simpler and more streamlined.
- NPCs Rebaked. All 30 of the *Lancer* core rulebook's mech NPCs, from the **ACE** to the **WITCH**, have been given overhauls designed to make them more cohesive, give them more sharply-focused tactical and gameplay identities, and smooth out what I feel to be rough and unintuitive edges.
- Bespoke **GRUNTS**. Rather than a template, these **GRUNTS** are bespoke units designed to be **GRUNTS** from the outset. Simple and straightforward, these units require no construction or choosing among 30 different NPC classes.
- The Revised **VETERAN** Template. A new look at the **VETERAN** template, which now gives NPCs the chance to take unique class-specific traits to represent their experience and training.
- The Revised **ULTRA** Template. Designed with greater dramatic impact and interaction in mind, this new **ULTRA** template broadens the selection of powerful **ULTRA** traits, weapons, and systems to enable a wider variety of playstyles, while avoiding frustrating blanket immunities that can discourage players from attempting various tactics.

Each of these elements is designed with an eye towards modularity; you can use them together or pick individual components that you wish to use while ignoring the rest, and you can use them as a replacement for core rulebook material or alongside it. For example, you could use bespoke **GRUNTS** and also make use of the core rulebook's **GRUNT** template, or you could choose not to use the new Structure Damage and Overheating tables if you prefer the viscerality of the default version. You can even use rebaked NPCs alongside their core rulebook versions if you want. None of these components require the use of others in order to function.

Throughout this supplement, I will offer my personal thoughts on the various components, both in order to set them down on paper for my own satisfaction as well as explaining to you, the reader and prospective GM, what I've decided to change and why, in the hopes that it makes it easier to discern what exactly has changed and more transparent in terms of things like tactics and mechanics. Maybe you'll agree with these decisions and maybe you won't, but the important thing is that you have a clear picture of things so you can come to your own informed conclusions.

This project, in particular the NPC rebakes which make up the majority of it, share some common goals in terms of a broad, systemic design framework.

- Everything in this supplement is designed to cleave as closely to the original designs as possible. I'm not looking to radically reinvent NPCs into completely new configurations, for example, though this does sort of happen in a couple of places. I want the barrier between knowing how the core version of an NPC works and how the rebake version works to be as low as possible, and the same applies to things like **GRUNTS** and templates.
- NPC rebakes are designed with an eye towards standardizing various NPC stats such as **HASE** score, **HEAT CAP**, **SPEED**, **ARMOR**, etc. In some cases, NPCs have large, seemingly-arbitrary jumps in various stats at various tiers, suddenly gaining **+5 SENSORS**, or having a stat that rapidly scales upwards, or gaining **ARMOR** where previously they had none. These revised versions smooth these progressions out where I feel it's warranted so they feel less arbitrary and more intuitive for GMs as the NPCs go up in tier (instead of blindsiding unfamiliar GMs with "oh wait, I didn't know this went up that much").

- Along with this, many instances of NPC to-hit numbers have been more tightly bound across the board. A lot of NPCs have a degree of **ACCURACY** baked into their attacks which is frankly excessive (such as melee weapons, which can never be affected by things like cover, sporting an inherent **+2♦**). This can often lead to things like **EVASION**, **E-DEFENSE**, taking cover, and inflicting **IMPAIRED** feeling devalued and less important. Tom himself has even noted this in the past, which is why the NPC classes found in modules like *No Room For a Wallflower* have much lower average to-hit values. As such, I've refactored a lot of these numbers into something intended to promote both more counterplay (taking cover or applying conditions like **IMPAIRED**) and teamwork (encouraging NPCs to help one another out with **LOCK ON**, flanking enemies, destroying cover, etc).
- Some NPCs gain multiple attacks as they go up in Tier (i.e. making two attacks at a time at T2 and three attacks at a time at T3). Due to this, these NPCs very often result in extreme power spikes at higher tiers as their damage output multiplicatively scales. Because of this, I've removed this multi-attack capability outright from almost all NPCs that have it, such as **OPERATORS**, **RONINS**, and **SPECTERS**. Instead, their weapons will scale by increasing in damage as most other NPCs do, bringing them more in line with the majority of the NPC compendium and making it easier for GMs running games at higher tiers to account for their inclusion in enemy compositions.

So you can keep these in mind as you go through the rest of the supplement, where I'll have more specific commentary on individual elements.

It's also worth noting that there are a number of *Lancer*'s core rulebook NPC catalogue which I didn't decide to revise, such as various other templates, NPC classes like the **SQUAD** and **MONSTROSITY**, etc. For this particular project, I chose to focus on elements that I felt would be most common and broadly applicable to the majority of *Lancer* games, which naturally includes the NPCs themselves, along with templates that are most commonly reached for (and most commonly critiqued, debated, and modified by GMs and their groups). Other templates, while I certainly have thoughts on them, are less pressing matters, and plus it can start to feel like "well if I did this then shouldn't I also do that," and part of finishing a project is knowing when to go "okay I'm finished." These are the parts that interested me the most, so these are the parts I decided to focus on.

And in some cases, I feel that other people have already done extensive work with these other elements, and if I were to attempt to do the same thing I would simply be retreading already trodden ground. **SQUADS**, for example, are an NPC type that people have been putting their own spin on for years now, and there are plenty of alternate versions out there for people interested in trying them out.

In fact, here are some other NPC-related projects for *Lancer* that you can check out:

THE GM'S GUIDE TO BUILDING ENCOUNTERS

BY OWACS ENDER

[OWACSENDER.SUBSTACK.COM/P/THE-GMS-GUIDE-TO-BUILDING-LANCER](https://owacsender.substack.com/p/the-gms-guide-to-building-lancer)

Every GM has to start somewhere, and while *NPCs Rebaked* is probably more likely to appeal to more experienced *Lancer* GMs who've already taken the core NPCs for countless spins and want something new (though newer GMs can absolutely make use of them), this guide to encounter building gives aspiring GMs a solid foundation in the basics of encounter creation, from the narrative side to the tactical, and the OPFOR creation guidelines listed here hold just as true for rebake NPCs as they do for standard ones.

PROTOTYPE PATTERN GROUPS BY VALKYRION

[VALKYRION.ITCH.IO/PROTOTYPE-PATTERN-GROUPS](https://valkyrion.itch.io/prototype-pattern-groups)

A collection of a dozen new NPCs along with a new template (the **BRIGAND**) that looks to poke at and expand on the **PIRATE** template in a way that's less damage-oriented (**SPLINTER ROUNDS** go home). It also has a selection of optional rules for things like NPC heat, NHP cascading, and its own alternate Structure Damage and Overheating rules.

GMS CRISIS CATALOG BY MARIA LOPEZ

[ESBIONARSHADOW.ITCH.IO/GMS-CRISIS-CATALOGUE](https://esbionarshadow.itch.io/gms-crisis-catalogue)

Though this supplement contains new player-facing content, it also has an extensive selection of GM-facing material, including new Structure Damage and Overheating rules (you may be sensing a pattern here), several assortments of new NPCs including rules for things like **SQUADRONS** and **GUNSHIPS**, and even comes with an associated mission that GMs can use for it as well.



SQUAD KITS BY RECONUS

[RECONUS.ITCH.IO/LANCER-SQUAD-KITS](https://reconus.itch.io/lancer-squad-kits)

One of the NPC classes that *NPCs Rebaked* doesn't really touch on is the **SQUAD**, and one of the reasons why it doesn't is because I feel that the **SQUAD** is an NPC deserving of more attention than a simple rebake. Another reason is because someone's already gone and done that. With 66 options spread across 22 different Squad Kits, this supplement goes into extensive detail such that any similar efforts on my part would be a pale imitation by comparison. If you want to bring more infantry into your combats, this is the place to find them.

RAID BOSSES - A GUIDE FOR LANCER BY FINALJAS90

[FINALJAS90.ITCH.IO/FINALJAS90S-RAID-BOSSES](https://finaljas90.itch.io/finaljas90s-raid-bosses)

One thing that *Lancer*'s NPC roster doesn't really handle, whether it's in the core rulebook or this supplement, is "solo bosses," opponents that are meant to serve as a meaningful combat challenge in and of themselves. Ultras are strong, sure, but they don't really accomplish this goal. This supplement consists of a design document detailing the means and methods by which you might create such an enemy to challenge your players, taking inspiration from games like *ICON*, *Gubat Banwa*, and *Log Horizon*, as well as MMOs, along with four pre-generated example bosses you can use right out of the box.

Some final notes before getting into the main material: at various places throughout this supplement, you will see the term OPFOR used. OPFOR is a military acronym that stands for "Opposing Force," and is typically used during training exercises to represent the side that's taking on the role of the enemy. As it's used here, OPFOR indicates the NPC side in *Lancer*'s tactical combat, comprising the enemy composition that the PCs are pitted against.

Additionally, mention is made (if only in one place) of the **INTANGIBLE** status, first formally codified in *Field Guide: The Karrakin Trade Baronies*. Intangible works thusly:

STATUS: INTANGIBLE

INTANGIBLE characters can move through obstructions such as characters or terrain but not end their turns in them. They, their actions, and any effects they own or control can only affect other Intangible characters and objects. Tangible characters can move through **INTANGIBLE** characters and objects but not end their turns inside their spaces and can't affect them in any way. **INTANGIBLE** characters cannot capture points or count for zones (for sitreps) and don't count as adjacent to tangible characters.

Effects that are already active on a character when they become Intangible, such as statuses, remain active, but effects that require an ongoing interaction between two characters or objects (like traps or force fields) end. If a mech becomes **INTANGIBLE**, its pilot remains **INTANGIBLE** for the same duration.

Lastly, you may be (rightly) wondering... why "rebake?" Rebake in this case is a reference to the ASW-G-11 Gundam Gusion Rebake from *Gundam: Iron-Blooded Orphans*, which is a revamped and modified version of the ASW-G-11 Gundam Gusion, hence these revamped and modified NPCs are also "rebakes" themselves. As to where that term comes from in the first place, it's ostensibly a reference to roasting coffee beans, which explains why the even further modified version of the Gundam in question is the ASW-G-11 Gundam Gusion Rebake Full City (full city being a particular type of coffee roast). I just think it's neat.

NPC STRUCTURE DAMAGE AND OVERHEATING TABLES

By default, NPCs have **1 STRUCTURE** and are destroyed when they reach **0 HP**. They also have **1 STRESS** and become **EXPOSED** when they exceed their **HEAT CAP** instead of making an overheating check.

When NPCs gain additional **STRUCTURE** and **STRESS** (such as from templates), NPCs will instead use the following **Structure Damage and Overheating Tables**, which are different from the ones that PCs use but otherwise follow the standard rules for structure damage and overheating.

The exception to this is NPCs with the **ULTRA** template, which use the same Structure Damage and Overheating Table that PCs use (*Lancer*, p. 80-81).

NPC STRUCTURE DAMAGE TABLE

5-6	Glancing Blow	The damage is notable but the effects are minor, and the NPC is IMPAIRED until the end of their next turn.
2-4	System Failure	The hit was sufficient to disrupt the NPC's systems, forcing them to pass a HULL check or become JAMMED until the end of their next turn. On a success, they become IMPAIRED instead. If the NPC was already IMPAIRED , they automatically fail this check.
1	Staggering Hit	The NPC chooses; either they become STUNNED until the end of their next turn, or they become IMPAIRED and SLOWED for the rest of the scene. If they choose the second option, it can't be chosen again for the rest of the scene.
Multiple 1s	Target Destroyed	The NPC is destroyed.

NPC OVERHEATING TABLE

5-6	Emergency Shunt	The NPC overheats but emergency safeties kick in, and they become IMPAIRED until the end of their next turn.
1-4	Instability	The NPC becomes EXPOSED as their reactor becomes unstable, causing emergency vents to visibly open and weakening their armor.
Multiple 1s	Meltdown	The NPC suffers a reactor meltdown at the end of their next turn.

DESIGNER'S NOTES

One of the more frustrating occurrences in *Lancer* is when an NPC that you were counting on to be an important and evocative element of the OPFOR gets hit, rolls a **System Trauma** result on the Structure Damage Table, and loses their one and only weapon and/or crucial system. How many times have your **ELITE DEMOLISHERS** lost their hammer? How many **VETERAN ENGINEERS** have had their turret system destroyed? And once that happens, even though NPCs still have an assortment of basic actions to fall back on, it simply isn't the same. Nobody puts a **DEMOLISHER** on the table going "hell yeah, I'm gonna use this guy to **Lock On** to so many people."

I'm a bit dubious of **System Trauma** in general. While I understand the fantasy of blowing parts off of mechs in combat, in practice players largely have two main responses to the prospect of losing weapons or systems; either their build doesn't care, or they take ablative equipment specifically for the purpose of ignoring it when it happens (such as the **ARMAMENT REDUNDANCY** system introduced in *Dustgrave*). It's a random outcome that no one seems particularly eager to engage with, because it offers no real interesting outcomes... either it's something that doesn't affect you one way or the next, or it's something that affects you so harshly that you'd rather pay an SP tax just to avoid it.

But for NPCs, **System Trauma** can be even more punishing. Many NPCs only have a single weapon or defining system in their base loadout, something that's critical to their functionality and thus renders them largely inert if it's destroyed. The fact that this can happen on a random roll means you can't reliably predict whether it will happen or not, which means some fights can quickly be left toothless all because someone lost their gun.

For some groups, this sort of randomness is appealing, but I personally find it less satisfying. Hence, one of the main elements of this revised Structure Damage Table is that it eschews **System Trauma** completely, replacing it with the **JAMMED** condition (potentially). This still means that NPCs can have their capabilities neutralized when taking structure damage, but only temporarily. **Direct Hit**, which results in either being **STUNNED** or destroyed, has also been changed to a result that's less prone to random destruction and/or **STUNNED**-induced death spirals.

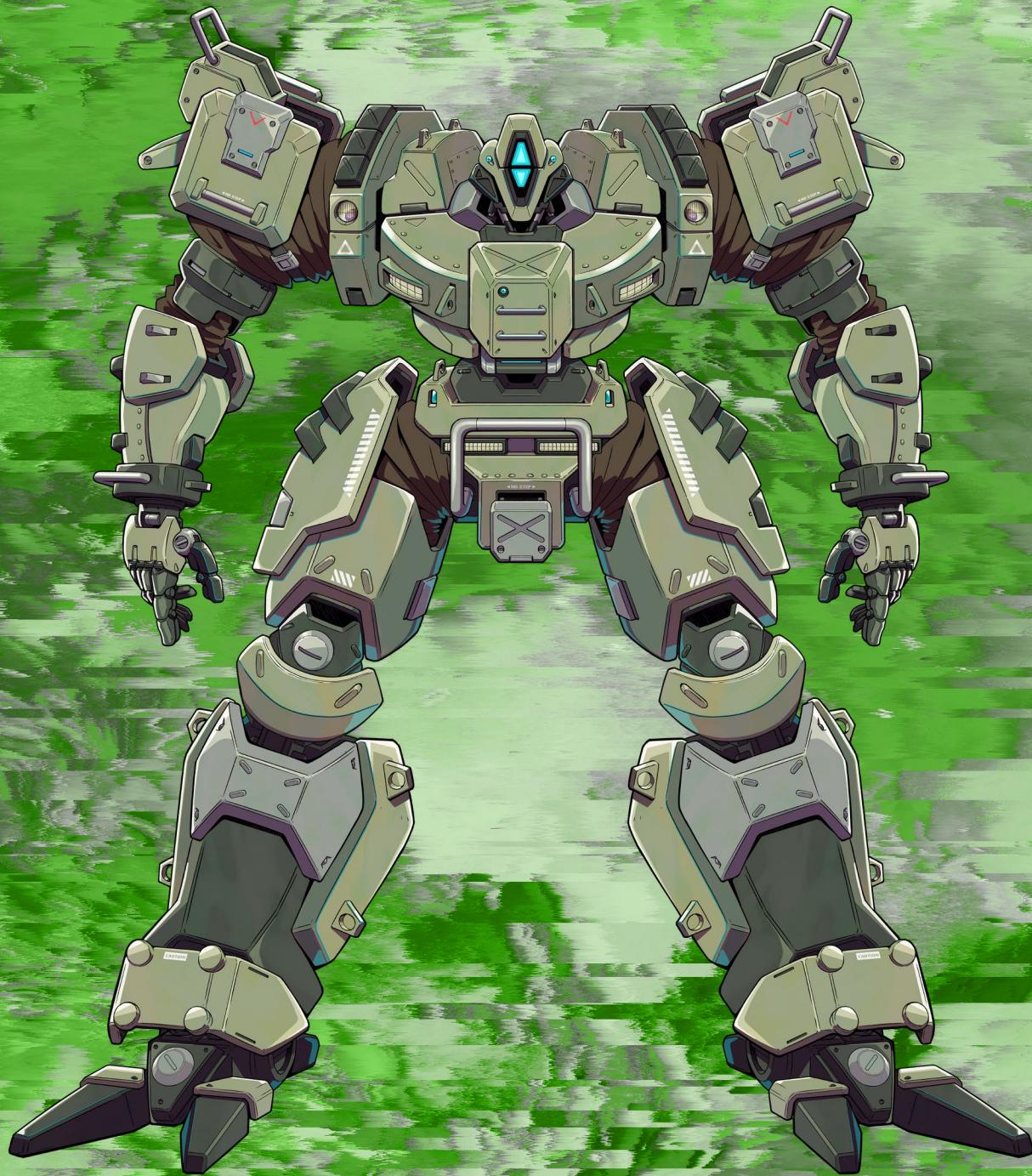
The end result of this is that more advanced NPCs such as **VETERANS** and **ELITES** are less prone to being randomly neutralized. You can still roll multiple 1's and have an NPC get destroyed outright, but overall this makes these sorts of NPCs a little bit more of a persistent threat that won't be as unceremoniously dispatched or turned into ambulatory Lock On dispensers.

Ultras, the closest NPC equivalent to PC-grade mechs, still use the same tables that PCs do. This gives them a bit more distinctiveness, highlighting that they're operating on a different level from even other advanced NPCs, and gives the PCs the satisfaction of being able to still blow parts of them off.

While you could argue that having the ability to lose components in this way or end up **STUNNED** makes **ULTRAS** potentially weaker in that regard than, say, an **ELITE**, it's worth noting that in both the core rulebook as well as this supplement, **ULTRAS** benefit from the **LEGENDARY** trait which lets them roll all structure damage and overheating checks twice and take either result, take multiple turns each round, are more easily able to clear debilitating conditions, and have other traits and abilities which hook into things like weapon or system destruction.

It's worth keeping in mind that because of the way these rules work, it's possible to stack templates on an NPC and create an **ELITE VETERAN COMMANDER** which will have **4 STRUCTURE** and **STRESS**, while still using these new tables. What does this mean? Unlike the table PCs and **ULTRAS** use under these rules, these specific tables do not escalate consequences based on remaining **STRUCTURE/STRESS**; that is, there's no equivalent to the **Direct Hit** result getting measurably worse (including potentially resulting in destruction) the more **STRUCTURE** that the NPC loses.

This can, in theory, mean that such a non-**ULTRA** multi-**STRUCTURE/STRESS** NPC becomes harder to kill than intended, having to either reduce their **STRUCTURE/STRESS** to 0 or count on them rolling multiple 1's. However, unlike **ULTRAS**, these NPCs won't benefit from things like the **LEGENDARY** or **JUGGERNAUT** traits, and are thus more vulnerable to debilitating debuffs like **JAMMED**, **STUNNED**, or **EXPOSED**, and as they roll more dice for these checks, the chances of those debuffs impacting them in a serious way goes up.



SECTION 1
NPCS REBAKED

NPC CLASS LIST

ARTILLERY	BOMBARD	High-damage, long-range artillery that focus on area damage and deal more damage based on the number of targets they hit.	p. 28
	OPERATOR	Very mobile hit-and-run skirmisher that uses teleportation to line up shots or retreat to safety.	p. 46
	RAINMAKER	Long-range missile artillery that deals consistent damage and threatens areas on the battlefield.	p. 52
	SNIPER	Exceptionally long-ranged and accurate artillery that can deal damage directly to a mech's structure under the right circumstances.	p. 64
CONTROLLERS	ARCHER	Controllers that deal relatively high damage and force their enemies to choose between immobility or taking additional damage.	p. 16
	BARRICADE	Controllers that create cover for allies and lock down fast-moving enemies.	p. 22
	HIVE	Controllers that create dangerous zones which deal steady damage and employ tech attacks that forcefully move opponents.	p. 40
	HORNET	Very fast, hard to hit controllers that inflict conditions on enemies at the price of being vulnerable to conditions themselves.	p. 42
	SEEDER	Controllers that focus on area-denial using traps and mines.	p. 60
	WITCH	Nasty controllers that inflict conditions and heat on enemies.	p. 70
DEFENDERS	BASTION	Shield-bearing defenders that protect nearby allies from harm.	p. 24
	DEMOLISHER	Slow, high-damage defenders, resistant to melee damage and very dangerous at close range.	p. 34
	GOLIATH	Enormous defenders that can draw aggro onto themselves and drag enemies around.	p. 38
	PYRO	Slow-moving defenders that ward off areas with lethal flames and protect allies with fiery shields.	p. 50
	SENTINEL	Defenders that specialize in locking areas around them down with reactive CQB attacks.	p. 62
STRIKERS	ACE	Fast-flying area-damage strikers with the ability to escape from danger.	p. 12
	ASSASSIN	Mobile strikers that mark targets for pursuit and punish those with conditions.	p. 18
	ASSAULT	Hardy, mid-range strikers that excel against targets out of cover.	p. 20
	BERSERKER	Fast melee strikers that are dangerous in close combat but risk harming allies.	p. 26
	BREACHER	High-damage, short-range, inaccurate strikers that can smash through obstacles and armor.	p. 30
	CATAPHRACT	Fast-moving strikers that can drag their enemies along with them.	p. 32
	ENGINEER	Strikers that deploy turrets, rapidly increasing their damage output if not dealt with.	p. 36
	RONIN	Melee duelists that can reflect ranged attacks and punish ranged attackers.	p. 54
	SPECTER	Mobile, invisible strikers that get bonuses when attacking solitary targets.	p. 66
	SCOURER	Relatively slow strikers that deal high damage to individual targets and get benefits against enemies they have already hit.	p. 56
SUPPORT	AEGIS	Hardy supports that create shielded areas which can protect allies and clear certain conditions.	p. 14
	MIRAGE	Supports that don't deal any damage, but can turn their allies invisible and teleport them around.	p. 44
	PRIEST	Technical supports that can bestow a variety of defensive benefits, as well as connecting their systems with those of allies to enhance them.	p. 48
	SCOUT	Supports that make targets vulnerable and prevent enemies from hiding or becoming invisible.	p. 58
	SUPPORT	Pure supports that repair their allies and clear conditions.	p. 68

SIZE
1

ACE

Striker



TIER 1		TIER 2		TIER 3	
HULL: -2	SYSTEMS: +1	HULL: -2	SYSTEMS: +2	HULL: -2	SYSTEMS: +3
AGILITY: +3	ENGINEERING: +0	AGILITY: +4	ENGINEERING: +1	AGILITY: +6	ENGINEERING: +1
HP: 10	Armor: 0	HP: 12	Armor: 0	HP: 14	Armor: 0
Evasion: 12	E-Defense: 8	Evasion: 15	E-Defense: 8	Evasion: 18	E-Defense: 10
Speed: 5	Size: 1	Speed: 6	Size: 1	Speed: 7	Size: 1
Heat Cap: 8	Save Target: 10	Heat Cap: 8	Save Target: 12	Heat Cap: 8	Save Target: 14
Sensors: 10		Sensors: 10		Sensors: 10	

TACTICS

ACES are very fast and reactive strikers that can use **BARREL ROLL** to mitigate dangerous or high-damage attacks. This is most effective against heavy weapons. Attacking from the air means many of their attacks will be able to more easily draw line of sight and fire around cover, allowing them to deal consistent damage, and they have weapons and abilities that benefit from **LOCK ON** such as their **MISSILE LAUNCHER**. Relatively low **HP** makes **ACES** vulnerable to things like **RELIABLE** damage, and **BARREL ROLL** can be disrupted by abilities such as tech attacks that cause conditions like **SLOWED**.

OPFOR NOTES

- Highly mobile and with flight capability, but be aware that flying usually means it won't be able to take cover.
- The highest any character can fly and still be able to attack is 10 spaces high, which is sufficient to put it out of the range of many close-range weapons, but not protect it from mid-to-long range ones.
- Works well alongside allies that can **LOCK ON** to enemies to enhance its damage-dealing capabilities, and against enemies without many long range options; keep its flight ceiling in mind in case no PC is capable of actually threatening it in return.

BASE SYSTEMS

SSC Flight System

System

The **ACE** can count any or all of their movement as **flying**.

Missile Launcher

Main Launcher, Smart, +1/2/3
[✓10] [⊕1] [4/6/8*]

Attacks made with this weapon against targets that have **LOCK ON** ignore cover.

Barrel Roll

Trait, Reaction, Recharge 5+

Trigger: A ranged or melee attack hits the **ACE**.

Effect: The Ace performs a barrel roll, flying **6 spaces** in any direction and causing the attack to miss. This movement ignores **engagement** and does not provoke **reactions**. This reaction can't be used if the **ACE** can't move (e.g. if it's **SLOWED** or **IMMOBILIZED**).

OPTIONAL SYSTEMS

Strafe

Trait, Quick Action

1/round, the **ACE** can **fly** spaces equal to their **SPEED** in any direction, automatically dealing **3/4/5** to one character below or adjacent to the path taken, plus any number of additional characters below or adjacent to the path taken who have **LOCK ON** (though **LOCK ON** must be consumed if used this way).

Missile Swarm

Main Launcher, Loading, +1/2/3
[⊕5] [3/4/5*]

This weapon deals double damage to characters with **LOCK ON**, and does not affect allied characters (bonus damage is not doubled).

Full Throttle

Trait, Reaction, Recharge 5+

Trigger: An enemy in line of sight moves.**Effect:** The **ACE** moves **10 spaces** in any direction and gains **soft cover** until the end of their next turn.**Countermeasures**

System, 4 ⚒ (Self), Limited 1

Whenever the **ACE** would gain a condition from a hostile character (**IMPAIRED**, **SLOWED**, etc), they may spend a charge from this system to ignore that condition. The character that inflicted that condition then gains **Lock On**.**Emergency Jettison**

Trait

Whenever the **ACE** is destroyed while **flying**, they instead move up to their **SPEED** and immediately land, remaining at **1 HP**. All of the **ACE**'s systems and traits (but not weapons) are then disabled.**DESIGNER'S NOTES**

The **ACE** is an NPC largely defined by its ability to fly. While that's certainly a very potent capability, it doesn't really do much to inform what the **ACE**, as a tactical combat unit, does, which is mainly shoot missiles at people and occasionally dodge their attacks with **BARREL ROLL**. Functional, but not very fleshed out.

I decided to lean into two elements to give the **ACE** more of a gameplay identity. The first was informed by its **MISSILE SWARM** optional, which gains power against targets with **LOCK ON**, something I spread out into other parts of its kit such as its baseline **MISSILE LAUNCHER** as well as **STRAFE**. I'll tell you now, you're going to see a lot of **LOCK ON** synergies like these throughout the rebakes, as a way to encourage enemies to cooperate for increased effect in a telegraphed fashion.

And actually, let's talk about the **MISSILE LAUNCHER** for a second. In the core rulebook, this had **SEEKING**, a very powerful tag that lets you ignore both cover and line of sight with a weapon. What I find this encourages with **Aces** is less zooming across the battlefield from an aerial position and more loitering behind LoS-blocking obstructions to fire missiles unimpeded. As a unit that can fly high into the Z-axis, gaining LoS on targets, particularly with a **BLAST** weapon, should be easy. I think **SEEKING** is both redundant here and encourages a playstyle I don't particularly favor for the **ACE**, which is why I removed it. Getting to ignore cover against targets with **LOCK ON** is a consolation for losing **SEEKING**. While this may not overly impact the weapon's relationship to hard cover, it does allow the **MISSILE LAUNCHER** to more efficiently bypass **soft cover** from things like smoke grenades, talents, and terrain.

The other element of focus is, simply, that the **ACE** is a slippery bastard. **BARREL ROLL** is an iconic ability of the **ACE**, catching newer players off-guard and requiring overlapping tactics to neutralize even for those that are more familiar with it. **EMERGENCY JETTISON**, playing into this, now additionally gives **Aces** an extra life, even if it's one stuck on the ground at **1 HP**. Sometimes an extra body on the field makes all the difference to a sitrep.

There's one survivability element to the core rulebook **ACE** which I'm not a fan of, and that's the **CHAFF LAUNCHERS** optional. This does something which I'm very much against, which is taking an NPC's deliberate weakness and patching it over. Part of the intended counterplay for **BARREL ROLL** is to neutralize it with the **SLOWED** condition, which is most commonly available to PCs through tech attacks such as **FRAGMENT SIGNAL**. When you fight **Aces**, you learn how that trick works. **CHAFF LAUNCHERS** letting the **ACE** use **BARREL ROLL** against tech attacks themselves takes that lesson, a thing you want the players to learn, and goes "nah just kidding. Boy, don't you feel stupid?"

In my experience, this sort of thing is a good way to discourage players from trying to engage with these sorts of weaknesses and tactics and instead simply default to brute force. You want players learning how to interact with NPCs in ways beyond just shooting more guns at them, and they should be rewarded for doing so.

COUNTERMEASURES is the replacement for **CHAFF LAUNCHERS**. It does several things to change this dynamic: for starters, it's **LIMITED 1**, which means it can only ever occur once and then it's used up, and secondly, using it requires the **ACE** to take a chunk of heat. Things which cause NPCs to take heat are an element I looked to incorporate throughout the rebakes in general, to give more texture to them and enable more opportunistic moments for hackers and heatgunners to capitalize on, and in this specific case, forcing the **ACE** to take an additional 4 heat in exchange for letting it shed a troublesome condition serves as a reasonable consolation prize; the player still accomplished something, forcing the **ACE** to burn a limited resource and take a bunch of heat they probably didn't want to. Next time, that bastard won't be so lucky.



AEGIS

Support



TIER 1		TIER 2		TIER 3	
HULL: +0	SYSTEMS: +2	HULL: +0	SYSTEMS: +3	HULL: +0	SYSTEMS: +4
AGILITY: -2	ENGINEERING: +2	AGILITY: -2	ENGINEERING: +3	AGILITY: -2	ENGINEERING: +4
HP: 14	Armor: 2	HP: 16	Armor: 2	HP: 18	Armor: 3
Evasion: 7	E-Defense: 10	Evasion: 8	E-Defense: 12	Evasion: 9	E-Defense: 14
Speed: 3	Size: 2	Speed: 3	Size: 2	Speed: 3	Size: 2
Heat Cap: 10	Save Target: 10	Heat Cap: 10	Save Target: 12	Heat Cap: 10	Save Target: 14
Sensors: 10		Sensors: 10		Sensors: 10	

TACTICS

Aegises are tough and defensive support units. They are most effective when positioned so that their **DEFENSE NET** can cover as many allies as possible, as the **AEGIS** itself is slow-moving and can't reposition quickly. They can also protect their allies from the effects of **IMPAIRED** and **SLOWED** while being immune to those conditions themselves.

OPFOR NOTES

- Slow-moving, using **BOOST** can provide additional mobility to get into position quicker but will prevent the activation of **DEFENSE NET** without any way to gain additional actions or turns.
- Protecting against multiple attacks can quickly cause heat to build up, requiring the use of **STABILIZE** to cool down.
- Works well in tandem with allies that prefer not to move, and works well against hostile sources of **IMPAIRED** and **SLOWED** such as **FRAGMENT SIGNAL**.

BASE SYSTEMS

Light Laser

Main Cannon, +1/2/3
[✓8] [3⚡ + 2/3/4⚡]

Defense Net

System, Full Action, Shield

The **AEGIS** spreads a powerful, shimmering repulsion shield over a ⚡2 area. While active, the **Aegis** is **IMMOBILIZED**, but all **ranged**, **melee**, and **tech attacks** against characters or objects within the affected area that originate outside the area receive +2⊖ and cannot result in critical hits; whenever an attack receiving this **DIFFICULTY** misses, the **AEGIS** takes 2⚡. Characters within the affected area may attack characters within and outside of the area normally.

Allied characters within the affected area also gain **IMMUNITY** to **IMPAIRED** and **SLOWED**, and clear these conditions when they enter the area if they already have them.

This effect lasts until the **AEGIS** ends it as a **protocol** or is destroyed. If the **AEGIS** exceeds their **HEAT CAP**, becomes **STUNNED**, or becomes **JAMMED** while the shield is active, the shield deactivates and can't be reactivated until the end of the **AEGIS'** next turn.

Regenerative Shielding

Trait

The **AEGIS** has **IMMUNITY** to **IMPAIRED** and **SLOWED**, and can't be critically hit.

OPTIONAL SYSTEMS

Focused Shielding

Trait, Reaction, 1/round

Trigger: An allied character within your **DEFENSE NET** area is hit by a ranged or melee attack.

Effect: That character gains **RESISTANCE to all damage from the attack**, then the **DEFENSE NET** is deactivated.

Guardian

Trait

Adjacent allied characters can use the **AEGIS** for **hard cover**.

Ring of Fire

Trait

Any hostile characters that start their turn inside the area affected by the **DEFENSE NET** or that enter it for the first time in a round take **2 ⚡** and become **SHREDDED** until they leave the area.

Remote Projector

Trait

When the **AEGIS** activates **DEFENSE NET**, it may choose a free space within **✓5** and generate a **⊕2** area centered on that space instead. All other effects of **DEFENSE NET** remain the same while this remote field is active (e.g. the **AEGIS** is **IMMOBILIZED**, etc).

HA Blackwall System

System, Full Action, Limited 1

The **AEGIS** generates a pitch-black wall of blinkspace **5 spaces high** covering a **✓10** area starting within **✓5**. All spaces must be free. The wall blocks line of sight, effects, and attacks (but not movement), and provides hard cover. Characters that start their turn in the wall or who enter it on their turn roll **1d6**. On a **4+** they are removed from play until the end of their next turn, when they reappear in a free space of their choice within **✓10** of the wall. If there are no free spaces, they return when a space becomes free. The wall lasts until the **AEGIS** ends it as a **quick action**, or is destroyed. When it ends, characters remaining in blinkspace reappear.

DESIGNER'S NOTES

The core rulebook **AEGIS** does something I find very awkward, which is that it gives its defining ability, the **DEFENSE NET**, a recharge value. Recharge abilities are capricious and fickle. Every *Lancer* GM probably has a story about the time the **Recharge 6+ SHORT-CYCLE LANCE** got to fire off three turns in a row, while some **Recharge 4+** ability spent the entire fight on cooldown.

I think it's a bad idea to have the **AEGIS** run this particular risk, especially give that it's a slow unit, which means it's very easy to wind up activating the **DEFENSE NET** because you think it's about to become useful, only for the fight to wind up happening somewhere else, forcing GMs into a sunk-cost dilemma: do you deactivate the shield and hope you don't botch the recharge rolls, or do you stay put and hope the **AEGIS** doesn't wind up a non-factor in the fight?

Naturally the biggest changes to this version of the **AEGIS** center around **DEFENSE NET**, which largely works the same only without being a **RECHARGE** system, and also now having several methods that players can use to overload the shield. It's more interesting if the **AEGIS** loses their shield due to actions that the players took than losing it because your lucky d6 decided that it was too tired to roll anything above a 3 that day.

The **DEFENSE NET** itself now has the potential to accumulate heat the more attacks it winds up deflecting, which (along with the shield shutting down if the **AEGIS** overheats) provides another potential avenue for players to disable it if none of them happen to have brought anything that can do so by inflicting **JAMMED**. This only kicks in if the **DEFENSE NET** is mitigating incoming attacks... if attacks are still slipping through, then there's less of a need for players to focus on disabling the shield in the first place.

Speaking of big, the **AEGIS** is the first, but certainly not the last, NPC rebake that will be getting a **SIZE** increase. The core rulebook NPC roster is predominantly focused on **SIZE 1** units, with anything bigger being relatively uncommon, which is pretty different from the selection of PC mechs which are much more varied in size. Being bigger adjusts how the **AEGIS** plays in a variety of ways, making it harder to be displaced with grapples or rams, giving it better synergy with its **GUARDIAN** optional, and also making it harder for the **AEGIS** to loiter behind obstructions on top of its **DEFENSE NET**. Besides, it's not "thank you Small Sal," now is it?

I have no idea why the **LIGHT LASER** scales the way it does, with a flat packet of energy damage and then burn scaling by tier. I thought about changing it, but honestly I don't think it matters that much, so I just kept it as it is. It's a funky little gun though, that's for sure.

SIZE
1

ARCHER

Controller



TIER 1		TIER 2		TIER 3	
HULL: -1	SYSTEMS: +2	HULL: -1	SYSTEMS: +3	HULL: -1	SYSTEMS: +4
AGILITY: +2	ENGINEERING: -1	AGILITY: +3	ENGINEERING: -1	AGILITY: +4	ENGINEERING: -1
HP: 16	Armor: 0	HP: 18	Armor: 0	HP: 20	Armor: 0
Evasion: 8	E-Defense: 8	Evasion: 10	E-Defense: 10	Evasion: 12	E-Defense: 12
Speed: 5	Size: 1	Speed: 5	Size: 1	Speed: 6	Size: 1
Heat Cap: 8	Save Target: 11	Heat Cap: 8	Save Target: 13	Heat Cap: 8	Save Target: 16
Sensors: 15		Sensors: 15		Sensors: 15	

TACTICS

ARCHERS excel at inflicting “choice punishment” on their enemies – they make characters choose between taking certain actions or letting the **ARCHER** attack them. Use **ARCHERS** to lock down mobile or hard-hitting PCs or to cover for more vulnerable allies. Keep in mind that **ARCHERS** are vulnerable to having their ability to use reactions disabled, such as being **JAMMED** or grappled.

OPFOR NOTES

- Deals consistent and repeated Striker-level damage through a combination of multiple attacks and **Reliable** damage. Consider this when planning how many other damage-dealing allies to add alongside them.
- Reliable** damage is especially effective against high **EVASION** targets and those benefiting from **INVISIBILITY**.
- Works well in combat scenarios where enemies are forced to move in order to achieve objectives, and against unarmored enemies that rely upon other forms of overlapping defenses to mitigate damage.

BASE SYSTEMS

Light Machine Gun

Main Cannon, +2/4/6, Reliable 3/4/5
[✓10] [5/7/9§]

Suppress

Trait, Quick Action, Reaction

The **ARCHER** chooses a target within line of sight and ✓10: they become **IMPAIRED** and the **ARCHER** gains the **MOVING TARGET** reaction.

This effect lasts until the **ARCHER** uses **MOVING TARGET**; the target damages the **ARCHER** or leaves the **ARCHER**’s line of sight; the **ARCHER** is **STUNNED**, **JAMMED**, or destroyed; the **ARCHER** chooses a new target for this action; or, the **ARCHER** ends it as a **free action**.

Moving Target

Reaction

Trigger: The **ARCHER**’s **SUPPRESS** target starts to move.

Effect: The **ARCHER** makes an attack against them with the **LIGHT MACHINE GUN**. This attack interrupts and resolves before the triggering movement.

Superior Sentinel

Trait

The **ARCHER** gains +1♦ on all attacks made as reactions (e.g., **OVERWATCH**).

OPTIONAL SYSTEMS

Covering Fire

Trait, Quick Action, Reaction, Recharge 4+

The **ARCHER** creates a $\odot 3$ area within $\nearrow 10$ and line of sight, and gains the **GOT YOUR BACK** reaction. This area lasts until the end of the **ARCHER**'s next turn or until the **ARCHER** creates a new area, and this reaction can be taken as many times per round as it is triggered.

Got Your Back

Reaction

Trigger: A character in the **COVERING FIRE** area makes an attack.

Effect: The **ARCHER** may attack that character with the **LIGHT MACHINE GUN**.

Impending Threat

Trait

MOVING TARGET's trigger now includes the target taking any action that does not target the **ARCHER**.

Flush Out

Trait, Quick Action, Recharge 4+

The **ARCHER** chooses a hostile character within $\nearrow 10$: that character must either move their **SPEED** in a direction of the **ARCHER**'s choice, or allow the **ARCHER** to attack them with the **LIGHT MACHINE GUN**. This movement ignores **engagement** and does not provoke **reactions**.

Blinding Shells

Trait

1/round, after the **ARCHER** makes a successful ranged attack, they may force their target to pass an **ENGINEERING** save. On a failure, the target only has line of sight to adjacent spaces until the end of their next turn.

Fire and Maneuver

Reaction, Trait, 1/round

Trigger: A hostile character in line of sight moves.

Effect: The **ARCHER** may **BOOST**. If they end this movement within $\nearrow 10$ and line of sight of the triggering character, that character takes **3/4/5** \diamond .

DESIGNER'S NOTES

The Controller that hits like a Striker. The **ARCHER** is a pretty solid and effective punishment controller with an extremely clear gameplay plan, and in that regard I think it's pretty well designed.

Its optionals are a real mess though. Ironically, the problem I have with the **ARCHER** is that, for a reaction-based unit, it simply has too many reactions in its optional systems. Four out of five **ARCHER** optionals are additional reactions, most of which are another variation of "the **ARCHER** threatens someone into doing/not doing a thing, then shoots them if they don't do/do that thing." You don't need that many! It's a pain in the ass to keep track of, and honestly just not that interesting.

So the biggest part of this rebake was finding a more dynamic set of optionals to play with. It still has some additional reaction-based stuff there, but it's more streamlined and consolidated. **COVERING FIRE** is the big holdover, of all the "shoot guys more" reaction optionals it's the one I like the best, carving out a zone on the map and punishing anyone within it who acts up. Otherwise, **IMPENDING THREAT** can simply be folded into **MOVING TARGET**, while **FLUSH OUT** serves as a more proactive form of choice punishment for the **ARCHER** to play with rather than a purely reactive one.

FIRE AND MANEUVER continues the trend you'll see repeated elsewhere throughout these rebakes of me taking identical NPC abilities (in this case, **RAPID RESPONSE**) and replacing them or turning them into more customized, class-tailored versions. I think it's nicer when NPCs have completely unique abilities, even if some of them work similarly, as opposed to the same ones repeated across multiple NPCs, though I admittedly make an exception for bread-and-butter things like **GUARDIAN**. The rebake **ARCHER**'s version of **RAPID RESPONSE** largely works the same as before, but it brings the **ARCHER**'s affinity for **Reliable** damage into prominence by encouraging you to stay within shooting distance of whoever triggered it.



ASSASSIN

Striker



TIER 1		TIER 2		TIER 3	
HULL: +0	SYSTEMS: +1	HULL: +1	SYSTEMS: +1	HULL: +1	SYSTEMS: +2
AGILITY: +2	ENGINEERING: -1	AGILITY: +3	ENGINEERING: +0	AGILITY: +4	ENGINEERING: +0
HP: 15	Armor: 0	HP: 18	Armor: 0	HP: 20	Armor: 0
Evasion: 12	E-Defense: 8	Evasion: 15	E-Defense: 9	Evasion: 17	E-Defense: 10
Speed: 6	Size: 1/2 or 1	Speed: 7	Size: 1/2 or 1	Speed: 8	Size: 1/2 or 1
Heat Cap: 7	Save Target: 10	Heat Cap: 7	Save Target: 12	Heat Cap: 7	Save Target: 14
Sensors: 10		Sensors: 10		Sensors: 10	

TACTICS

ASSASSINS are true experts at punishing single characters. Use **ASSASSIN'S MARK** to choose a target, and then make the most of the **ASSASSIN'S** high speed and **LEAP** to close the distance. **ASSASSIN'S MARK** gives **RESISTANCE** to the marked character's damage, but can't be swapped until the marked character is destroyed, so consider this when selecting targets. Without optional systems like the "**DEVIL'S COUGH**" **SHOTGUN**, **ASSASSINS** only have access to melee attacks and are fairly vulnerable to sustained damage.

OPFOR NOTES

- Mobile and surprisingly tough against their marked target, but can be focused down quickly by other characters if they aren't careful.
- KAI BIPLATING** is most useful on maps with hazardous terrain, pits, and vertical elements to take advantage of.
- Works well in conjunction with allies that can apply conditions like **SHREDDED** or **IMMOBILIZED**, or who can knock targets **PRONE**, to set up the **HEATED BLADE** for double damage.

BASE SYSTEMS

Heated Blade

Main Melee, +1/2/3, +1♦
[2] [4/5/6 ♀]

This weapon deals **double damage** to **PRONE**, **SHREDDED**, **IMMOBILIZED**, or **STUNNED** targets (bonus damage is not doubled).

Assassin's Mark

Trait, Quick Action

The **ASSASSIN** chooses a character in line of sight. For the rest of the scene, these effects apply:

- It has **RESISTANCE** to that target's damage.
- Damage it deals to that target cannot be reduced.
- It gains +1♦ on all saves forced by that target, and the target makes all saves forced by the **ASSASSIN** with +1⊖.

The **ASSASSIN** can only choose a new target if the current target is destroyed.

Leap

Trait, Quick Action, Recharge 5+

The **ASSASSIN** flies **6 spaces** in any direction but must land on a surface. When they land, characters adjacent to the **ASSASSIN** must succeed on an **AGILITY** save or be knocked **PRONE**.

Kai Biplating

Trait

The **ASSASSIN** gains +1♦ on all **AGILITY** checks; additionally, they climb and swim at normal speed, ignore **difficult terrain**, and, when making a standard move, can jump horizontally up to their **SPEED** and vertically up to half their **SPEED** (in any combination).

OPTIONAL SYSTEMS

"Devil's Cough" Shotgun

Heavy CQB, +0/1/2, Loading, Knockback 2
[✓3, ✎3] [10/15/20]

Spinning Kick

Trait, Quick Action

The **ASSASSIN** chooses an adjacent character: they must pass a **HULL** save or be pushed **4 spaces** away from the **ASSASSIN** and knocked **PRONE**.

Shroud Projector

System, Quick Action, Recharge 6+

The **ASSASSIN** sets off a charge, creating a **⊕3** concealing shroud. The **ASSASSIN** gains **soft cover** within the affected area, and characters other than the **ASSASSIN** fully inside or outside the area cannot draw line of sight into or out of the area. Characters partially within the area are not affected. The **HEATED BLADE** deals double damage to characters inside this area (as though they were **PRONE** etc). This effect lasts until the end of the **ASSASSIN**'s next turn, or until the **ASSASSIN** uses this system again.

Explosive Knives

System, Quick Action, Recharge 5+

The **ASSASSIN** throws an explosive knife at a character within **✓5**, making a ranged attack at **+2/4/6**. On a hit, the knife embeds itself in the target and explodes at the end of their next turn, dealing **4/6/8*** in a **⊕1** area and forcing the struck target to pass a **HULL** save or become **SHREDDED** until the end of their next turn.

Transfix

Trait, Quick Action, Recharge 6+

The **ASSASSIN** jams their blade into a vital part of an adjacent character: that character must pass an **ENGINEERING** save or become **STUNNED**. While **STUNNED** this way, the **ASSASSIN** becomes **IMMOBILIZED**. This effect lasts until the **ASSASSIN** and the target are no longer adjacent or until the target takes structure damage.

DESIGNER'S NOTES

I really like the **ASSASSIN**. It's got a fun kit that encourages setting up combos, the **ASSASSIN'S MARK** serves as a unique tactical threat, and it has a lot of maneuverability which encourages more dynamic map layouts to play around in.

That said, there's no reason the **HEATED BLADE** needs a base **+2**, come on now.

Beyond that, and beyond **ASSASSIN'S MARK** now imposing **DIFFICULTY** against saves given how many saves the **ASSASSIN** has all over its kit, the biggest changes are once again in the optionals. **EXPLOSIVE KNIVES** has been moved from a **Limited 3** system, something that requires more mental overhead on the GM's part to keep track of, to a recharge-based system, and it brings with it some **SHREDDED** application to better combo with the **HEATED BLADE** and give it more of a reason for being in the **ASSASSIN**'s kit.

Both **SHROUD PROJECTOR** and **SAP** are abilities that you'll see elsewhere among core rulebook NPCs. In the rebake, only the **ASSASSIN** has **SHROUD PROJECTOR** which feels more appropriate for a close-range striker than for the long-distance **SNIPER**.

As for **SAP**... **STUNNED** is one of those debuffs that a lot of people have very strong feelings about, mainly negative ones. Nobody really likes being told to skip their turn. As an NPC optional, I'm very rarely interested in using **SAP**. It's potentially very strong, but not in a very unique or interesting way. **TRANSFIX** retains the ability to apply **STUNNED**, but makes the implementation a little more dynamic by actually giving players additional ways to interact with it beyond having a buddy **STABILIZE** it off of you.

One might ask, why is the **"DEVIL'S COUGH" SHOTGUN** an **ASSASSIN** optional? Sure, it hits like a truck, but it doesn't really have anything to do with the rest of what the **ASSASSIN** does, it doesn't tie in to the mark or the blade or anything like that, so what's it there for? The answer is that it's there to be cool as hell. It's an iconic weapon, you're allowed to color outside the lines sometimes.

SIZE
1

ASSAULT

Striker



TIER 1		TIER 2		TIER 3	
HULL: +1	SYSTEMS: +1	HULL: +2	SYSTEMS: +2	HULL: +3	SYSTEMS: +3
AGILITY: +1	ENGINEERING: +1	AGILITY: +2	ENGINEERING: +2	AGILITY: +3	ENGINEERING: +3
HP: 15	Armor: 1	HP: 18	Armor: 1	HP: 21	Armor: 1
Evasion: 8	E-Defense: 8	Evasion: 10	E-Defense: 9	Evasion: 12	E-Defense: 10
Speed: 4	Size: 1	Speed: 4	Size: 1	Speed: 4	Size: 1
Heat Cap: 8	Save Target: 10	Heat Cap: 8	Save Target: 12	Heat Cap: 8	Save Target: 14
Sensors: 10		Sensors: 10		Sensors: 10	

TACTICS

The **ASSAULT** is a straightforward, damage-dealing striker that emphasizes the importance of taking cover. Equipped to do good damage at decent range, they want to flank their opponents or drive them out of cover in order to maximize their effectiveness. **HUNKER DOWN** can increase their survivability, but leaves them less able to maneuver in return.

OPFOR NOTES

- A versatile, well-rounded NPC effective at standard ranges, but be aware they are still a **STRIKER** and not simply a generic "filler" unit; it is a damage dealer, and should be treated as such.
- **HUNKER DOWN** is an extremely valuable defensive tool that can be used every round, even though using it results in being **SLOWED**. This drawback can be mitigated with friendly assistance.
- Works well when paired with allies that can destroy cover or that can move enemies out of cover.

BASE SYSTEMS

Heavy Assault Rifle

Heavy Rifle, +0/1/2
[✓10] [6/8/10 ⚡]

This weapon gains +1♦ against targets that do not have **cover**.

Combat Knife

Auxiliary Melee, +1/2/3
[⌘1] [4/5/6 ⚡]

Hunker Down

Trait, Reaction, 1/round

Trigger: An attack hits the **ASSAULT**, but damage hasn't been rolled yet.

Effect: It gains **RESISTANCE to all damage from the attack**, but becomes **SLOWED** until the end of its next turn.

OPTIONAL SYSTEMS

Rank Discipline

Trait

The **ASSAULT** gains +1♦ on all attacks, checks, and saves while adjacent to at least one allied character with the **MECH** tag.

Underslung Grenade Launcher

Auxiliary Launcher, Arcing, Knockback 2, Loading, +1/2/3
[✓10, ⚡1] [4/6/8 *]

Micro-Missile Barrage

System, Full Action, Recharge 6+

The **ASSAULT** launches a ⚡10 volley of micro-missiles. All characters within the affected area must succeed on a **HULL** save or take **6/8/10 ***. On a successful save, they take **half damage**. Characters who do not have **cover** make this save with +1♦.

Fix and Flank

Trait, Reaction, 1/round

Trigger: A character who doesn't have **cover** from the **ASSAULT** is successfully attacked by an allied character.

Effect: The **ASSAULT** may target them with **OVERWATCH** using the **HEAVY ASSAULT RIFLE**, dealing **half damage**.

Shocktrooper

Trait

When the **ASSAULT** uses **HUNKER DOWN**, instead of the normal effect, they may instead **BOOST** and gain +1♦ on all attacks, checks, and saves until the end of their next turn.

DESIGNER'S NOTES

This is the NPC that inspired this entire project, the very first one I did. Originally, I was only interested in revising the **ASSAULT** to address my personal issues with it. Then I started poking around at the other NPCs, and now here we are.

So what are my issues with the **ASSAULT**? The **ASSAULT** is an NPC that, through no fault of its own, often winds up being overused by GMs newer to *Lancer* who aren't as familiar with things. They see the **ASSAULT** as "a generic guy with a gun" and decide that it must be a filler unit, despite the fact that the **ASSAULT** is a hard-hitting Striker and therefore not really "generic" in the sense they're expecting. The core rulebook doesn't really do anything to dispel this impression either, and so "don't treat **ASSAULTS** like filler units" is a lesson a lot of newer GMs end up learning the hard way.

On top of this, the **ASSAULT** is boring. It isn't boring because it does nothing interesting, though that's definitely part of it; it's boring because the **ASSAULT** is just generically good. It has a ranged weapon that hits hard and has **Reliable**, it has a built-in **BRACE**-like ability in **HUNKER DOWN** that it suffers no penalty for using, its statline is good with no real standout weaknesses... the **ASSAULT** is an NPC that has no real concrete gameplay identity, no tactical leaning, no gimmick or schtick, and it also has no real friction points to it, nothing that defines it in terms of what it's bad at.

That **Reliable** damage is a third factor behind my dislike of the core rulebook **ASSAULT**. Only three core NPCs have **Reliable** damage baked into their base kit, and so you would think that three out of 30+ wouldn't be that big of a deal, but the problem is that those three NPCs (the **ARCHER**, the **ASSAULT**, and the **RAINMAKER**) are all very "normal, generic-seeming" NPCs. They're just guys with guns and missiles. The end result of this is that a lot of GMs bring them into a lot of encounters, and this tends to result in a lot of fights seeing high amounts of **Reliable** damage being flung around, which devalues things like cover or having high **EVASION**.

So the cornerstone of my **ASSAULT** rebake was twofold: remove the **ASSAULT'S Reliable** damage, and give it an actual gameplay identity of some sort, something to make it stand out as more than just a generic guy with a gun, so that GMs might be more mindful of how to incorporate them into an OPFOR.

And this is the result. I leaned all the way in to the "no **Reliable** damage" idea by completely inverting it, turning the **ASSAULT** into a unit that actively fares worse against targets in cover, which in turn encourages players to seek out cover and encourages the GM to more proactively look for flanking opportunities rather than just firing away and letting **Reliable** damage pick up the spares. **HUNKER DOWN** now comes with a built-in drawback as well (taken from the **DEMOLISHER'S** similar **DIG IN** reaction, we'll cover what happened to that later) so that forcing an **ASSAULT** to brace against an attack feels like more of an accomplishment.

Of course, the **ASSAULT'S** optionals now play into this identity as well to help solidify it further. The **UNDERSLING GRENADE LAUNCHER** gains some **KNOCKBACK** to help shove people out of cover, while **MICRO-MISSILE BARRAGE** becomes much more dangerous against targets out of cover, especially those relying on defenses like Invisibility against which save-based effects are particularly useful. It is, however, a **Full Action** now, because I've always felt

that getting to combo it with a **SKIRMISH** is a bit excessive.

If you're wondering if this means that I'm against NPCs having access to **Reliable** damage, the answer is no. My issues with **Reliable** NPCs in the core rulebook comes down to the specific NPCs which have it, not that it exists at all. As you've already seen (assuming you're reading through this in order), the **ARCHER** still has their **Reliable** damage, which I felt was appropriate given their punishment-based gameplan. It makes the threat of being shot by the **ARCHER** more serious if there's no way you can just luck out and be completely missed.

I've also added **Reliable** damage to several other NPCs throughout the rebakes, maintaining the same number of baseline **Reliable** NPCs as the core rulebook, simply shuffling around where you find it in the hopes of making its inclusion in an OPFOR a more thoughtful, deliberate consideration.

While we're here, let's talk about one of the most overlooked bits of the **ASSAULT'S** kit, the **COMBAT KNIFE**. The **COMBAT KNIFE** exists in a weird spot for the **ASSAULT**, because *Lancer* by and large isn't a game that rewards having a "backup melee weapon" much of the time... if you have multiple weapons, you tend to want them to exist in similar range brackets or have some form of cooperative synergy, and the **HEAVY ASSAULT RIFLE** and **COMBAT KNIFE** have neither. As a result, a lot of GMs basically ignore the knife in favor of keeping the **ASSAULT** at a distance where it can shoot while staying out of melee and benefiting from cover, which is a very sensible and reasonable thing to do.

Beyond the knife serving as a means to absorb unfortunate **SYSTEM TRAUMA** results, I actually do think that point-blank barrages with both the rifle and knife are surprisingly effective even using the core rulebook version of the **ASSAULT**. Yes, you suffer **Engagement** penalties for shooting while adjacent to someone, but the rifle has **Reliable** to offset missing – the rebake version also supports this as well. The **Engagement** penalty is countered by the rifle's **ACCURACY** against targets without cover, and a lot of the time you're in someone's face they probably won't have cover.

This tactic is further supported by the **SHOCKTROOPER** optional, which lets you turn **HUNKER DOWN** from a defensive ability to a gap closer and attack booster, letting you set up a bayonet charge via off-turn movement and granting additional Accuracy for both attacks.

All of this is to say that while an argument could be made that the knife seems like a superfluous element of the **ASSAULT'S** kit and it would simplify things to simply remove it and focus on its identity as a mid-range rifleman, I actually appreciate the extra depth it lends the unit in terms of tactics and playstyle options, and so I've elected to keep it for that reason. **BARRAGING** this way does mean the **ASSAULT** can potentially do more damage than you might expect it to at a glance, but this brings me all the way back to the original point of this rebake: the **ASSAULT** is a Striker, and should always be treated as such.



BARRICADE

Controller



TIER 1		TIER 2		TIER 3	
HULL: +0	SYSTEMS: +1	HULL: +1	SYSTEMS: +1	HULL: +2	SYSTEMS: +1
AGILITY: -2	ENGINEERING: +3	AGILITY: -2	ENGINEERING: +4	AGILITY: -2	ENGINEERING: +5
HP: 14	Armor: 2	HP: 18	Armor: 2	HP: 22	Armor: 2
Evasion: 6	E-Defense: 9	Evasion: 7	E-Defense: 11	Evasion: 8	E-Defense: 13
Speed: 3	Size: 2	Speed: 3	Size: 2	Speed: 4	Size: 2
Heat Cap: 10	Save Target: 12	Heat Cap: 10	Save Target: 15	Heat Cap: 10	Save Target: 18
Sensors: 15		Sensors: 15		Sensors: 15	

TACTICS

BARRICADES are at their best when locking down fast-moving targets that rely on their mobility. They can also use **MOBILE PRINTER** to create **hard cover** for allies (or for themselves) or to block off portions of the map.

OPFOR NOTES

- Low damage but equipped with multiple ways to interfere with enemy mobility.
- A high **SENSORS** allows for effective use of tech actions such as **LOCK ON**, **INVADE**, or **DRAG DOWN**.
- Works well in combat scenarios where enemies need to move in order to achieve objectives, and paired with allies who benefit from having protective cover on demand.

BASE SYSTEMS

Graviton Lance

Main Cannon, +1/2/3, +1 \oplus
 $[\checkmark 10] [2/3/4 \checkmark]$

On Hit: The target is **SLOWED** until the end of their next turn.

Mobile Printer

System, Quick Action

The **BARRICADE** prints a **SIZE 2** cube in a free area within $\checkmark 3$. The cube provides **hard cover** and is a single object with **20 HP** and **EVASION 5**. The **BARRICADE** can only have one cube deployed at a time; if a new one is deployed, the first one dissolves.

Drag Down

System, Quick Tech, +1/2/3

The **BARRICADE** makes a **tech attack** against a character within **SENSORS**. On a success, they take **2 \checkmark AP** per space that they voluntarily move until the end of their next turn.

Bulwark Mods

Trait

The **BARRICADE** ignores **difficult terrain** and **dangerous terrain**.

OPTIONAL SYSTEMS

Spike Barrier

Trait

The cube printed by **MOBILE PRINTER** is covered in piercing spikes; the first time in a round any character besides the **BARRICADE** moves adjacent to it, that character takes **2/3/4 ⚔ AP** and must pass an **AGILITY** save or lose all their remaining movement as though they had become **ENGAGED**.

Extrudite

Trait

The **BARRICADE** can print two separate cubes at a time with **MOBILE PRINTER** instead of one, and cubes no longer dissolve when new ones are printed, but **MOBILE PRINTER** is now **Recharge 5+** when used; it automatically **Recharges** if all cubes are destroyed.

Seismic Repulsor

System, Quick Action, Recharge 6+

The **BARRICADE** emits a seismic pulse from one of its printed cubes, creating a **⊕3** area around it. All **non-flying** characters within that area must pass a **HULL** save or be **knocked 3 spaces back** from the cube and knocked **PRONE**. Allied characters affected this way (including the **BARRICADE** itself) are not knocked **PRONE**. The cube is then destroyed.

Hunger/Pursuit Limpets

System, Quick Action, Recharge 6+

The **BARRICADE** rapidly prints and deploys a field of tiny, mobile mines in a free **SIZE 4** area adjacent to them. The affected area becomes **difficult terrain**; additionally, hostile characters that enter the area for the first time in a round or start their turn there must pass a **SYSTEMS** save or be **SLOWED** until the end of their next turn.

Titan-Snare Drone

System, Drone, Quick Action, Limited 1

Snare Drone (SIZE 1/2, 5/8/10 HP, Evasion 10/12/14, E-Defense 10/12/14, Tags: DRONE)

This drone can be printed and deployed to any free adjacent space. When hostile characters move into or start their turn within **✓3** of the drone, it emits a pulse and they become **IMMOBILIZED** until the drone is destroyed.

DESIGNER'S NOTES

Something that I think is important to consider when it comes to *Lancer* NPC design, and this can apply to other games with NPCs that work similarly, is "what does this NPC look like with absolutely no optionals whatsoever?" If you decide to use this NPC without any extras, what sort of gameplay are you looking at?

In the case of the **BARRICADE**, what you're looking at is two completely passive traits, a gun that slows people, and the ability to make a cube on a **Recharge 5+**.

I'm not gonna put too fine a point on it, this kind of stinks. A bare-bones **BARRICADE** is going to spend 90% of its time shooting people with the **GRAVITON LANCE** and maybe tossing out basic **INVADES**, and while that's functional and all, it's very boring. To add to that, **MOBILE PRINTER**, which is perhaps the most evocative and iconic **BARRICADE** ability, is on a recharge system (remember what I talked about with the **AEGIS**) as well as being awkward to use due to it being a **protocol**. You have to plunk cubes down at the start of the **BARRICADE'S** turn, which means using it to provide cover for allies on demand is that much harder to do. Combine this with the **BARRICADE'S** slow speed, and **MOBILE PRINTER** can often end up more of a gimmick than a useful feature.

So one of the biggest changes to the **BARRICADE** rebake is adjusting its base systems to be more interesting and dynamic. I chose to ditch **SHOCK PLATING**, giving it some more **HP** to compensate for the loss of resistance, and replace it with **DRAG DOWN**. Taken from its optionals, **DRAG DOWN** is the **BARRICADE** ability I reach for more often than not, and given what the **BARRICADE** specializes in, I feel like it's a strong contender for deserving to be moved into its base kit. This loss of **RESISTANCE** does make it generally more fragile, even with the additional **HP**, but given its mid-to-long range weapons and systems and ability to generate hard cover on demand, I feel this is a fair trade, and one that helps differentiate it more from controllers such as the **HIVE**.

As for **MOBILE PRINTER**, it's no longer a **recharge** ability and also no longer a **protocol**, and also no longer has to be placed adjacent to the **BARRICADE**. Overall, this makes it significantly easier and more flexible to use, with the caveat that you can only ever have one cube out at a time (barring optionals like the revised **EXTRUDITE**, of course). Cutting down on the ability to flood the map with deployables helps make things easier for the GM to manage as well.

In terms of optionals, this version of the **BARRICADE** has more stuff that hooks into its cubes, bringing that element into more prominence than it had in the core rulebook. This is something I try to do throughout the rebakes, looking for opportunities to hook optionals into base abilities to enhance or augment them in interesting ways.

It does make the NPCs a bit more "self-referential" in places, and that can make cross-classing components from one NPC to another a little trickier – for example, the **SPIKE BARRIER** trait is kind of useless to put on an NPC that doesn't also have the **MOBILE PRINTER** system to go along with it – but given that cross-classing is entirely optional and makeshift to begin with, I'm okay with that, and there are still plenty of other self-contained traits and systems you can freely make use of.



BASTION

Defender



TIER 1		TIER 2		TIER 3	
HULL: +2	SYSTEMS: +0	HULL: +4	SYSTEMS: +0	HULL: +6	SYSTEMS: +0
AGILITY: -3	ENGINEERING: +2	AGILITY: -3	ENGINEERING: +3	AGILITY: -3	ENGINEERING: +4
HP: 10	Armor: 3	HP: 12	Armor: 3	HP: 14	Armor: 4
Evasion: 8	E-Defense: 8	Evasion: 10	E-Defense: 9	Evasion: 12	E-Defense: 10
Speed: 4	Size: 2	Speed: 4	Size: 2	Speed: 4	Size: 2
Heat Cap: 8	Save Target: 10	Heat Cap: 8	Save Target: 12	Heat Cap: 8	Save Target: 14
Sensors: 5		Sensors: 5		Sensors: 5	

TACTICS

BASTIONS are hardy defenders that use their bulk and size to protect themselves and nearby allies. Use **FRIENDLY INTERDICTION** to defend against distant enemies, like artillery and snipers, or to set up favorable engagements at closer range. **BASTIONS** (and their wards) are vulnerable to **KNOCKBACK** and forced movement, as these effects break many of their abilities.

OPFOR NOTES

- High **ARMOR** but only modest **HP** makes them more resistant to low-damage **AUXILIARY** weapons, but more vulnerable to high-damage **HEAVY** or **SUPERHEAVY** weapons, or weapons with **AP**.
- With only close-to-mid range weapons itself and low **SENSORS**, protecting backline units means it won't have many chances to contribute to combat.
- Works well when operating at mid-range to closer distances, alongside allies that can benefit from its protective abilities without needing to remain mobile, such as ranged Strikers.

BASE SYSTEMS

Rotary Grenade Launcher

Main Launcher, Arcing, Loading, +1/2/3
[✓8, ⊕1] [4/6/8★]

An adjacent allied character can reload this weapon as a **quick action**.

Heavy Assault Shield

Heavy Melee, Knockback 1, +1/2/3
[⊗1] [3/4/5∅]

On Hit: Target must pass a **HULL** save or be knocked **PRONE**.

Friendly Interdiction

Trait, Protocol

The **BASTION** and one allied character adjacent to it gain **RESISTANCE** to all damage dealt by one character within line of sight. The **BASTION** may choose a new allied character or a new character to gain **RESISTANCE** from as a **protocol**. The allied character loses **RESISTANCE** if they break adjacency.

Guardian

Trait

Adjacent allied characters can use the **BASTION** for hard cover.

OPTIONAL SYSTEMS

Near-Threat Denial System

System

When characters within $\sqrt{3}$ attack the **BASTION** or a character being protected by **FRIENDLY INTERDICTION**, they take **2/3/4 * AP** before rolling.

Siege Guardian

Trait

Allied characters gain **RESISTANCE** to damage from **BLAST**, **BURST**, **LINE**, and **CONE** attacks while they're adjacent to the **BASTION**.

Fearless Defender

Trait, Reaction, 1/round

Trigger: An allied character within $\sqrt{5}$ of the **BASTION** takes damage, and the **BASTION** isn't **IMMOBILIZED**, **SLOWED**, **STUNNED**, or otherwise unable to move.

Effect: The **BASTION** moves to a space adjacent to the triggering character and takes the damage instead. The **BASTION** may then immediately use **FRIENDLY INTERDICTION** on the triggering character.

Deathcounter

System, Shield

The **BASTION** is wreathed in a crackling energy field visible to all characters. The first time the **BASTION** is successfully hit by a **ranged** or **melee attack** each round, all damage is reduced to 0, after which the field visibly dissipates until the start of the next round.

Stack Up

Trait

When the **BASTION** takes its **standard move** or **Boosts**, an adjacent allied character can choose to move with them, mirroring their movement. This allied character's movement ignores **engagement** and does not provoke **reactions**. Each allied character can only move a number of spaces this way each round equal to their **SPEED**.

DESIGNER'S NOTES

The **BASTION** is a pretty straightforward NPC in a lot of ways: a big guy with a shield that you can take cover behind and who can protect you from damage. There's not really a whole lot about that dynamic that's changed in the rebake version except that I've tried to add a little more juice to a playstyle that largely requires several NPCs to be holding position next to each other in order to gain these benefits, like adjacent allies being able to reload the **ROTARY GRENADE LAUNCHER**, or **STACK UP** allowing the **BASTION** a splash of tactical mobility that it's never had before.

Speaking of more closely integrating various optional systems into base systems, you can see this in the **BASTION** rebake as well, where more of its optional traits now directly hook into **FRIENDLY INTERDICTION**.

Perhaps the biggest and most important change is to **DEATHCOUNTER**, what is probably the most recognizable and memorable **BASTION** ability. **DEATHCOUNTER** is almost certainly responsible for more "that's bullshit!" moments than anything else in the game. Somewhere in the world right now, as you read this, a new player is firing a **CYCLONE PULSE RIFLE** at a **BASTION**, completely unaware that they're about to learn a valuable lesson in why the **SCAN** action is useful.

I actually think that **DEATHCOUNTER**, design-wise, is perfectly fine. It has extremely clear counterplay (though many people do seem to misread how it works, assuming that it only breaks if the **BASTION** would take damage, instead of simply being hit with an attack), and once you know how it operates you can pretty easily work around it.

So what did I change? I simply added a visibility cue to it. If anything about **DEATHCOUNTER** could be said to be awkward it's the fact that there's absolutely no baked-in telegraphing of it, leaving its effect feeling like it comes completely out of nowhere when it happens. This version of **DEATHCOUNTER** works exactly like the core rulebook version in every way, except that you can now see when it's active (even if you don't yet know how it functions) and when it's been disabled. Sometimes all you need is a bit of tactile feedback to make things click into place.

Also, I'm gonna be real honest... I have no idea why the core rulebook **BASTION'S SAVE TARGET** is so low. It doesn't really matter as much because that version of the **BASTION** has no saves in its kit (the rebake has a whopping one, the new version of the **HEAVY ASSAULT SHIELD**, whose damage no longer scales so weirdly either), but nowhere else in the game does anyone have a below-ten **SAVE TARGET**, like that's just not a thing that exists. Was it a typo? A weird overlooked artifact? Is there some sinister, secret purpose to it? Whatever the case might be, I raised it to be in line with every other "low **SAVE TARGET**" value across the NPC roster.

SIZE
1

BERSERKER

Striker



TIER 1		TIER 2		TIER 3	
HULL: +3	SYSTEMS: -2	HULL: +4	SYSTEMS: -2	HULL: +5	SYSTEMS: -2
AGILITY: +2	ENGINEERING: -1	AGILITY: +3	ENGINEERING: -1	AGILITY: +4	ENGINEERING: -1
HP: 12	Armor: 1	HP: 16	Armor: 1	HP: 20	Armor: 1
Evasion: 8	E-Defense: 6	Evasion: 9	E-Defense: 7	Evasion: 10	E-Defense: 8
Speed: 5	Size: 1	Speed: 5	Size: 1	Speed: 5	Size: 1
Heat Cap: 6	Save Target: 10	Heat Cap: 6	Save Target: 12	Heat Cap: 6	Save Target: 14
Sensors: 5		Sensors: 5		Sensors: 5	

TACTICS

BERSERKERS are ferocious melee units that are very scary up close. Their potential is greatest when they can charge into an enemy with **AVALANCHE CHARGE** and follow up with another attack with the **CHAIN AXE**. Though **STAMPEDE DEFENSE** is powerful, due to their terrible **HEAT CAP** and **E-DEFENSE**, **BERSERKERS** are vulnerable to **tech attacks**. **AGGRESSION** can be a double-edged sword, making them dangerous both to friend and foe alike, and canny opponents will seek to exploit this.

OPFOR NOTES

- A melee unit with extreme strengths and extreme vulnerabilities, look to quickly get the most out of them before they're destroyed.
- **AGGRESSION** can be used tactically by including it in the area-of-effect for damaging attacks and abilities, though this will of course damage it as well. Enemies can take advantage of this themselves.
- Works well as an aggressive frontline unit to apply immediate pressure to enemies so other units can act unimpeded, or as a sudden and dangerous threat when brought in as reinforcements.

BASE SYSTEMS

Chain Axe

Heavy Melee, +1/2/3
[#1] [7/9/11 ♂]

On Critical Hit: Target becomes **SHREDDED** until the end of their next turn.

Stampede Defense

Trait

The **BERSERKER** has **RESISTANCE** to all damage unless they are **IMPAIRED**, **STUNNED**, **IMMOBILIZED**, **SHREDDED**, **SLOWED**, or **EXPOSED**.

Aggression

Trait

After taking damage for the first time each round, the **BERSERKER** must immediately attack a random adjacent character, hostile or allied, with the **CHAIN AXE**. This attack happens even if the **BERSERKER** is destroyed.

Avalanche Charge

Trait, Quick Action, Recharge 5+

The **BERSERKER** moves spaces equal to their **SPEED** in a straight line, ignoring **reactions** and **engagement**, then attacks a random adjacent character, hostile or allied, with the **CHAIN AXE**.

OPTIONAL SYSTEMS

Juggernaut

Trait

When the **BERSERKER** uses **AVALANCHE CHARGE**, all characters adjacent to the path they follow or adjacent to their final position, hostile or allied, must succeed on a **HULL** save or be knocked **PRONE**.

Harpoon Cannon

Main CQB, +2/4/6, AP
[✓5, ✘3] [2/3/4 ⚡]

On Hit: Targets of smaller or equal **SIZE** to the **BERSERKER** are pulled adjacent to them in a straight line, or as close as possible. If they're larger, the **BERSERKER** is pulled adjacent to them instead. If this ends with the **BERSERKER** adjacent to the target, the **BERSERKER** **GRAPPLES** them.

Retribution

Trait

Whenever the **BERSERKER** takes damage, their next attack deals **+1d6 bonus damage**. This bonus damage is lost when the **BERSERKER** attacks, or at the end of their next turn.

Headhunter

Trait

Whenever the **BERSERKER** attacks a target that is **GRAPLED**, **IMMOBILIZED**, **STUNNED**, or **PRONE** with the **CHAIN AXE**, they become **SHREDDED** on hit rather than on critical hit.

Overdrive Servos

System

The **BERSERKER** counts as **SIZE 3** for **RAM** and **GRAPPLE**, and they deal **3/4/5 ⚡** on hit with **RAM** and **GRAPPLE**.

DESIGNER'S NOTES

I love the **BERSERKER**. Like the xenomorph, it's the perfect organism... clear-cut strengths and weaknesses, a distinct gameplay style and tactical role, evocative mechanics that players can cleverly engage with, it has it all.

Consequently, the **BERSERKER** rebake doesn't really change a whole lot. In terms of base systems, it more or less works like it always did, with the exception that **AGGRESSION** now explicitly gets one last swing off even when the **BERSERKER** is destroyed, a fun little surprise for players and something else they can try to take advantage of.

The optionals show a bit more change. Retribution has been streamlined from a stacking, scaling bonus into a much more straightforward +1d6 bonus damage, both for simplicity and to help keep things more bounded. Meanwhile, **SUPERHOT** (yet another ability shared between multiple NPCs) has been replaced in favor of more **BERSERKER**-specific options. **OVERDRIVE SERVOS** gives the **BERSERKER** some additional **BLACKBEARD** flavor, and allows the GM to use them to bully incautious players who think their large **HEAVY FRAME** mechs make them the king of control points. **HEADHUNTER**, meanwhile, lets the **BERSERKER** get some revenge for all the times you slapped debuffs on it to make it more vulnerable by exploiting some vulnerabilities of its own.

Then we come to optional weapons, of which the core rulebook **BERSERKER** has several. I strongly suspect that a lot of the NPCs that have optional weapons in their kit have them mainly to serve as a form of ablative protection against **System Trauma**... a **BERSERKER** without their **CHAIN AXE** isn't really much of a threat, after all. I'm not really a fan of them in that regard, and I'm also not really a fan of the way that casually giving an NPC the ability to barrage can significantly increase their damage output without consideration.

Unlike some other optional weapons, both the **HARPOON CANNON** and **NAIL GUN** actually complement the **BERSERKER**'s playstyle. The **BERSERKER** is a rushdown melee striker, and both guns help with that, either by bringing enemies closer or pinning them in place, but it's for exactly that reason that I don't think the **BERSERKER** needs both of them, nor do I think it needs a second weapon that punches as hard as the **NAIL GUN** does. Thus, it gets cut in favor of the lower damage and more utility-oriented **HARPOON CANNON**, especially as the grapples that weapon can enable now synergize with **OVERDRIVE SERVOS**, enabling you to really push the **BERSERKER** in the direction of an aggressive grappler if you like.

SIZE
2

BOMBARD

Artillery



TIER 1		TIER 2		TIER 3	
HULL: +0	SYSTEMS: +1	HULL: +0	SYSTEMS: +2	HULL: +0	SYSTEMS: +3
AGILITY: -1	ENGINEERING: +2	AGILITY: -1	ENGINEERING: +3	AGILITY: -1	ENGINEERING: +4
HP: 12	Armor: 0	HP: 14	Armor: 0	HP: 16	Armor: 0
Evasion: 7	E-Defense: 12	Evasion: 8	E-Defense: 14	Evasion: 9	E-Defense: 16
Speed: 2	Size: 2	Speed: 2	Size: 2	Speed: 2	Size: 2
Heat Cap: 8	Save Target: 11	Heat Cap: 8	Save Target: 13	Heat Cap: 8	Save Target: 15
Sensors: 15		Sensors: 15		Sensors: 15	

TACTICS

BOMBARDS are very long-range artillery mechs designed to punish characters that stay close together to take advantage of adjacency bonuses. They are relatively fragile up close, but resilient at a distance thanks to **SIEGE ARMOR**, so place them far back to maximize their effectiveness. **CLUSTER MUNITIONS** adds cumulative damage based on the number of targeted characters within the area, which can include drones and even allies as well.

OPFOR NOTES

- Extremely long-ranged and capable of indirect fire with the **BOMBARD CANNON** thanks to **ARCING**, but extremely slow and vulnerable at close range.
- Maximizing the number of targets within the **BOMBARD CANNON**'s radius will not only enhance its damage thanks to **CLUSTER MUNITIONS**, but will automatically reload special shells such as **EARTHSHAKER SHELLS** for repeat use.
- Works well against enemy compositions that want to remain in close formation, and in conjunction with allies that can either protect it from being rushed down or that can help move enemies closer together for followup attacks.

BASE SYSTEMS

Bombard Cannon

Superheavy Cannon, +2/4/6, +1 Θ , Arcing, Ordnance
[\nearrow 25, \odot 2] [5/7/9*]

Cluster Munitions

Trait

The **BOMBARD**'s attacks with the **BOMBARD CANNON** deal **+2/+3/+4** damage to all characters for each targeted character beyond the first.

Earthshaker Shells

System

When attacking with the **BOMBARD CANNON**, the **BOMBARD** may also fire a special earthshaker shell. In addition to any damage, one character within the **BLAST** must pass a **HULL** save or be knocked **PRONE**. Debris or broken earth is thrown up by the impact, creating two **SIZE 1** segments of **hard cover** in free spaces within $\nearrow 3$ of the targeted space. The **BOMBARD CANNON** must then be reloaded before it can be used again (as though it was **Loading**) unless two or more characters were targeted by this attack.

Siege Armor

Trait

The **BOMBARD** has **RESISTANCE** to all damage from attacks that originate beyond $\nearrow 3$.

OPTIONAL SYSTEMS

High-Impact Shells

System

When attacking with the **BOMBARD CANNON**, the **BOMBARD** may fire a special high-impact shell. On hit, characters are **knocked back 2 spaces** either directly away from the **BOMBARD** or from the center of the **BLAST**, **+1 space** for each targeted character beyond the first, up to a maximum of **5 spaces**. The **BOMBARD CANNON** must then be reloaded before it can be used again (as though it was **Loading**) unless two or more characters were targeted by this attack. Only one type of special shell can be fired at a time.

Bunker Buster Shells

System

When attacking with the **BOMBARD CANNON**, the **BOMBARD** may fire a special bunker buster shell. The **BOMBARD CANNON** automatically deals **10/20/30 * AP** damage to all objects and terrain in the affected area, and one character in the area must pass a **HULL** save or become **SHREDDED** until the end of their next turn. The **BOMBARD CANNON** must then be reloaded before it can be used again (as though it was **Loading**) unless two or more characters were targeted by this attack. Only one type of special shell can be fired at a time.

Flare Drone

System, Quick Action, Drone

Flare Drone (Size 1/2, HP 10/15/20, Evasion 10, E-Defense 10, Tags: Drone)

This drone can be deployed to a space within line of sight and $\checkmark 25$, where it hovers in place and begins projecting bright light in a $\odot 2$ area. All characters in the affected area – including those that move into the affected area or start their turn within it – lose **INVISIBLE** and **HIDDEN**, and cannot **HIDE** or turn **INVISIBLE** within the area. Additionally, the **BOMBARD** gains **+1♦** to attacks against characters within the affected area (including the drone itself). The **BOMBARD** can only have one drone deployed at a time; if a new drone is deployed, the old one disintegrates.

High-Angle Fire

Trait, Full Action, 1/round

The **BOMBARD** may prepare a delayed, high-angle shot with the **BOMBARD CANNON**. Choose a $\odot 3$ area, which becomes visible to all characters; the **BOMBARD** then makes an attack at the end of the next round with the **BOMBARD CANNON**, after all characters have acted, against every target within the area.

Counterbattery Suite

System, Reaction, 1/round

Trigger: A hostile character makes an attack against the **BOMBARD**.

Effect: The triggering character gains **LOCK ON**. This reaction can't be used against characters within $\checkmark 3$ of the **BOMBARD**.

DESIGNER'S NOTES

The **BOMBARD** is another NPC with a clearly defined mechanical role, as well as an infamous NPC among players unfamiliar with its particular gimmick. As an artillery NPC, the **BOMBARD** serves as an anti-deathball unit, discouraging PCs from clumping together, and at that it excels.

Beyond that, the **BOMBARD** doesn't really need to do much else, and so the rebake is more about standardizing how many of its optionals work, consolidating them into a "hit multiple people or have to reload" mechanic, whereas before it was a mix of **recharge** systems and passive traits.

The possibility of having to reload might make this **BOMBARD** seem weaker than its core rulebook counterpart, but I think that in general the **BOMBARD** is going to be seeking out multi-target shots anyway. They might want to take a less optimal shot if the PCs spread out smartly in order to apply something like **PRONE**, **KNOCKBACK**, or **SHREDDED** to a single target as the situation calls for it, but it's not tremendously difficult to maintain a steady volume of fire with normal attacks (or drop the occasional bit of friendly fire in order to keep those special shells in stock).

This also incentivizes push-and-pull (figuratively and literally) between the PCs and NPCs with forced movement tech... the PCs will naturally want to try and smartly spread out to avoid being shelled and rewarding the **BOMBARD** for it, while the **BOMBARD**'s allies can look for ways to shove the PCs together and get those repeated special shell procs going.

EARTHSHAKER SHELLS in particular have also been tuned slightly downward, going from a multi-target prone to a single-target prone. While **HIGH-IMPACT SHELLS** and **BUNKER BUSTER** in the core rulebook are traits and therefore expected to simply be always on (and in fact, I've gone and tweaked those to be a bit juicier than their default), **EARTHSHAKER SHELLS** were a **Recharge 6+** system, and therefore balanced accordingly.

This version of the system, by contrast, can potentially be used fairly regularly, and I don't think that the mass prone is as healthy when it could theoretically be used to repeatedly prone clusters of slower units and leave them floundering. If anything, you could view this as a bizarre sort of buff to firing **EARTHSHAKER SHELLS** into a target zone containing both allies and enemies, knocking a PC prone while leaving any NPCs in the area still standing (if quite scuffed).

In terms of optionals, I've never cared for **CLUSTER-SEEKER BOMBS**. The **BOMBARD** already does good damage on its own and doesn't need even more, and **REPEATER CANNON** is one of the more superfluous optional weapons. I understand its intended role is to give the **BOMBARD** something to defend itself with if PCs get close to it, but the thing is that I think PCs who get close to **BOMBARDS** should be rewarded for it, that's like Artillery Unit Weakness 101 right there.

The **BOMBARD** is another NPC that's received a size increase. This makes it harder for it to post up behind line-of-sight obscuring terrain and shoot with impunity (though you can still build maps around that tactic if you want, you just need to use bigger rocks). Between having the longest range of any NPC in the rebake roster and **SIEGE ARMOR**, I'm of the opinion that the **BOMBARD** doesn't really need that additional layer of overlapping defense as strongly. Its **HP** value is slightly more frontloaded now to compensate.



BREACHER

Striker



TIER 1		TIER 2		TIER 3	
HULL: +2	SYSTEMS: -1	HULL: +3	SYSTEMS: -1	HULL: +4	SYSTEMS: -1
AGILITY: +0	ENGINEERING: +1	AGILITY: +0	ENGINEERING: +2	AGILITY: +0	ENGINEERING: +3
HP: 18	Armor: 1	HP: 20	Armor: 1	HP: 22	Armor: 1
Evasion: 9	E-Defense: 7	Evasion: 11	E-Defense: 8	Evasion: 13	E-Defense: 9
Speed: 3	Size: 2	Speed: 3	Size: 2	Speed: 4	Size: 2
Heat Cap: 7	Save Target: 11	Heat Cap: 7	Save Target: 13	Heat Cap: 7	Save Target: 15
Sensors: 5		Sensors: 5		Sensors: 5	

TACTICS

BREACHERS pack low accuracy shotguns that can nonetheless deal significant burst damage. They work best against targets with low **EVASION** or when they can gain **ACCURACY** by attacking **PRONE** targets or those with **LOCK ON**. They also pose a significant threat to heavily protected targets benefiting from **ARMOR** and **RESISTANCE** (who often tend to have low **EVASION** as well), as **BREAK ARMOR** can strip those defenses away until the effect is cleared.

OPFOR NOTES

- High damage, but low accuracy and short range.
- Relatively slow, but both **BREACH RAM** and many of its optional systems provide additional forms of mobility to close the distance quickly.
- Works well against enemies with poor **EVASION** to maximize its chances to hit, and alongside allies that further help enhance its chances of landing successive hits with its **DUAL SHOTGUNS**.

BASE SYSTEMS

Dual Shotguns

Main CQB, +1/2/3, +2 \ominus
[✓3, ✘3] [5/7/9 \emptyset]

This weapon can make two attacks at once, targeting either the same character or different ones. The final attack rolls for this weapon can never be affected by **ACCURACY**.

Breach Ram

System, Quick Action, Recharge 6+

The **BREACHER** moves **up to 6 spaces** in a straight line, ignoring **engagement** and passing through – but not stopping in – spaces occupied by other characters. Obstructions and objects in the **BREACHER'S** path take **30 \emptyset AP**. The **BREACHER** passes through any obstructions destroyed this way and continues moving until they have moved **6 spaces** or fail to destroy an obstruction. Any characters in the **BREACHER'S** path must succeed on an **AGILITY** save or be pushed out of the way as directly as possible and knocked **PRONE**.

Break Armor

Trait

Characters that are successfully attacked more than once in a turn by the **BREACHER'S DUAL SHOTGUNS** become **SHREDDED** for the rest of the scene.

Ram Plating

Trait

The **BREACHER** gains +1 \oplus to **RAM**.

OPTIONAL SYSTEMS

Follower Count

System, Quick Tech, +1/2/3, +1 ♦

The **BREACHER** makes a tech attack against a character within Sensors. On a success, the **BREACHER** gains +1 ♦ on all attacks against their target, and may **BOOST** once per turn as a **free action** so long as it moves them directly towards their target. This lasts until either character is destroyed and cannot be changed to a new target unless the **BREACHER** takes 4 ♦ to attempt this **tech attack** against a different target.

Thermal Charge

System, Grenade, Quick Action, Recharge 6+

The **BREACHER** throws a grenade to a space within 5. Characters in the ensuing +1 explosion must pass an **AGILITY** save or take 2/3/4 ♀ and become **SHREDDED** until the end of their next turn. Objects, terrain, and **DEPLOYABLES** in the area automatically take 30 * AP damage; if any objects or terrain are destroyed this way, the **BREACHER** may immediately move their **SPEED** towards one of those spaces or as close as possible.

Painmaker

Trait, Full Action

The **BREACHER** prepares a salvo of shells, becoming **SLOWED** until the end of their next turn. This effect is visible to everyone. During the **BREACHER**'s next turn, the next time they use the **DUAL SHOTGUNS**, they may make four attacks at once instead of two.

Fragmentation Shells

Trait

1/round, when the **BREACHER** makes a successful attack with the **DUAL SHOTGUNS**, a different character within 3 of the target takes 2/3/4 ♀ plus bonus damage equal to the initial target's **ARMOR**.

Breach and Clear

Trait

When using **BREACH RAM**, the **BREACHER** may also attack any character in their path with the **DUAL SHOTGUNS**. The **DUAL SHOTGUNS** only make a single attack against each character this way (rather than making two attacks at once), and these attacks deal **half damage** on hit.

DESIGNER'S NOTES

So here's an interesting guy. The **BREACHER** is maybe one of the more unintuitive Strikers at first glance, a unit that really wants to land multiple attacks with a super inaccurate weapon. It's sometimes hard to tell what this NPC is geared towards at first, which is cracking open low **EVASION**, high toughness mechs, things like your **IPS-N DRAKES**.

Of course, in practical terms it isn't necessarily hard to crank the **BREACHER'S ACCURACY** up to the point that it's capable of threatening lots of targets with hard-hitting multi-attacks, and multi-attacks are one of the things I set out to curtail with this project. But I think when it comes to the **BREACHER**, its particular implementation of multi-attacking is integral to its gameplay style. Rather than remove and rework it, I decided to keep it intact while refining things in a bit by lowering its weapon damage just a hair, and also ensuring that the **DUAL SHOTGUNS** can't benefit from excess **ACCURACY**, further reinforcing that you want to go after targets with lower **EVASION** when possible.

It's because of this that the **BREACHER** also got a size increase. Shooting **PRONE** targets is one of the best ways to gain extra **ACCURACY** (as it applies to all attacks, unlike **LOCK ON** which is a one-time consumable), but at **SIZE 1** the Breacher struggles to knock larger mechs prone; you can't **RAM** anyone bigger than you, and **HEAVY FRAME** makes things even more difficult. So in addition to being bigger, **RAM PLATING** now encourages the **BREACHER** to knock people flat before unloading both barrels into them.

With the **BREACHER'S** bigger size and thus bigger footprint, I've slightly tamped down on its **SPEED** scaling over tier, going from **3/4/5** to **3/3/4**, a minor change but one that means you might want to look at pairing it with movement-facilitating options at higher tiers. Its own **THERMAL CHARGE** system can now be used for this in a pinch as well, given that **BREACH RAM** is on a **Recharge 6+** and thus may not always be available. Plus, hey, there's always **BOOST**, not to mention **FOLLOWER COUNT** can now be used more flexibly if at a heat cost.

One of the biggest changes to its optionals lies in **PAIN-MAKER**, an optional that in the core rulebook version is exceedingly awkward and demanding to make use of. Yeah, it's a lot of extra attacks, but you have to jump through a ton of hoops to get there, and frankly I've never found it to be all that worthwhile. The revised **PAIN-MAKER** along with the newly added **BREACH AND CLEAR** exist to give the **BREACHER** more ways to fish for **BREAK ARMOR** procs. Meanwhile, the rather underwhelming **FLECHETTE SHOT** (which doesn't even have a to-hit value listed, raising the question of how it's even supposed to work) has been replaced with **FRAGMENTATION SHELLS**, a way of doling out additional damage that encourages the Breacher to go hunting for heavily armored targets and the allies who like to hide behind them.

And to go along with the **SIZE** increase from **1** to **2** and **THERMAL CHARGE** going from a **Limited 1** system to a **Recharge 6+**, the **BREACHER** also has a sideline in terrain destruction. Its terrain damage capabilities have been increased to a flat **30 AP** damage at all tiers, primarily so it can blow openings in the terrain big enough to fit its bigger body through; at **TIER 1**, only dealing **10 damage** to terrain might render it incapable of breaching holes in larger obstructions unless the GM is accommodatingly making everything out of **SIZE 1** blocks.

SIZE
1

CATAPHRACT

Striker



TIER 1		TIER 2		TIER 3	
HULL: +1	SYSTEMS: +0	HULL: +2	SYSTEMS: +0	HULL: +3	SYSTEMS: +0
AGILITY: +2	ENGINEERING: +0	AGILITY: +3	ENGINEERING: +0	AGILITY: +4	ENGINEERING: +0
HP: 16	Armor: 0	HP: 18	Armor: 0	HP: 20	Armor: 0
Evasion: 10	E-Defense: 8	Evasion: 11	E-Defense: 9	Evasion: 12	E-Defense: 10
Speed: 8	Size: 1	Speed: 8	Size: 1	Speed: 8	Size: 1
Heat Cap: 6	Save Target: 12	Heat Cap: 7	Save Target: 14	Heat Cap: 8	Save Target: 16
Sensors: 5		Sensors: 5		Sensors: 5	

TACTICS

CATAPHRACTS are mobile "linebreaker" strikers that can pull formations apart. **TRAMPLE** allows them to move through enemies and get them to the rear lines, where they can use **IMPALE** to drag vulnerable targets into disadvantageous positions. Position **CATAPHRACTS** so that they are closer to individual hostile characters, as **POINT-DEFENSE SHIELD** doesn't work if several enemies are an equal distance away. Note that **CATAPHRACTS** still provoke reactions when they move, so use their abilities carefully.

OPFOR NOTES

- Damage is relatively modest damage for a melee Striker, especially against targets with **ARMOR**, but has a variety of powerful forced movement and Condition-applying tools within its optional systems. Consider this when planning its use.
- As a **SIZE 1** unit, grappling may be less effective against larger targets who can automatically take control of grapples. **IMPALE** will still drag even larger targets out of position upon use.
- Works well against enemy compositions that rely on grouping closely together, and in conjunction with hazards such as **MINES** or **dangerous terrain** which it can drag targets into.

BASE SYSTEMS

Ram Cannon

Heavy Cannon, Melee, +0, +1/2/3♦
[✓5, ✘2] [5/7/9∅]

This lance can be used as either a **ranged** or **melee** weapon, but not both in the same turn. When used as a ranged weapon, **Critical Hits** cause the target to become **IMPAIRED** until the end of their next turn. When used as a melee weapon, it gains **Knockback 2**.

Trample

Trait

The **CATAPHRACT** ignores **engagement** and can pass through – but not stop in – spaces occupied by other characters, **1/turn** dealing **2/3/4∅** to those characters.

Impale

System, Full Action, Recharge 6+

The **CATAPHRACT** moves up to **8 spaces** in a straight line. Pick a character that the **CATAPHRACT** passed through or ended adjacent to; they must pass a **HULL** save at **+1⊖**. On a failure, they are grappled by the **CATAPHRACT** and pulled with the Cataphract to the end of their movement. On **Critical Hit** with the **RAM CANNON**, this system automatically **Recharges**.

Point-Defense Shield

System, Shield

The **CATAPHRACT** has **RESISTANCE to all damage from the closest hostile character**. If multiple characters are equally close, this effect does not apply.

OPTIONAL SYSTEMS

Electrified Lasso

System, Quick Action, 1/round

A character in line of sight and $\checkmark 5$ must make a **HULL** save. On a failure, they are pulled **as close as possible** to the **CATAPHRACT**; if they become adjacent, the Cataphract automatically **GRAPPLES** them.

Lance Shot

System, Full Action, Recharge 6+

The **CATAPHRACT** fires a piercing lance in a $\checkmark 5$ path. All characters within the affected area must pass a **HULL** save or be knocked back **3 spaces**. Any character that collides with an obstruction or another character also becomes **IMMOBILIZED** until the end of their next turn.

Electromagnetic Bola

System, Recharge 5+, Quick Action

A flying character in $\checkmark 10$ must pass an **AGILITY** save. On a failure, they are pulled **3 spaces**, land immediately, and become **IMMOBILIZED** until the end of their next turn. This counts as **falling** but without damage.

Charge

Trait, Quick Action, Recharge 5+

The **CATAPHRACT** moves spaces equal to their **SPEED** in a straight line, ignoring **reactions** and **engagement**, then attacks a target within **RANGE** with the **RAM CANNON**.

Capacitor Discharge

Trait

As long as the **CATAPHRACT** isn't **SLOWED** or **JAMMED**, whenever characters within $\checkmark 3$ make **ranged** or **melee** attacks against them, they take **2** \ddagger before rolling.

DESIGNER'S NOTES

When looking at the **CATAPHRACT** in the core rulebook, my first thought is: what's up with that to-hit bonus? Why does it scale like that, gaining **ACCURACY** by tier? It's so weird! No other NPC does that. I debated whether I should keep it like that or not, and ultimately decided to try and find a reason to stick with it just to see if I could.

When you have a lot of **ACCURACY**, that lends itself well to fishing for critical hits, and so I gave the **RAM CANNON** both an on crit effect as well as having critical hits automatically recharge **IMPALE**, the **CATAPHRACT**'s big "this is what I was put in the OPFOR to do" ability. This is something you'll see elsewhere throughout, which is giving **Recharge** abilities alternate ways to be recharged than just rolling the dice and hoping. There's still an element of random variance to it, maybe you just won't score any crits either, but it gives the GM a goal they can actively pursue, and it also gives players something they can work to interfere with when they figure out how it works.

The **CATAPHRACT** also isn't the first time that we'll see something which I like to call "why does this NPC have this incredibly powerful optional ability that's all about hitting lots of people with hard crowd-control debuffs out of nowhere?" **LANCE SHOT**, the core rulebook version, is undeniably good as in "strong," but why does the **CATAPHRACT** have an AoE jam? Yes, it's a bit of a hybrid striker/controller, but "jams a bunch of people at once" isn't really something I would associate with the fast charging lance guy who yanks people across the map.

For the rebake, I leaned into the displacement angle more, giving the **CATAPHRACT** more forced movement tools instead. **CAPACITOR DISCHARGE** was changed among other reasons because I don't really think NPCs need multiple **RESISTANCE**-granting capabilities going on at once. **POINT-DEFENSE SHIELD** is already in the **CATAPHRACT**'s base kit, and it's a very good implementation of **RESISTANCE** with specific encouraged tactics and counterplay (the **CATAPHRACT** likes dragging people off to 1v1 them, where it has an advantage, and this can be played around). Meanwhile, **CAPACITOR DISCHARGE** going "yeah it also just gets energy and heat resistance too, why not" feels like gilding the lily. So now it's less about that, and more of a thing that makes fighting the **CATAPHRACT** up close and personal (where it likes to be) more dangerous.

As for why **CAPACITOR DISCHARGE** now shuts off via **JAMMED** rather than **IMMOBILIZED**, I made this change specifically because the **CATAPHRACT** has several abilities that incline it towards **GRAPPLING**, and **GRAPPLING** is a good way to inadvertently end up becoming **IMMOBILIZED** (such as grabbing onto a bigger character, say). This means an ability that shuts off for that reason runs afoul of potential anti-synergy. This exists within the core rulebook version and while I'm not sure how big of a deal it is in practical terms, it's always struck me as a little unusual that you can take an optional which can be shut off accidentally by doing things other abilities want you to do (as opposed to a more deliberate tradeoff, which I don't really view this as being).



DEMOLISHER

Defender



TIER 1		TIER 2		TIER 3	
HULL: +3	SYSTEMS: -1	HULL: +4	SYSTEMS: -1	HULL: +5	SYSTEMS: -1
AGILITY: -3	ENGINEERING: +2	AGILITY: -2	ENGINEERING: +3	AGILITY: -2	ENGINEERING: +4
HP: 20	Armor: 2	HP: 25	Armor: 2	HP: 30	Armor: 2
Evasion: 6	E-Defense: 7	Evasion: 7	E-Defense: 8	Evasion: 8	E-Defense: 9
Speed: 2	Size: 2	Speed: 2	Size: 2	Speed: 2	Size: 2
Heat Cap: 8	Save Target: 10	Heat Cap: 8	Save Target: 13	Heat Cap: 8	Save Target: 15
Sensors: 10		Sensors: 10		Sensors: 10	

TACTICS

DEMOLISHERS are slow, resilient defenders that dish out heavy damage and debilitating conditions when enemies get close to them. Use their size and power in melee combat to force enemy characters away from areas of the map until they can bring the **DEMOLISHER** down, using **EARTHSHATTER** to attack them from a distance.

OPFOR NOTES

- Slow and cannot easily be moved involuntarily, better at holding critical areas of the map (such as objective points) than at chasing down speedy targets.
- When targets aren't in range for melee attacks or close-range systems, consider actions such as **LOCK ON** or **STABILIZE**, or use **EARTHSHATTER** to target empty spaces and create cover for its allies to use.
- Works well alongside allies that can either move enemies into range, or that can move it closer to enemies (typically via teleportation, as **HEAVY FRAME** doesn't prevent that).

BASE SYSTEMS

Demolition Hammer

Superheavy Melee, +1/2/3, +1 \ominus , AP, Knockback 3
[$\ddot{\otimes} 2$] [12/14/16*]

On Hit: Targets must pass a **HULL** save or be **STUNNED** until the end of their next turn.

Earthshatter

Heavy Melee, +1/2/3, Knockback 1, Thrown 5
[$\ddot{\otimes} 1$] [5/6/7 \otimes]

On Attack: The Demolisher deals **10/20/30 \otimes AP** to an object or piece of terrain within $\checkmark 2$, if there is one. Hit or miss, place a **SIZE 1** piece of terrain that grants **hard cover** in a free space adjacent to your target. The terrain has **10 HP** and **EVASION 5**. This weapon does not need to be retrieved between uses.

Shock Armor

Trait

The **DEMOLISHER** has **RESISTANCE** to damage from **melee weapons**.

Heavy Frame

Trait

The **DEMOLISHER** can't be pushed, pulled, knocked **PRONE**, or knocked back by smaller characters.

OPTIONAL SYSTEMS

Jet Propulsion

System

Whenever the **DEMOLISHER** makes an attack with the **DEMOLITION HAMMER**, it may take **4 $\ddot{\otimes}$** to move **4 spaces** in a straight line directly towards the target before the attack.

Kinetic Compensation

Trait

Each time the **DEMOLISHER** misses with the **DEMOLITION HAMMER**, they gain **+1 \oplus** on all subsequent attacks with it until they hit. This **ACCURACY** can be gained multiple times and stacks.

Seismic Destroyer

System, Full Action, Recharge 6+

Unless they can **fly**, all characters in a $\Delta 5$ area must pass an **AGILITY** save or be knocked **PRONE**. All objects and terrain within this area take **10/20/30 Ø AP**; if any terrain or objects are destroyed this way, all affected characters also automatically take **4/6/8 Ø**.

Hullcracker

Trait, Quick Action, Recharge 5+

The **DEMOLISHER** chooses a character within $\checkmark 2$; they must pass a **HULL** save or be **IMMOBILIZED** and **SHREDDED** until the end of their next turn.

Drag Cables

System, Quick Action

The **DEMOLISHER** chooses a character within $\checkmark 5$; that character must pass a **HULL** save or become embedded with high-tensile cable anchors. While these anchors are embedded, neither the target nor the **DEMOLISHER** can move more than **5 spaces** away from one another. If the target is smaller than the **DEMOLISHER**, they move when the **DEMOLISHER** moves, mirroring their movements. The **DEMOLISHER** can attempt to reel in the cables as a **protocol**, forcing an embedded character to pass another **HULL** save or be pulled adjacent to the **DEMOLISHER** (or as close as possible).

An embedded character or an adjacent ally can remove the cables on a hit with a **melee attack** against **Evasion 10**. Otherwise, this effect lasts until the end of the scene, until either character is destroyed, or until the **DEMOLISHER** uses this system on a new target.

DESIGNER'S NOTES

The **DEMOLISHER** is too damn slow. This is the experience just about everyone has with it the first time they try to use it, visions of walking up to a PC mech and smashing it with a big hammer dancing in their heads, before the cold, hard reality of **2 SPEED** sets in. Pairing **DEMOLISHERS** with a **MIRAGE** to teleport them around the map is a classic combo for a reason.

But do I think the **DEMOLISHER** needs more speed? No, and furthermore I think the **DEMOLISHER** being slow should be integral to its tactical identity. The **DEMOLISHER** isn't a speedy striker running people down, it's the guy in heavy armor standing outside the castle gates telling you that none shall pass. Being slow should inform the GM of how the **DEMOLISHER** is meant to be used, as a dangerous guardian warding off places the PCs might want to visit, like objective points.

But being both slow and a melee unit does present some difficulties when it comes to having the **DEMOLISHER** play an active role in a fight. It can be very easy for players to simply ignore it and focus on other matters, leaving it little opportunity to be a contributing member of the OPFOR. For that reason, rather than making it faster, I elected to give the **DEMOLISHER** more stuff to do at a distance. **EARTHSHATTER** lets it golf club chunks of terrain at people it can't reach with the hammer, extending its potential danger radius, along with **SEISMIC DESTROYER** and **DRAG CABLES**. The core rulebook **DEMOLISHER** does have access to the frankly absurd **CONCUSSION MISSILES** optional, which in my opinion is something that's weirdly a bit too good at what it does, hence why it's no longer present here.

But in the interests of giving GMs what their dark hearts thirst for, **JET PROPULSION** does enable some additional movement the **DEMOLISHER** can tap into in exchange for a heat tax. I added this for two main reasons, the first being to give the **DEMOLISHER** a bit more independence outside of things like pairing it with a **MIRAGE**, and the second being that in the revised **VETERAN** template that you'll see later in this supplement, the **ACROBAT** trait which could be used to give slow units like the **DEMOLISHER** plenty of free additional movement no longer exists.

While it's getting ahead of myself a bit, I'm not really a big fan of the **ACROBAT** trait. It flattens the identity of slow NPCs by being a no-cost, no-friction way to give them an abundance of extra mobility, and you commonly see it used on slow units like the **DEMOLISHER**. **JET PROPULSION** is my attempt at giving **DEMOLISHER**-using GMs something that still enables extra movement, but comes with more of a cost associated with it than just "3 extra movement every time you move or boost."

To go back to the **DEMOLISHER** itself, **DIG IN** was removed in favor of an **HP** increase at all tiers. As mentioned, I'm not really a big fan of NPCs having multiple forms of **RESISTANCE** all at once, and **SHOCK ARMOR** is a more interesting defensive layer than "like the **ASSAULT'S HUNKER DOWN** but it makes you slow." And speaking of the **ASSAULT**, I think that the **ASSAULT** facing a consequence like becoming **SLOWED** in exchange for **RESISTANCE** suits them better than a unit that's already probably not moving much.

Oh, and here's yet another example of **SAP** being turned into something more specific to the NPC in question. The **DEMOLISHER** already has access to **STUNNED** with its hammer, so there's no reason to give it even more **STUNNED** in its optionals. **HULLCRACKER** is instead all about pounding someone into the ground like a nail and leaving them vulnerable to a followup swing if they aren't careful.

SIZE
1

ENGINEER

Striker



TIER 1		TIER 2		TIER 3	
HULL: -1	SYSTEMS: +1	HULL: -1	SYSTEMS: +2	HULL: -1	SYSTEMS: +3
AGILITY: -1	ENGINEERING: +3	AGILITY: -1	ENGINEERING: +4	AGILITY: -1	ENGINEERING: +5
HP: 20	Armor: 0	HP: 22	Armor: 0	HP: 24	Armor: 0
Evasion: 7	E-Defense: 10	Evasion: 8	E-Defense: 12	Evasion: 9	E-Defense: 14
Speed: 3	Size: 1	Speed: 3	Size: 1	Speed: 3	Size: 1
Heat Cap: 10	Save Target: 10	Heat Cap: 10	Save Target: 12	Heat Cap: 10	Save Target: 14
Sensors: 15		Sensors: 15		Sensors: 15	

TACTICS

ENGINEERS' DEPLOYABLE TURRETS make them potent force multipliers, as they can continue to deploy new ones each turn. If enemies don't deal with an **ENGINEER'S** turrets, their potential damage and battlefield utility quickly skyrockets. **TARGET DESIGNATOR** can be used to focus fire upon selected foes, as otherwise turrets attack the nearest target, which players can use to control who takes damage.

OPFOR NOTES

- Slow but tough, damage output scales over time with the number of **DEPLOYABLE TURRETS** on the field, though turrets are easy to destroy.
- Though not a full-fledged Support unit, various optional systems enable a more support-oriented playstyle. High **SENSORS** along with **TARGET DESIGNATOR** enables support via **LOCK ON** as well.
- Works well in combat scenarios where it has time to build up turrets in defensive positions or around critical objectives, forcing enemies to move into range of multiple turrets at once.

BASE SYSTEMS

Flak Cannon

Heavy Cannon, +1/2/3, Smart
[✓15] [3/4/5*]

This weapon gains +1♦ against **flying** targets.

Deployable Turret

System, Drone, Quick Action

Deployable Turret (SIZE 1/2, HP 1, EVASION 10, E-DEFENSE 10, Tags: DRONE)

Up to two of these self-constructing turrets can be deployed to any free space within ✓3. At the end of the **ENGINEER'S** turn, deployed turrets attack the nearest hostile character within ✓10. They attack at +1/2/3 and deal 4/5/6¤. The **ENGINEER** may have six turrets deployed at one time; if they deploy additional turrets beyond this, previous turrets of their choice are destroyed until they have no more than six total. All turrets are destroyed when the **ENGINEER** is destroyed. If the **ENGINEER** becomes **JAMMED** or **STUNNED**, their turrets are also disabled for the duration of those conditions instead of attacking.

Target Designator

System, Quick Action, Recharge 6+

The **ENGINEER** chooses a character within line of sight and **SENSORS**; they gain **LOCK ON**. At the end of the **ENGINEER'S** turn, up to two of their **DEPLOYABLE TURRETS** will attack that target (if it is within **RANGE**) instead of attacking the nearest hostile character. This trait automatically recharges whenever two or more **DEPLOYABLE TURRETS** are destroyed by hostile characters before the start of the **ENGINEER'S** next turn.

OPTIONAL SYSTEMS

Deployable Fortifications

Trait

DEPLOYABLE TURRETS are **SIZE 1**, and adjacent allied characters can use them for **hard cover**.

Perimeter Defense

Trait

DEPLOYABLE TURRETS gain $\Delta 3$ and can **OVERWATCH** (1/round per turret), and the **ENGINEER** gains the **AUTO-TRACKING** reaction.

Auto-Tracking

Reaction, 1/round

Trigger: An allied character within $\Delta 3$ of a **DEPLOYABLE TURRET** makes a successful attack.

Effect: The **DEPLOYABLE TURRET** makes an attack against the triggering character's target, as long as the target is within line of sight and **RANGE**.

Mobile Turrets

Trait

At the start of the **ENGINEER'S** turn, they may move two **DEPLOYABLE TURRETS** up to **3 spaces** in any direction.

Skyshield Protocol

Trait

DEPLOYABLE TURRETS gain $+1\oplus$ against **flying** targets.

Repurpose

Trait, Quick Action, 1/round

The **ENGINEER** chooses an allied character adjacent to one of their **DEPLOYABLE TURRETS**; that character either gains **3/4/5 OVERTSHIELD** or gains $+1\oplus$ on all attacks, checks, and saves until the end of their next turn. The turret is then destroyed.

DESIGNER'S NOTES

The **ENGINEER'S** turrets are, quite naturally, the most distinctive thing about it, and yet the players are fairly disincentivized from interacting with them. Not due to any overt punishment mechanic, but simply because it's incredibly inefficient to try and shoot the turrets when they have as much **HP** as they do and the **ENGINEER** can just spawn them infinitely. Anyone remotely familiar with enemy-spawners in any other games will be able to tell you that the optimal strategy is usually to kill whatever is spawning the adds first. This means that fighting an **ENGINEER** is almost always just a case of damage-racing it down while ignoring its turrets, only destroying them if you happen to do so incidentally via AoEs or something.

So this rebake is a bit of a radical departure in the sense that it makes turrets supremely interactive, namely by giving them a whopping **1 HP** each.

This means that turrets can be much more easily destroyed, and this could perhaps be considered a big step down for the **ENGINEER**, but any time spent destroying turrets is still time not destroying other stuff. What this means is that AoE weapons, things like grenades, and paired auxiliary weapons are now more viable as means of engaging **ENGINEERS** as opposed to simply "shoot the big guy until they're dead," and to make up for this steep decline in turret survivability, **ENGINEERS** can now deploy two turrets at a time, eliminating the need for the **POWER DEPLOYER** optional which, given how it turns placing turrets into a **Recharge** mechanic and how random recharging can be, I've always considered something of a potential trap choice.

Turrets being more easily destroyable also means that bringing multiple **ENGINEERS** into a fight will, hopefully, be less of a potentially oppressive experience, but I'd maybe still keep an eye on it. Multiplicative scaling is a pain like that.

With all of this in mind, the **ENGINEER** and its optionals have been reworked to give it more stuff to do besides pop out turrets endlessly. **ENGINEER'S MARK** is now **TARGET DESIGNATOR**, still allowing it to focus some of its turrets onto a target of its choice, but also applying **LOCK ON** to someone in the process, great for sharing with friends. Meanwhile, its optionals have been changed to give the turrets more of a support/utility bent along with dealing damage, letting allies use them for cover or turning them into power-ups.

Maybe the biggest visible change in its optionals is the removal of the **ARSENAL** trait. There's a lot to recommend the fantasy of customizing one's turrets, but I've never felt that **ARSENAL** was really all that compelling in practice. I rarely find myself wanting to turn a $\Delta 10$ attack into a $\Delta 3$, for example, and the long range blast option is awkward to take advantage of with the turrets' inherent targeting restrictions (since you can't intelligently place the AoEs as you'd like). That leaves **Reliable** damage (ehh) and the **Primed** option which turns turrets into bombs... an option that's very feast or famine, considering most players probably won't be blowing up turrets anyway, and if they do it won't be close enough to matter. About the best you could hope for is to use **MOBILE TURRETS** to move them into someone's face and hope they blow up in time, presumably if and/or when the **ENGINEER** itself is destroyed.

Also, **ARSENAL** is just a lot to keep track of, and its removal helpfully means there's one less thing for GMs running **ENGINEERS** to have to concern themselves with. They've already got enough on their plates as it is.

SIZE
3

GOLIATH

Defender



TIER 1		TIER 2		TIER 3	
HULL: +4	SYSTEMS: +1	HULL: +5	SYSTEMS: +2	HULL: +6	SYSTEMS: +3
AGILITY: -2	ENGINEERING: +1	AGILITY: -2	ENGINEERING: +1	AGILITY: -2	ENGINEERING: +1
HP: 25	Armor: 0	HP: 30	Armor: 0	HP: 35	Armor: 0
Evasion: 6	E-Defense: 8	Evasion: 7	E-Defense: 9	Evasion: 8	E-Defense: 10
Speed: 3	Size: 3	Speed: 3	Size: 3	Speed: 3	Size: 3
Heat Cap: 8	Save Target: 11	Heat Cap: 10	Save Target: 13	Heat Cap: 12	Save Target: 15
Sensors: 10		Sensors: 10		Sensors: 10	

TACTICS

GOLIATHS are relatively mobile defenders (for their size, that is) that can bring enemies to them. With **CRUSH TARGETING**, **GOLIATHS** force dangerous enemies to focus attacks on them; all it needs is line of sight, allowing **GOLIATHS** to target even fast or hard-to-hit characters. The prodigious size of **GOLIATHS** also lets them provide cover for their allies and obstruct the battlefield with their presence.

OPFOR NOTES

- Extremely high **HP** and large **SIZE**, be mindful of deploying more than one in a given combat.
- Use abilities such as **CRUSH TARGETING** and **MAG GAUNTLET** to identify dangerous enemies and force their attention elsewhere, taking damage for allies through coercion and looming threats.
- Works well in combat scenarios where it can maneuver unimpeded, and in conjunction with fragile allies that benefit from an aggressive bodyguard that dominates enemy attention.

BASE SYSTEMS

Drum Shotgun

Heavy CQB, +2/4/6
[✓5, ✘3] [5/6/7§]

This weapon ignores ranged penalties from **Engaged**.

Crush Targeting

System, Quick Tech

A hostile character within **SENSORS** and line of sight gains +3◊ to attack against any character other than the **GOLIATH** until the start of the **GOLIATH**'s next turn. This effect does not stack, and the effect ends immediately if the **GOLIATH** becomes **JAMMED** or **STUNNED**.

Towering Stride

Trait

The **GOLIATH** can end its turn overlapping obstructions, cover, and terrain smaller than **SIZE 3**.

Heavy Frame

Trait

The **GOLIATH** can't be pushed, pulled, knocked **PRONE**, or knocked back by smaller characters.

Guardian

Trait

Adjacent allied characters can use the **GOLIATH** for **hard cover**.

OPTIONAL SYSTEMS

Power Knuckle

System, Quick Action, Recharge 5+

A character within $\sqrt{2}$ must pass a **HULL** save or take **4/5/6** \notin , be pushed **5 spaces** directly away from the **GOLIATH**, and knocked **PRONE**.

Pin

Trait, Quick Action

A character within $\sqrt{2}$ becomes **IMMOBILIZED** and **IMPAIRED** until they either damage the **GOLIATH**, the **GOLIATH** is **STUNNED** or destroyed, or the **GOLIATH** targets another character with this effect. The **GOLIATH** is **IMMOBILIZED** for the duration of this effect.

Mag Gauntlet

System, Quick Tech

A character within **SENSORS** and line of sight must pass a **HULL** save or be pulled **3 spaces** towards the **GOLIATH**. If they are pulled adjacent to the **GOLIATH** (or are already adjacent to them), they automatically become **GRAPPLED**. The **GOLIATH** can only grapple one character this way at a time, and can't use this system while grappling someone this way.

Coercive Force

System, Full Tech, Recharge 6+

All characters of the **GOLIATH'S** choice within **SENSORS** are pulled **2 spaces** towards the Goliath.

Attractor Field

Reaction, Trait, Recharge 5+

Trigger: An allied character within $\sqrt{2}$ and line of sight is targeted by an attack dealing **kinetic** or **explosive** damage.

Effect: The **GOLIATH** becomes the target of the attack instead. If the attack was an area of effect, such as a **LINE**, **cone**, **blast**, etc, the attacker must now position it so it targets the **GOLIATH**, or as close as possible, which could change its targets. This transfer takes place even if the attack could not have hit the **GOLIATH** (i.e. it was a **melee attack**).

DESIGNER'S NOTES

A number of NPCs are defined not as much by what they do as by what they are. In the **GOLIATH'S** case, that's being The Big Guy. The biggest NPC you can have outside of putting the **SHIP** template on someone, the **GOLIATH** serves as a defender by virtue of A) being big, and thus providing a lot of **GUARDIAN** bulk to hide behind, B) being big, and thus having lots of **HP**, and C) **CRUSH TARGETING**, which makes it so people have a hard time hitting anyone who isn't the **GOLIATH**, with all of its **HP** to absorb that punishment.

The **GOLIATH** faces some difficulties though, firstly because **CRUSH TARGETING** is on a recharge roll, and secondly (and more uniquely), the **GOLIATH** is so big that it has trouble sometimes maneuvering around maps, even with a base **SPEED** of **3** which is "slow but not, like, **DEMOLISHER** slow."

For the rebake, **CRUSH TARGETING** no longer has a **recharge**, but you can disable it with certain debuffs, and **SIEGE ARMOR** is replaced by a new trait, **TOWERING STRIDE**, that allows the **GOLIATH** to move with a bit more freedom around terrain-filled maps.

The flavor text in the core rulebook mentions in passing that **GOLIATHS**, or at least the specific version being described, makes use of "magtech" and that gave me an idea for where to take things with an eye towards turning the **GOLIATH** into even more of a demanding, forceful bruiser-style tank. **POWER KNUCKLE** and **PIN** remain, both solid and good options, but while I get the intent, **RETRIBUTION** belongs to the **BERSERKER** so out it goes, along with **WATCHFUL GUARDIAN**.

CRUSHING EMBRACE is a pretty solid trait, but **MAG GAUNTLET** trades out **JAMMED** for the ability to yank someone into the **GOLIATH'S** grasp, while **COERCIVE FORCE** gives the big bully even more tools to shove people around (including allies, if you want to feel clever about yourself). The additional defensive capabilities provided by **WATCHFUL GUARDIAN** are replaced instead by **ATTRACTOR FIELD**, which allows the **GOLIATH** to divert attacks into itself, directly leveraging its massive **HP** pool for more active protection.

As a side note, a number of the rebake **GOLIATH'S** systems are now tech systems, including **CRUSH TARGETING**. This matters a bit in terms of what can and can't be used while it's **JAMMED**, and also makes the **HACKER** talent's **INVADE** option **HACK./SLASH** more useful for players to take advantage of.

SIZE
1

HIVE

Controller



TIER 1		TIER 2		TIER 3	
HULL: -1	SYSTEMS: +2	HULL: -1	SYSTEMS: +3	HULL: -1	SYSTEMS: +4
AGILITY: +0	ENGINEERING: +1	AGILITY: +0	ENGINEERING: +2	AGILITY: +0	ENGINEERING: +3
HP: 20	Armor: 0	HP: 22	Armor: 0	HP: 24	Armor: 0
Evasion: 8	E-Defense: 10	Evasion: 9	E-Defense: 12	Evasion: 10	E-Defense: 14
Speed: 4	Size: 1	Speed: 4	Size: 1	Speed: 4	Size: 1
Heat Cap: 8	Save Target: 12	Heat Cap: 8	Save Target: 14	Heat Cap: 8	Save Target: 16
Sensors: 10		Sensors: 10		Sensors: 10	

TACTICS

HIVES use **RAZOR SWARM** to control the battlefield, granting soft cover to their allies and denying areas to their enemies. Deploy your swarm and use **DRONE BARRAGE** to lock down enemies, or move them into the range of swarms and allies.

OPFOR NOTES

- Physically resilient with well-rounded stats, a good inclusion in many forces.
- Proper positioning of **RAZOR SWARM** and other optional systems is key to effectively denying areas and disrupting enemy formations.
- Works well in combat scenarios where contesting and denying objective zones is key, as well as with allies that can either benefit from the cover **RAZOR SWARM** provides or that can take advantage of enemies being forcibly moved.

BASE SYSTEMS

Hunter-Killer Nexus

Main Nexus, +2/4/6, Seeking, Smart
[✓10] [3/4/5▲]

Razor Swarm

System, Drone, Quick Action

The **HIVE** deploys a **✓1** razor swarm in a free area within **SENSORS**. Allied characters gain **soft cover** as long as they are at least partially within the affected area. Hostile characters that start their turn at least partially within the area or move into it for the first time in a round take **2/3/4▲**. At the start of the **HIVE**'s turn, they may move the razor swarm up to **2 spaces** in any direction, including into spaces occupied by other characters. Only a single razor swarm may be deployed at a time, and if a new one is deployed (or the **HIVE** is destroyed) the old one is destroyed.

Drone Barrage

System, Quick Tech, +2/4/6

The **HIVE** makes a **tech attack** against a character within **SENSORS**. On a success, the target chooses one: they become **IMMOBILIZED** and **IMPAIRED** until the end of their next turn, or they immediately move up to **4 spaces** in a direction chosen by the **HIVE**. This movement ignores **engagement** and does not provoke **reactions**.

OPTIONAL SYSTEMS

Driving Swarm

Trait

Whenever characters take **burn** from a razor swarm, they must pass a **SYSTEMS** save or immediately move **4 spaces** in a direction chosen by the **HIVE** after taking damage. This movement ignores **engagement** and does not provoke **reactions**.

Harrier Maniple

System, Quick Tech, +2/4/6

The **HIVE** releases a swarm of tiny drones and makes a tech attack against a hostile character within **SENSORS**. On a success, the **HIVE** pushes the target up to **2 spaces** in a direction of their choice and the drones create a swarming $\Theta 2$ area centered around them that lasts until the end of their next turn. All other hostile characters that start their turn at least partially within the area or move into it for the first time in a round take **2/3/4 A**. This counts as taking **burn** from a razor swarm.

Solipsis Swarm

System

At the start of their turn, hostile characters within $\checkmark 3$ of the **HIVE** take **2/3/4 A**. This counts as taking **burn** from a razor swarm.

Electro-Nanite Payloads

Trait

Until the end of their next turn, any character that takes **burn** from the **HIVE** or a razor swarm makes all checks and saves at **+1 Θ**, and all **tech attacks** are made against them with **+1 ♦**. This effect of this trait does not stack.

Command Override

Quick Tech, $\mathfrak{f} 4$ (Self), Recharge 5+

The **HIVE** chooses up to three **DRONES** within **SENSORS** (including those belonging to other characters) and moves them **3 spaces** in any direction. Then all characters adjacent to any of those **DRONES** must pass a **SYSTEMS** save or take **2/3/4 A** and gain **LOCK ON**. This counts as taking **burn** from a razor swarm.

DESIGNER'S NOTES

The **HIVE** is an OPFOR staple. For *Lancer* GMs looking to flesh out an enemy composition, no other NPC is as endlessly versatile. It does control, it does damage, it's tough, it works at a variety of ranges, and there really isn't a bad way to build one. It's like onions and garlic, it's hard to go wrong by adding some to whatever you're cooking.

So if the **HIVE** is so good, is there anything about it to rebake?

Beyond removing its completely unnecessary multi-attack scaling, the **HIVE** is yet another example of an NPC with a quintessential base ability that's on a **recharge**. It does make a bit more sense given that **RAZOR SWARMS** create a permanent presence on the battlefield, but as I did with the **BARRICADE**, I think it makes more sense to remove recharge and instead limit the **HIVE** to a singular swarm. Now you might think this drastically reduces the amount of map pressure the **HIVE** can apply, but we'll get to that.

To make up for being limited to a single **RAZOR SWARM**, the benefits of **MOTILE SWARM** are baked in for free, letting the **HIVE** either nudge the swarm around as a protocol or use **quick actions** to reposition it where it can do the most harm.

Now we come to the optionals, and this is where things get fun. This version of the **HIVE** is all about giving GMs additional tools to create additional dangerous areas on the map through various means. Rather than plopping down additional **RAZOR SWARMS**, you yourself can manifest a swarm around the **HIVE**, or cause enemies to become surrounded by them via **HARRIER MANIPLE**, or cause them to emerge from drones on the field (allied or hostile alike) through **COMMAND OVERRIDE** (and really, how weird is it that the drone swarm NPC didn't have any way to interact with **DRONES** before?).

Furthermore, taking **burn** from anything that counts as a **RAZOR SWARM** is capable of proccing the **DRIVING SWARM** trait, while taking burn from the **HIVE** in general (including its **HUNTER-KILLER NEXUS**) can inflict **ELECTRO-NANITE PAYLOADS** onto targets, setting them up for future tech attacks either from the Hive or its allies.

With only one **RAZOR SWARM** to worry about, this does mean the **HIVE** has to be more thoughtful about its positioning, but in turn it has more time to spend harassing the PCs with the new tools at its disposal, and it should also make things easier for GMs who no longer have to worry about **RAZOR SWARMS** covering every inch of the map, especially if you're using multiple **HIVES** in one fight.

In terms of stat adjustments, it's always been kind of surprising (and a bit excessive) to me that the **HIVE**, already such a generally well-rounded, effective, and durable controller, also has a high base **SPEED**. I don't really think it needs that on top of everything else, but as a compromise (and to put things into parity to cut down on a bit of mental overhead) I increased the **RANGE** on its **HUNTER-KILLER NEXUS** from **8** to **10**, in line with its **SENSORS**.

A note on **GRIND MANIPLE**: this is a really solid tech attack that I find falls into the category of "generally good, but doesn't really have much to say about how the NPC plays." Don't worry though, as while it's no longer a part of the **HIVE** rebake's kit, it's too good to just throw out completely, and it'll be making another appearance later in this supplement.



HORNET

Controller



TIER 1		TIER 2		TIER 3	
HULL: -2	SYSTEMS: +2	HULL: -2	SYSTEMS: +3	HULL: -2	SYSTEMS: +4
AGILITY: +2	ENGINEERING: +0	AGILITY: +4	ENGINEERING: +0	AGILITY: +6	ENGINEERING: +0
HP: 8	Armor: 0	HP: 8	Armor: 0	HP: 8	Armor: 0
Evasion: 16	E-Defense: 6	Evasion: 18	E-Defense: 7	Evasion: 20	E-Defense: 8
Speed: 6	Size: 1/2	Speed: 8	Size: 1/2	Speed: 10	Size: 1/2
Heat Cap: 5	Save Target: 12	Heat Cap: 6	Save Target: 14	Heat Cap: 7	Save Target: 16
Sensors: 5		Sensors: 5		Sensors: 5	

TACTICS

HORNETS are small, fast controllers that are extremely hard to hit and incredibly annoying. They deal limited damage, but their ability to inflict debilitating conditions and Impair numerous targets is great for interfering with enemy strikers. Fortunately for their enemies, **HORNETS** have a low **E-DEFENSE** that makes them vulnerable to smart weaponry, **Reliable** damage, and tech attacks.

OPFOR NOTES

- Extremely mobile and evasive, but also extremely fragile and close-ranged.
- Hover** flight and several mobility-enhancing optional systems enable freely selecting targets for harassment, and multiple types of conditions (including access to **JAMMED** and **IMMOBILIZED** along with **IMPAIRED**) allows for maximum disruption against a variety of foes.
- Works well against targets relying heavily on powerful all-or-nothing attacks, and in combat engagements where its mobility and harassment capabilities can contest objectives all across the map.

BASE SYSTEMS

Stinger Pistol

Auxiliary CQB, +1/2/3, +1♦
[✓5, ♦3] [1/2/3♦]

On Hit: Targets become **IMPAIRED** until the end of their next turn.

SSC Total Suite

System

The **HORNET** can hover whenever they move.

Weave

Trait

Each round, the first attack made against the **HORNET** as a **reaction** automatically fails.

Impale Systems

System, Quick Tech, +2/4/6, Recharge 5+

The **HORNET** makes a **tech attack** against a character within **SENSORS**. On a success, they take **3/4/5** and become **JAMMED** until the end of their next turn.

OPTIONAL SYSTEMS

Supersonic

Trait, Full Action, Recharge 6+

The **HORNET** flies to a space in line of sight and **✓50** so impossibly fast that it counts as **teleportation**. If they end this movement within **✓5** of another character, that character becomes **IMPAIRED** until the end of their next turn and this ability automatically **recharges**; if multiple characters are within **✓5**, the Hornet chooses only one of them to become **IMPAIRED**.

Umbral Interdiction

System, Reaction, 1/round

Trigger: A character within **SENSORS** and line of sight attempts an attack.

Effect: If the target is not **IMPAIRED**, they immediately become **IMPAIRED** until the end of their next turn; this interrupts and resolves before the triggering attack. If the target is **IMPAIRED**, they must pass a **SYSTEMS** check or their attack automatically misses.

System Spike

Trait

Hostile **IMPAIRED** characters within the **HORNET'S SENSORS** receive **+2Θ** on all attacks, saves, and skill checks instead of **+1Θ**.

Slingshot

System, Quick Tech, +2/4/6, Recharge 5+

The **HORNET** makes a **tech attack** against a character in **SENSORS**. On a success, they take **3/4/5** and are pushed **3 spaces** in a direction of the **HORNET's** choice, then the **HORNET** moves to any free space within $\checkmark 5$ of the target as directly as possible.

Lock/Hold Javelins

System, Full Action

The **HORNET** fires a javelin at a character within $\checkmark 5$ and line of sight. The target must succeed on a **HULL** save or be impaled, at which point the javelin tethers itself and its victim to the ground (or another surface), rendering them **IMMOBILIZED** and **SHREDDED**. They, or any adjacent character, can attempt to remove the javelin with a successful **HULL** save as a **full action**; otherwise, this effect lasts for the rest of the scene or until the **HORNET** takes this action again.

DESIGNER'S NOTES

Another NPC largely defined by what it is rather than what it does, the **HORNET** is defined by being annoying.

Okay, the **HORNET** is actually defined by being absurdly evasive and hard to hit, encouraging players to find other ways of engaging with it, like **Reliable** damage or hacking. That's cool and all, but what does the **HORNET** do then? Well, it **JAMS** people with **IMPALE SYSTEMS** and... **IMPAIRS** them with the **STINGER PISTOL**. And maybe does other debuff stuff. Or **teleports**. It makes attacks miss sometimes.

It's not really a very strong gameplay identity. "Controller that debuffs people and makes things hard for them" is like Controller 101 stuff, that's what the role does. What does the **HORNET** do specifically, in terms of function, to set it apart from something like the **WITCH**?

In the core rulebook, I find that's a bit hard to define. I do think it's kind of interesting and unique that the **HORNET** has a gun that zaps people with **IMPAIRED** on a hit, and so I decided to lean into that some more throughout... what if the **HORNET** took the status effect that the game generally weighs as "annoying but not super powerful" and made it even more annoying? What if it **IMPAIRED** even more people? What if it made **IMPAIRED** even stronger?

The **HORNET** is also a bit unique by virtue of being a fragile controller that doesn't want to hide in the backlines, and in fact can't or else it can't do anything, due to its incredibly short **SENSORS**. I brought the **STINGER PISTOL**'s range into parity with its **SENSORS** (a thing I do with other NPCs throughout, mainly as an ease of overhead thing) to emphasize that even more; the **HORNET** is the controller that lives in your face, daring you to try and swat it down.

Things like **SUPersonic** and the newly added **SLINGSHOT** play into this even further, emphasizing the **HORNET**'s mobility while encouraging that short-range lifestyle. This also makes it an incredibly responsive NPC when it comes to sitreps with multiple objectives that need contesting... **SLINGSHOT** can be used to yank someone off a point before moving into the newly-vacated spot, for example, something I'm sure the PCs will greatly appreciate.

UMBRAL INTERDICTION now works on a bit of a two-step system, requiring the target to be Impaired in advance if you want to skip straight ahead to forcing their attack to miss, but maybe the **IMPAIRED** it doles out otherwise will still be enough to do the job, especially if paired with **SYSTEM SPIKE** which doubles the effectiveness of Impaired within its **SENSOR 5** radius.

As for **LOCK/HOLD JAVELINS**, they can stay as-is, everybody loves nailing someone to the ground. Plus, all that **IMPAIRED** flying around will make the saves to try and get free that much harder.

A note on the **IMPAIRED** condition: this is one of the only conditions in the game that players have a readily available form of **IMMUNITY** to via the **SUPERIOR BY DESIGN** core bonus. This core bonus means that several of the **HORNET** rebake's tools, namely **UMBRAL INTERDICTION** and **SYSTEM SPIKE**, will be completely unable to affect characters benefiting from it. I don't think this is enough to constitute a significant problem, as there's still plenty the **HORNET** can bring to the table that **SUPERIOR BY DESIGN** won't protect them from (**IMPALE SYSTEMS**, **SLINGSHOT**, **LOCK/HOLD JAVELINS**, and even if they're **IMPAIRED**-immune, **SUPersonic** can still use them as a valid destination for free recharges), but you may want to keep it in mind when designing an OPFOR including a Hornet against such PC builds.



MIRAGE

Support



TIER 1		TIER 2		TIER 3	
HULL: -2	SYSTEMS: +2	HULL: -2	SYSTEMS: +3	HULL: -2	SYSTEMS: +4
AGILITY: +1	ENGINEERING: +1	AGILITY: +2	ENGINEERING: +1	AGILITY: +2	ENGINEERING: +1
HP: 10	Armor: 0	HP: 12	Armor: 0	HP: 14	Armor: 0
Evasion: 10	E-Defense: 12	Evasion: 12	E-Defense: 15	Evasion: 14	E-Defense: 18
Speed: 5	Size: 1/2	Speed: 5	Size: 1/2	Speed: 5	Size: 1/2
Heat Cap: 6	Save Target: 12	Heat Cap: 6	Save Target: 14	Heat Cap: 6	Save Target: 16
Sensors: 15		Sensors: 15		Sensors: 15	

TACTICS

MIRAGES are potent support mechs, able to teleport their allies around at will and hinder ranged attackers with abilities like **WARP SENSORS**. They can also make allied characters **INVISIBLE** with **DATAVEIL**, but become vulnerable themselves while doing so. These strengths come at a price: attacks that ignore cover (such as **Seeking** attacks, **melee**, or **tech attacks**) bypass many of these defenses, and **MIRAGES** are incapable of dealing damage on their own.

OPFOR NOTES

- Able to easily reposition allies all around the battlefield, but vulnerable to attacks that ignore cover as well as **Reliable** damage.
- **Teleportation** ignores obstructions, **engagement**, and doesn't provoke **reactions**. Make use of this to move allies out of danger or into positions they'd otherwise be unable to reach normally.
- Works well in combat scenarios where their movement-granting capabilities can be used to readily contest multiple objectives, and alongside allies whose slow speed can be offset by teleportation.

BASE SYSTEMS

Warp Sensors

System, Quick Tech, +2/4/6

The **MIRAGE** makes a **tech attack** against a character within **SENSORS**. On a success, they take **2/3/4** **↳** and all attacks they make until the end of their next turn treat their targets as having **soft cover**.

Dataveil

System

By default, the **MIRAGE** is **INVISIBLE**. They can transfer this status to another character within line of sight as a quick action. When they do so, the **MIRAGE** ceases to be **INVISIBLE**, and as a **quick action** they may transfer it back to themselves or to another character; otherwise, this effect lasts until the **MIRAGE** is destroyed.

Glitch Scanners

System, Quick Tech

The **MIRAGE**'s advanced electronic countermeasures play havoc with enemy systems, causing them to register false positives on the battlefield. They may **teleport** up to two allied characters within **SENSORS**, moving them **5 spaces** in any direction – revealing their “true” locations.

Blip

Trait, Reaction, 1/round

Trigger: A hostile character takes action in line of sight.

Effect: The **MIRAGE** may **teleport** one allied character within **SENSORS 5 spaces** in any direction.

OPTIONAL SYSTEMS

Illusory Subroutines

System, Quick Tech, +2/4/6

The **MIRAGE** makes a **tech attack** against a character within **SENSORS**. On a success, the target treats all characters allied to the **MIRAGE** as **INVISIBLE** until the start of the **MIRAGE**'s next turn.

Warp Targeting

Trait

All allied characters within **SENSORS** benefit from special digital **soft cover**; this stacks with other sources of **soft cover**, giving **+2** on **ranged attacks** against characters benefiting from both instead of **+1** (digital **soft cover** does not stack). If the **MIRAGE** takes damage, this effect ends until the start of their next turn.

Metafold Shove

System, Quick Tech, +1/2/3

The **MIRAGE** makes a **tech attack** against a hostile character within **SENSORS**. On a success, the target swaps places with an allied character within the **MIRAGE**'s line of sight and within **✓5** of the target, both characters **teleporting**. **Flying** characters can't be swapped with characters that aren't **flying**, and vice versa.

Manifest False Idols

System, Full Tech, Recharge 5+

The **MIRAGE** creates three **SIZE 1** data constructs in free spaces within line of sight and Range **✓5**. These constructs provide **soft cover**, but don't block line of sight and can be passed through. When hostile characters pass through a construct, it disappears and they must pass a **SYSTEMS** save or take **2/3/4** **h** and become **JAMMED** until the end of their next turn. During the **MIRAGE**'s turn, they can **teleport** an allied character within line of sight to the location of a data construct as a **quick action**, causing the construct to disappear, as long as there is sufficient free space for them to end this movement in. These constructs last until the end of the scene, until the **MIRAGE** is destroyed, or until the **MIRAGE** uses this system again.

Multiplicity

Reaction, Trait, 1/round

Trigger: A allied character in line of sight and **SENSORS** is hit by an attack.

Effect: The attacker must pass a **SYSTEMS** save, or the target gains **RESISTANCE to all damage from the attack**. On a success, the attack does damage as normal, but the **MIRAGE** may then **teleport** the target up to **5 spaces** in any direction and that character gains **soft cover** until the end of their next turn.

DESIGNER'S NOTES

The **MIRAGE** is the NPC roster's premier (and more or less only) dedicated movement-facilitating support unit. If your OPFOR needs more mobility, this is generally the guy you go to. I've tried to add some additional options throughout the rebake NPCs to give GMs more options for that particular element, but if you're looking for extra movement, the **MIRAGE** is still a one-stop shop.

That hasn't really changed, and the **MIRAGE** rebake hasn't changed a ton compared to the original version either. It no longer has **REALITY FLICKER** as a baseline trait, because as thematic as it is, **DATAVEIL** already helps protect the **MIRAGE** against things like reaction attacks, so I don't think it needs it as much. And besides which, another NPC is going to be all about **teleporting** themselves around the map, so this helps differentiate the two of them.

GLITCH SCANNERS being a **QUICK TECH** system doesn't change much about its function, but does open up interactions with things like **JAMMED**, **HACK./SLASH**, and so on that I mentioned in the notes for the **GOLIATH**.

The optionals have had similar low-level adjustments, a bit of a change to how **METAFOLD SHOVE**'s targeting works, some more heat on **MANIFEST FALSE IDOLS** as well as a duration clarification, the biggest changes are to **WARP TARGETING** and **MULTIPLICITY**. **WARP TARGETING** has always been a bit of an awkward ability, because it's directly redundant with the **MIRAGE**'s baseline tech attack, **WARP SENSORS**, as **soft cover** doesn't stack. So I just made it stack, granting a special form of **soft cover** that can combo with other **soft cover**.

As for **MULTIPLICITY**, while "you thought you were shooting a real target but it was actually an illusion" is incredibly thematically appropriate for the **MIRAGE**, it's also incredibly powerful and kind of frustrating to be on the receiving end of, a no-telegraph counterspell. It's weird to me that something like the **ACE'S BARREL ROLL** has a recharge value, but something like this, even requiring a **SYSTEMS** save, can just be used whenever, plus it combines total **Immunity** with a generous teleport.

I'm not a huge fan of the way this works, and so I decided to borrow a cue from the **SWALLOWTAIL'S** core active. **MULTIPLICITY** can still be used freely, but now it grants **RESISTANCE** if the triggering character fails the save rather than outright **IMMUNITY**, and if they pass the save then the target gets a consolation **teleport** (with some bonus **soft cover**).

But overall, if you're used to how the **MIRAGE** functions out of the core rulebook, there shouldn't be too many surprises here. Pick your slowest allies and blink them around the map, decide whether you want to give out **DATAVEIL** or keep it for yourself, that sort of thing.

SIZE
1

OPERATOR

Artillery



TIER 1		TIER 2		TIER 3	
HULL: +2	SYSTEMS: +2	HULL: +3	SYSTEMS: +3	HULL: +4	SYSTEMS: +4
AGILITY: +2	ENGINEERING: +2	AGILITY: +3	ENGINEERING: +3	AGILITY: +4	ENGINEERING: +4
HP: 12	Armor: 0	HP: 14	Armor: 0	HP: 16	Armor: 0
Evasion: 10	E-Defense: 10	Evasion: 12	E-Defense: 12	Evasion: 14	E-Defense: 14
Speed: 5	Size: 1	Speed: 5	Size: 1	Speed: 5	Size: 1
Heat Cap: 8	Save Target: 11	Heat Cap: 8	Save Target: 13	Heat Cap: 8	Save Target: 15
Sensors: 10		Sensors: 10		Sensors: 10	

TACTICS

OPERATORS are elite and extremely mobile artillery mechs. They aren't particularly hardy, nor is their **RAPTOR PLASMA RIFLE** especially long-ranged compared to other artillery units, but the incredible mobility offered by their **TRACE DRIVE** allows them to teleport around the battlefield at will. This allows them to quickly move into range, shoot, then move away, darting around the outskirts of fights and teleporting to advantageous positions, such as on top of obstructions or terrain, into cover, and anywhere else they can line up an effective shot.

OPFOR NOTES

- Notably short ranged for an **ARTILLERY** unit and very fragile, picking the right positions and moments to teleport in or out of range are crucial to effective use, as well as coordinating with allies rather than simply loitering independently like longer-ranged units might.
- STRIKE AND FADE** allows choosing whether to focus on offense or defense as circumstances dictate. Optional teleportation systems can help enable both bonuses at once.
- Works well against slow targets unable to respond to its advanced mobility, as well as against high **EVASION** or **INVISIBLE** targets thanks to the **Reliable** damage of its **RAPTOR PLASMA RIFLE**.

BASE SYSTEMS

Raptor Plasma Rifle

Heavy Rifle, +1/2/3, Reliable 3/4/5
[✓12][7/9/11 ↗]

On Critical Hit: This weapon deals ♠ instead of ↗.

Trace Drive

System

The **OPERATOR** teleports when they make their **standard move**.

Strike and Fade

Trait

Whenever the **OPERATOR** teleports during their turn before making any attacks, they gain +1♦ on all attacks with the **RAPTOR PLASMA RIFLE** until the end of their turn. Whenever the **OPERATOR** teleports during their turn after making any attacks, all attacks against them receive +1♦ until the end of their next turn. If the Operator splits their movement with an attack, they may only choose one of these effects.

Self-Erasure

Trait

When the **OPERATOR** is destroyed, it immediately self-immolates in a wave of superheated plasma. All characters adjacent to the **OPERATOR** when this takes place must pass an **AGILITY** save or take **4/5/6 ↗** and be rendered only able to draw line of sight to adjacent spaces until the end of their next turn. On a success, they take **half damage** only. This mech is then removed from the battlefield – it is utterly annihilated.

OPTIONAL SYSTEMS

Telefrag

Trait, Quick Action, Recharge 6+

The **OPERATOR** teleports into a space occupied by another character within line of sight and ✓15. The target must pass an **AGILITY** save or take **4/5/6 ↗ AP** damage and become **JAMMED** and **SHREDDED** until the end of their next turn. On a successful save, they take **half damage** only. Succeed or fail, the **OPERATOR** takes **1d6 ↗ AP** and then **teleports** to a new space within ✓5.

Fade Generator

System, Reaction, 1/round

Trigger: The **OPERATOR** takes damage from a **ranged** or **melee attack**.

Effect: The **OPERATOR** teleports their **SPEED**. They may take **1d6 ↗** to also become **INVISIBLE** until the start of their next turn.

Overload Shot

Trait

When the **OPERATOR** attacks with the **RAPTOR PLASMA RIFLE**, they may take **4** ⚔ to treat its **RANGE** as **12**.

Singularity Grenade

System, Quick Action, Limited 1

The **OPERATOR** may expend a charge to throw a grenade to a space within **5**. Characters in the **2** energy pulse (excluding the **OPERATOR**) must pass a **SYSTEMS** save or be **teleported 2 spaces** in a direction of the **OPERATOR'S** choice and treat the **OPERATOR** as **INVISIBLE** until the end of their next turn. The **OPERATOR** then **teleports** their **SPEED**.

Deniable Asset

Trait

SELF-ERASURE now deals **6/8/10** ⚔ (half on a successful save), and when the **OPERATOR** is destroyed they may immediately **teleport** their **SPEED** as a **reaction** before self-immolating.

DESIGNER'S NOTES

From a rebake that didn't change much, to a rebake that changed a whole bunch.

First off, there is absolutely no reason for the **OPERATOR'S** gun to be as juiced as it is. Setting aside that its multi-attack scaling by tier is directly responsible for it being considered one of the more dangerous NPCs in the game, **20** and baseline **+2** ⚔ is absurd. This is simply too much gun.

Chopping the plasma rifle's **RANGE** down to **12** and removing all its **ACCURACY** might seem like a drastic over-correction, but there's a method to this madness. **TRACE DRIVE** gives the **OPERATOR** freely available teleportation which means it's free to dart in and out of position without repercussion, and mobility is basically a form of range.

STRIKE AND FADE exists to make up for both the missing **ACCURACY** as well as any increased risk the **OPERATOR** might incur by having to stick closer to the action, in a way that requires more thoughtful play than simply firing from extreme range before ducking behind cover. Your baseline approach with an **OPERATOR** rebake will be deciding whether to move into range with a standard move (gaining **ACCURACY** on your attack), then boosting back out, or boosting to move into range and then using **TRACE DRIVE** to move back out (making yourself harder to hit).

This does require a very different playstyle from the core rulebook **OPERATOR**. You can no longer safely sit at long range and shoot away with a gun that casually nullifies cover penalties, this version is forced to move closer to the fight. As a result, the rebake **OPERATOR** is much more likely to want to take advantage of benefits granted by allies that they could previously pass up due to distance. Things like using a **HIVE'S RAZOR SWARM** for cover or taking shelter

within an **AEGIS' DEFENSE NET**, now they want to be more of a team player than a, well, solo operator.

Another big change is giving the plasma rifle **Reliable** damage. Remember how I said I was going to reassign where that went in the NPC roster? This is one such reassignment. Giving the **OPERATOR'S** weapon **Reliable** helps make up for its loss of baseline **ACCURACY** as well, allowing it to always do something even when it wants to use **STRIKE AND FADE** defensively, constantly chipping away at targets as it teleports around the battlefield. This also makes the incorporation of **Reliable** damage into an OPFOR a more deliberate consideration, as **OPERATORS** aren't as generic-seeming as other NPCs like the **ASSAULT** are typically viewed as.

The plasma rifle now also sports an on-crit effect, hooking into **STRIKE AND FADE'S ACCURACY**, turning its damage from **energy** to **burn**. This is an enhancement that, in my opinion, strikes a more interesting and textured balance than simply giving bonus damage. **Burn** ignores armor, making it better against certain enemies, without doing as much damage on average as an additional **+1d6** might, but it does have the chance to recur which might prompt some meaningful decisions on the players' parts (whether to devote actions to **BOLSTERING** or **STABILIZING**, let's say).

It does also mean that certain mechs with the **INSULATED** trait, namely the **LANCASTER** and **GENGHIS**, are therefore immune to **OPERATOR** critical hits. I've considered this interaction carefully and come to the conclusion that I find it to be extremely funny, and therefore another point in this adjustment's favor.

The **OPERATOR** is also frequently seen as a frustrating opponent to fight due to things like **FADE GENERATOR** and **SKIRMISHER** making it hard to pin down and deal with effectively, on top of its other hard to handle qualities. For the rebake, I wanted to lean much harder into the identity of a teleport-oriented skirmisher, hence the rework of **FADE GENERATOR** into a reactive **teleport** rather than passive Invisibility, which you can still get a bit of for a heat tax as well as through the limited-use **SINGULARITY GRENADE**. This means the **OPERATOR** can still try and dance around the map, and if you have one of the teleportation-granting optionals you can gain both **STRIKE AND FADE** bonuses in a single turn, but once it's flanked or cornered, it's much harder for it to effortlessly get away unscathed.

TELEFRAG is a pretty weird inclusion in the **OPERATOR'S** kit, a thing that encourages you to teleport into the enemy while also dealing self-damage. Even for the potential of doling out **JAMMED**, it's a bunch of stuff that an **OPERATOR** typically doesn't want to be doing. This version of **TELEFRAG** has been changed to work more like using someone as a stepping stone, teleporting into them but then also teleporting back out, and trades out damage scaling for additional utility via **SHREDDED**. There's still some self-damage, so it remains a risky move, but there should be more reason to want to use it beyond **TELEFRAG SELF-ERASURE GRUNT OPERATOR** memes now.



PRIEST

Support



TIER 1		TIER 2		TIER 3	
HULL: -1	SYSTEMS: +2	HULL: -1	SYSTEMS: +4	HULL: -1	SYSTEMS: +6
AGILITY: -1	ENGINEERING: +2	AGILITY: -1	ENGINEERING: +3	AGILITY: -1	ENGINEERING: +4
HP: 10	Armor: 0	HP: 13	Armor: 0	HP: 16	Armor: 0
Evasion: 10	E-Defense: 12	Evasion: 12	E-Defense: 15	Evasion: 14	E-Defense: 18
Speed: 5	Size: 1/2	Speed: 5	Size: 1/2	Speed: 5	Size: 1/2
Heat Cap: 10	Save Target: 11	Heat Cap: 10	Save Target: 13	Heat Cap: 10	Save Target: 15
Sensors: 10		Sensors: 10		Sensors: 10	

TACTICS

PRIESTS are powerful support mechs that harshly punish attackers while protecting selected allies. **INVESTITURE** enables them to empower a single chosen ally such as a powerful striker or defender, while **DISPERSAL SHIELD** allows them to protect others as needed. Investiture demands that they remain close to their chosen ally, which puts both of them at risk if they become separated.

OPFOR NOTES

- Physically vulnerable, but well protected against tech attacks.
- Many of its powerful defensive abilities only protect allies, leaving itself as a critical target to be focused, and this likelihood should be planned around accordingly.
- Works well against tech attackers, enemies that make multiple attacks or use area-of-effect weapons, and in conjunction with allies that benefit from **INVESTITURE**'s empowerment and can help protect it in turn.

BASE SYSTEMS

Abjure

System, Quick Tech, +2/4/6

The **PRIEST** makes a **tech attack** against a character within **SENSORS**. On a success, the target takes **2/3/4** ⚡ each time they make any attack roll until the end of their next turn.

Hardened Target

Trait

The **PRIEST** gains +1♦ on **SYSTEMS** saves, and **tech attacks** against them receive +1♦.

Investiture

Trait, Quick Action

The **PRIEST** links systems with an allied mech or vehicle within **✓5**. As long as they remain linked and within **✓5**, the target gets +1♦ on all attacks and gains the benefits of **HARDENED TARGET**. If either character becomes **JAMMED** or **STUNNED**, however, the other character also receives the condition for the same duration or until the link is disabled. The link is disabled if either character is destroyed or moves more than **5 spaces** from the other. The **PRIEST** can only link with one character at a time.

Dispersal Shield

System, Quick Action, Recharge 5+

The **PRIEST** releases a cloud of miniature drones that cluster around a nearby mech, providing protection. The **PRIEST** or an allied character within **SENSORS** gains **5/6/7 Overshield** and **RESISTANCE to damage and heat from the next attack that hits**. This effect does not stack.

OPTIONAL SYSTEMS

Fortress

Trait

HARDENED TARGET gives +3 \oplus on **SYSTEMS** saves and deals +3 \ominus on **tech attacks**, instead of +1.

Empowered Investiture

Trait, Protocol

The **PRIEST** pushes their **INVESTITURE** link to its limit, becoming **IMMOBILIZED** while linked this way. The linked character gains **IMMUNITY to IMPAIRED** and **SLOWED** (and clears them if they already have those conditions), both the **PRIEST** and linked character gain **RESISTANCE to all damage and heat**, and the linked character no longer needs to remain within $\sqrt{5}$ of the **PRIEST**. This effect lasts until the end of the linked character's next turn. When this effect ends, the link ends as well, and the **PRIEST** becomes **STUNNED** until the end of their next turn.

Sanctuary

Trait, Full Tech

The **PRIEST** chooses an allied character within **SENSORS**. Before attempting to attack that character, characters must first pass a **SYSTEMS** save. On a failure, they don't lose the action, but can't target the protected character again until the start of their next turn. This effect lasts until the **PRIEST** is destroyed or until the end of the **PRIEST's** next turn.

Fractal Assault

Reaction, System, 1/round, Recharge 6+

Trigger: A hostile character damages a character linked by **INVESTITURE**.

Effect: The triggering character must choose one; the damage from the triggering effect is reduced to 0 and this reaction automatically recharges, or the triggering character becomes **STUNNED** until the end of their next turn.

Feedback

Trait

Whenever a **tech attack** misses the **PRIEST** or a character linked by **INVESTITURE**, the attacker takes **2/3/4** \ddagger .

DESIGNER'S NOTES

The **PRIEST** is a bit of a mixed bag. You might assume, looking at its base kit, that it would be all about empowering its Investiture buddy, but then looking elsewhere it seems like maybe it's more about just protecting people in general? And it has a brief sideline in becoming more resistant to **tech attacks** for some reason.

In a way, the **PRIEST** is a bit of catch-all support, and while rebakes are intended to give NPCs more of a focused identity, I do think in this case that trying to boil them down to one of these elements would take away too many tools from the GM.

So instead, this rebake is aimed at tying those elements together a bit more cohesively, such as having Investiture share the benefits of **HARDENED TARGET** and/or **FORTRESS** with the target. How many people remember that **INVESTITURE** lets the **INVESTITURE** target share the **PRIEST's SYSTEMS** score? It's a pretty regularly overlooked detail, and I think getting to share that anti-tech protection makes for a more valuable effect.

I also think that **DISPERSAL SHIELD** giving 1d3 applications of **RESISTANCE** is very weird, and have no idea why it works that way. I cut it down to a single dose, then blended it together with the **OVERSHIELD** from **EMPOWERED SHIELD**, clearing up more room in the optionals for the **FEEDBACK** trait, further emphasizing that anti-tech angle if you want to really lean into it.

EMPOWERED INVESTITURE replaces **GREATER INVESTITURE**, while **SANCTUARY** remains untouched, and that leaves **FRACTAL ASSAULT**. This is one of those stun effects that I feel iffy about, though at least it's on a recharge, but it's still an optional I find is kind of unfun and unengaging, roll a save or get **STUNNED**, the end. This version turns the effect into more of a choice, which is always an approach I favor when it comes to things like this. Being **STUNNED** sucks, but choosing to become **STUNNED** in order to shut off an NPC's powerful defensive tool feels like a clever tactical gambit (unless the **PRIEST** hits the hot 6 on their recharge roll, such is life).

SIZE
1

PYRO

Defender



TIER 1		TIER 2		TIER 3	
HULL: +1	SYSTEMS: -1	HULL: +2	SYSTEMS: -1	HULL: +3	SYSTEMS: -1
AGILITY: -1	ENGINEERING: +3	AGILITY: -1	ENGINEERING: +4	AGILITY: -1	ENGINEERING: +5
HP: 10	Armor: 3	HP: 13	Armor: 3	HP: 16	Armor: 3
Evasion: 8	E-Defense: 8	Evasion: 9	E-Defense: 9	Evasion: 10	E-Defense: 10
Speed: 2	Size: 1	Speed: 2	Size: 1	Speed: 2	Size: 1
Heat Cap: 12	Save Target: 11	Heat Cap: 12	Save Target: 13	Heat Cap: 12	Save Target: 15
Sensors: 8		Sensors: 8		Sensors: 8	

TACTICS

PYROS are slow, resilient defenders that deny areas through a combination of **heat** and **burn**, and are especially threatening against characters already suffering from **burn**. Position **FIREBREAK** where it can protect the most allies from incoming attacks while also threatening to deal **burn** to anyone who crosses it, allowing the **PYRO** to follow up with a powerful attack from their **FLAMETHROWER**.

OPFOR NOTES

- Slow and heavily armored, with close-range weaponry, unsuited to chasing down faster enemies or spearheading assaults, but very effective against close-ranged threats.
- Several optional systems create dangerous areas which, in conjunction with **FIREBREAK**, can make parts of the map hazardous to move through.
- Works best on maps where they can deny areas (such as objectives) and lock down critical chokepoints, and alongside allies that can either move enemies into the dangerous zones they've established or who can deal **heat** and **burn** to enemies themselves.

BASE SYSTEMS

Flamethrower

Heavy CQB, +1/2/3, 4 ⚔ (Self)
[△5] [3/4/5 ⚔]

This weapon deals double **burn** to characters that have any **burn**.

Firebreak

Trait

At the end of the **PYRO**'s turn, they create a $\nearrow 5$ wall of flame, **4 spaces** high, in free spaces within $\checkmark 3$ and line of sight. This wall doesn't block line of sight, but provides **soft cover**; when an attack is made against a character benefiting from this cover, roll **1d6**. On a **4+**, that attack misses. Characters can pass through this wall, but when crossing the wall for the first time in a round or starting their turn overlapping its spaces, they take **2/3/4 ⚔**. This wall lasts until the start of the **PYRO**'s next turn, or until the **PYRO** moves or is **STUNNED**, and its effect doesn't stack with **INVISIBLE**.

Explosive Vent

System, Full Action

The **PYRO** clears all **heat**. All characters within $\odot 2$ must pass an **AGILITY** save or take **heat** equal to half the amount the **PYRO** cleared and be knocked **PRONE**.

Insulated

Trait

The **PYRO** has **IMMUNITY** to **burn**.

OPTIONAL SYSTEMS

Napalm Bomb

System, Quick Action, Recharge 5+

The **PYRO** launches a napalm canister that erupts in a $\oplus 1$ curtain of flame within $\nearrow 5$. All characters within this area must pass an **AGILITY** save or take **2/3/4 A** and **2/3/4 F**. The **PYRO** may instead target a free area with this **BLAST**; if they do, it creates a burning patch on the ground that lasts until this system is used again. Characters that start their turn at least partially within the area or move into it for the first time in a round must pass an **AGILITY** save or take **2/3/4 A** and **2/3/4 F**.

Unshielded Reactor

Trait

Characters that start their turn within $\nearrow 3$ of the **PYRO** or who move into $\nearrow 3$ of them for the first time in a round take **2/3/4 F**, and they make all checks to clear burn with $+1\ominus$ as long as they remain within **3 spaces** of the **PYRO**.

Superhot

System, Reaction, 1/round, 4 F (Self)

Trigger: The **PYRO** takes damage from an attack.

Effect: The **PYRO** gains **RESISTANCE to all damage from the attack**. If the attack was a **melee attack**, the triggering character must pass an **ENGINEERING** save or take **3/4/5 A**.

Explosive Jet

System, Recharge 5+, Quick Action

Hostile characters within $\oplus 2$ must pass a **HULL** save or be knocked back outside of the area and knocked **PRONE**. The **PYRO** then flies **5 spaces** in any direction, but must land after completing that move. If the **PYRO** is in the **DANGER ZONE**, the **HULL** save is made with $+1\ominus$ and this system automatically recharges.

Lingering Flames

Trait

When the **PYRO** attacks with the **FLAMETHROWER**, flames continue to burn in **3 free spaces** of their choice within the affected area. When characters start their turn in one of these spaces or enter one for the first time in a round, they take **2/3/4 A**. These spaces last until the end of the scene, or until the **PYRO** attacks with the **FLAMETHROWER**.

DESIGNER'S NOTES

Another member of the **SPEED 2** Club, the **PYRO** also suffers from an unfortunate tendency to not effectively advertise to GMs what its primary strengths and tactical purposes are. People see the **PYRO** and assume it must be some sort of dangerous flamethrower-wielding assault unit, only to be discouraged by its exceptionally slow speed and close range, when what the **PYRO** actually is (rather unintuitively) is a shield-projecting defender that also happens to have a flamethrower if people get close.

I'm not really interested in turning the **PYRO** into more of a striker, but I do think there's an argument to be made that it's a little too unintuitive for its own good, on top of its low speed making it hard to leverage effectively.

As with the **DEMOLISHER**, my approach to the **PYRO** takes the form of expanding its area of influence rather than making it faster. One big way I make this work is by increasing the range at which **FIREBREAK**, the new version of the core rulebook's **FIREBREAK SHIELD**, can be placed. Also, **FIREBREAK** now actually sets people on fire, another absent element of the core **PYRO** that often catches people off-guard to the extent I might consider this to be the most unintuitive NPC ability in the entire game. This new actually fire-based version creates more of a threat for people trying to push through the shield to get to the area the **PYRO** is contesting since it plays right into the **FLAMETHROWER** dealing double burn to targets that already have any, a thing the **PYRO** normally has to rely on successive attacks or outside help to facilitate.

To further assist the **PYRO**, more of its optionals have been redesigned towards a goal of making the **PYRO'S** part of the map extremely unpleasant to be around. Where the **DEMOLISHER** and its hammer serve as the dangerous threat keeping people away, the **PYRO** does this by setting the map on fire, whether it's using **NAPALM BOMB** (now a system instead of a weapon) to drop burning patches on the ground, using **LINGERING FLAMES** to set even more burning patches on the ground, or the expanded range on **UNSHIELDED REACTOR** making the **PYRO** itself more of a walking hazard.

SUPERHOT has been adjusted to serve as more of a generalized **RESISTANCE** system along with an additional heat cost (more incentive to make use of **EXPLOSIVE VENT**, which itself now has a bigger radius), and additional heat may also come in handy with the revised **EXPLOSIVE JET**, which now automatically recharges if used while the **PYRO** is in the **DANGER ZONE**. As with the **DEMOLISHER**, I'm not a fan of slapping **ACROBAT** on every single **PYRO** just to give them more mobility, so this is my solution to that.

SIZE
1

RAINMAKER

Artillery



TIER 1		TIER 2		TIER 3	
HULL: +0	SYSTEMS: +2	HULL: +0	SYSTEMS: +3	HULL: +0	SYSTEMS: +4
AGILITY: +0	ENGINEERING: +0	AGILITY: +1	ENGINEERING: +0	AGILITY: +1	ENGINEERING: +1
HP: 10	Armor: 1	HP: 12	Armor: 1	HP: 14	Armor: 1
Evasion: 8	E-Defense: 8	Evasion: 10	E-Defense: 10	Evasion: 12	E-Defense: 12
Speed: 3	Size: 1	Speed: 3	Size: 1	Speed: 3	Size: 1
Heat Cap: 8	Save Target: 11	Heat Cap: 8	Save Target: 13	Heat Cap: 8	Save Target: 15
Sensors: 15		Sensors: 15		Sensors: 15	

TACTICS

RAINMAKERS are one part artillery and one part controller. Their **SKYHAMMER SALVO** forces characters to avoid certain areas or take guaranteed **LOCK ON** and damage. They can also dish out delayed damage through optional systems like **HOUND MISSILES** and **ATLAS MISSILES** which render areas of the map dangerous to traverse. Like other artillery mechs, **RAINMAKERS** are relatively vulnerable on their own.

OPFOR NOTES

- Long range, modest damage, multi-target artillery unit that doesn't require line of sight with its **MISSILE PODS**, allowing it to keep up constant fire from relative safety.
- SKYHAMMER SALVO** and many optional systems require line of sight to use, forcing careful consideration about when to step out and utilize them versus remaining out of line of sight.
- Works well in environments with abundant terrain to take cover behind, and where it can deploy dangerous area effect abilities to hinder foes as they attempt to approach allies or objectives.

BASE SYSTEMS

Missile Pods

Main Launcher, Arcing, Knockback 1, +2/4/6
[✓15] [4/5/6*]

This weapon can attack **1-3** targets at a time.

Huntsman

Trait

Against characters with **LOCK ON**, the **MISSILE PODS** gain **SMART** and **SEEKING**. If the **RAINMAKER** consumes **LOCK ON** during the attack, the **MISSILE PODS** also gain **AP** against that target.

Skyhammer Salvo

System, Quick Action

The **RAINMAKER** establishes a **⊕1** targeting area within line of sight and **SENSORS**, visible to all characters. Hostile characters that start their turn within this area (even partially, up to **10 spaces** high) or enter it for the first time during their turn gain **LOCK ON**. Hostile characters that end their turn within this area are hit by a rocket, taking **4/5/6***. This area lasts until the start of the **RAINMAKER**'s next turn.

OPTIONAL SYSTEMS

Atlas Missiles

System, Full Action, Recharge 6+

The **RAINMAKER** chooses a space on the ground in line of sight and **✓15**, visible to all characters. The **RAINMAKER** launches a missile that lands at the end of the next round, creating a **⊕2** explosion centered on that space. Characters in the area must pass an **AGILITY** save or take **16/20/24*** damage. On a success they take **half damage**. The **RAINMAKER** can force hostile characters with **LOCK ON** make this save with **+1θ**, but they must consume the **LOCK ON** during the save.

Hound Missiles

System, Drone, Quick Action, Recharge 6+

Hound Missile (Size 1/2, HP 10/12/14, Evasion 10, E-Defense 10, Tags: DRONE, IMMUNITY to PRONE, SLOWED, and IMMOBILIZED).

The **RAINMAKER** deploys the **HOUND MISSILE** in an adjacent space and picks a target in $\checkmark 15$ and line of sight. At the start of the **RAINMAKER**'s turns the missile makes its own standard move, flying **3 spaces** towards its target, **6** if the target has **LOCK ON**. It moves directly, maneuvering around cover and terrain if needed. When the missile moves adjacent to its target, or collides with any character, it creates a $\oplus 1$ explosion. Characters in the affected area must pass an **AGILITY** save or take **16/20/24 ***. On a success, they take **half damage**.

Any hostile character that attempts to move a **HOUND MISSILE** (i.e. with **KNOCKBACK**, push, pull, etc) must pass a contested **SYSTEMS** check against the **RAINMAKER**. If they fail, the movement is ignored, that character gains **LOCK ON**, and the **RAINMAKER** may change the missile's target to that character.

Hades Missiles

System, Quick Action, Recharge 5+

The **RAINMAKER** launches a missile that detonates in a $\Delta 3$ area within $\checkmark 15$; this doesn't need line of sight, just a possible route to the target. All characters within the area must pass a **HULL** save or take **4/5/6 *** and be **knocked back 3 spaces** in the direction of the cone. On a save, they take **half damage** and are **knocked back 1 space**.

Seeker Volley

System, Full Action, Recharge 5+

All hostile characters in line of sight and $\checkmark 15$ must pass a **SYSTEMS** save or gain **LOCK ON** and take **4/5/6 ***. On a success, they take **half damage** only.

Suppression Salvo

Trait

When hostile characters end their turn within the **SKYHAMMER SALVO** targeting area, the **RAINMAKER** may hit them with a rocket that deals no damage, but forces them to pass a **HULL** save or become **SLOWED** and **IMPAIRED** until the end of their next turn instead.

DESIGNER'S NOTES

RAINMAKERS are a unit that end up punching way above their weight in ways that GMs often aren't aware of at first. Looking at the **MISSILE PODS**, they don't seem to do that much damage, but the problem comes in the form of the unit's baked-in combo of tossing out **JAVELIN ROCKETS**, then using the **MISSILE POD** to immediately knock people into their triggering area.

Not only is this more damage than you would expect, armor notwithstanding, it's just extremely boring. It's a combo with no real interactability or counterplay, and so it feels less like a clever combo and more like a perfunctory checklist. All this and the **RAINMAKER** gets **Reliable** damage, to boot. Not a fan.

All right, so first things first, the **Reliable** damage? Gone. An NPC that can attack up to three independent targets every turn doesn't need **Reliable** damage, because it has the reliability of making multiple attacks on its side. **JAVELIN ROCKETS**? Get outta here. What I want the **RAINMAKER** to be is a consistent, modest damage artillery unit, something that exerts steady pressure on the PCs rather than threatening them with massive spike damage, and it doesn't need to smack them with extra **JAVELIN ROCKET** damage to accomplish that.

The core rulebook likens the **RAINMAKER** to a controller, but honestly it really isn't much of one... **JAVELIN ROCKETS** aren't great as an area denial tool, and as mentioned they more or less wind up as just extra damage for the **RAINMAKER**, but what if it was more of a controller? And **HUNTSMAN**, that's kind of a fun trait, what if I did some more with that sort of thing?

Hence the **RAINMAKER** rebake. **SKYHAMMER SALVO** gives the **RAINMAKER** the sort of area denial that the **JAVELIN ROCKETS** were ostensibly for, but in a way that doesn't turn in to simply fishing for bigger numbers. On top of that, more of the optionals hook into **LOCK ON** in various ways, either applying them (such as **SEEKER VOLLEY**) or consuming them for effect (such as the revised **ATLAS MISSILES**). Creating dangerous areas and knocking people around, it's definitely got a controller vibe going for it.

One of the bigger changes is to the infamous and iconic **HOUND MISSILES**. **HOUNDS** (and their **ULTRA** counterparts, **WOLFHOUNDS**) are a cool and evocative system in theory, but in practice canny players more or less treat like a free explosive barrel to chuck back at enemies. Reducing its **HP** scaling makes shooting it down less of a hassle, but the real treat here is the contested **SYSTEMS** check whenever someone tries to forcefully move the missile off-course or throw it in someone's face. You can still attempt these sorts of tactics, nothing's stopping you from giving it a try, but now it's less of a freebie, and if you aren't careful it might literally blow up in your face.

This **RAINMAKER** also sees a bit of a range reduction across the board. This is to give the different artillery NPCs more texture by way of placing them at different effective range bands, such as how the **BOMBARD** works out to **RANGE 25** while the **OPERATOR** now works within **RANGE 12**. **RANGE 15** is still decent, and the **RAINMAKER** still benefits from being able to loiter behind line-of-sight obstructing cover while spamming missiles, so I think it'll manage just fine.

SIZE
1

RONIN

Striker



TIER 1		TIER 2		TIER 3	
HULL: +1	SYSTEMS: -1	HULL: +2	SYSTEMS: -1	HULL: +3	SYSTEMS: -1
AGILITY: +2	ENGINEERING: -1	AGILITY: +3	ENGINEERING: -1	AGILITY: +4	ENGINEERING: -1
HP: 18	Armor: 0	HP: 20	Armor: 0	HP: 22	Armor: 0
Evasion: 10	E-Defense: 7	Evasion: 13	E-Defense: 8	Evasion: 16	E-Defense: 9
Speed: 5	Size: 1	Speed: 5	Size: 1	Speed: 6	Size: 1
Heat Cap: 7	Save Target: 10	Heat Cap: 7	Save Target: 13	Heat Cap: 7	Save Target: 15
Sensors: 10		Sensors: 10		Sensors: 10	

TACTICS

RONINS are straightforward, deadly melee strikers that excel against targets that rely on ranged firepower. **REBOUND** and **COUNTER-BALLISTIC SUITE** make it dangerous for enemies to attack **RONINS** with ranged weapons, but they have no particular defenses against melee or tech attacks, nor do they have any way around things such as **ARMOR** or **RESISTANCE**.

OPFOR NOTES

- **CARBON FIBER SWORD** is a solid, no-frills weapon even without additional benefits from **COUNTER-BALLISTIC SUITE**.
- With a high base **SPEED** and no ranged attack options, make frequent use of **BOOST** to close the distance with targets.
- Works well against enemies reliant on ranged weapons, or in missions with objectives that force enemies to come to them.

BASE SYSTEMS

Carbon Fiber Sword

Main Melee, +2/4/6, +1 
[2] [6/8/10]

Rebound

System, Shield, Reaction, 1/round 

Trigger: The **RONIN** takes damage from a **ranged attack**.

Effect: They roll **1d6**: on **4+**, they gain **RESISTANCE** to **damage from that attack**, and the attacker must repeat the attack against themselves. On **3 or less**, the **RONIN** may **BOOST** towards the triggering attacker.

Counter-Ballistic Suite

Trait

Whenever a hostile character within $\sqrt{5}$ makes a ranged attack, the **RONIN** may give them a **RONIN'S MARK**. Only one character at a time can have a **RONIN'S MARK**; if a new mark is applied, any others are removed. When the **RONIN** makes a successful attack against a character using the **CARBON FIBER SWORD**, it can consume the **RONIN'S MARK** to deal **+1d6 bonus damage**.

OPTIONAL SYSTEMS

Chaff Launchers

Trait

Ranged attacks made by **ENGAGED** characters against the **RONIN** receive **+2** instead of **+1**, and the **RONIN** gains **soft cover** until the start of their next turn whenever they **BOOST**.

Instinct Mode

System, Full Action, Recharge 6+

The **RONIN** enters a prepared stance, visible to everyone. Until the end of the **RONIN**'s next turn, the first time each turn that a hostile character in line of sight makes a **ranged attack**, as a reaction the **RONIN** may first **BOOST** towards the triggering attacker and then make an attack against them with the **CARBON FIBER SWORD** if they are within range.

Mag Field

Trait

Whenever the **RONIN** takes damage or effects from missed attacks (e.g. **RELIABLE**), they may choose a different character within **✓5** to also take the damage or effects.

Charged Slash

System, Full Action, Recharge 6+

A character within **✓2** must pass an **AGILITY** save or choose: become **JAMMED** until the end of their next turn, or the **RONIN** chooses one of the target's equipped weapons and the target takes that weapon's damage from a ruptured magazine or power cell, then they become **IMPAIRED** until the end of their next turn. On a success, they become **IMPAIRED** until the end of their next turn only.

Extended Blade

System

The **RONIN**'s **CARBON FIBER SWORD** becomes **⌘3**. The first time each turn that the **RONIN** performs a critical hit with it, all characters of their choice within **THREAT** take **2/3/4** damage, excluding the target just attacked.

DESIGNER'S NOTES

I wrestled with the **RONIN** for a while, unsatisfied with it but unsure of exactly what to do with it. The main issue I have with the core rulebook **RONIN** is that, like the **ASSAULT**, it's a unit that lacks a strong identity. "Guy with a sword" doesn't cut it, the NPC roster is overflowing with evocative, tactically distinct melee strikers... you have **BERSERKERS** and **ASSASSINS**, you have **CATAPHRACTS** and **SPECTERS**. "This guy has a sword," so what? I'm of the opinion that tactics games neither need nor want "generic" units. Even if you have a pressing need for "a guy with a sword," that unit should still have more of an identity beyond just that.

I looked at a few different angles but couldn't find one I liked, until what I realized is that the most iconic element of the **RONIN**, the bit everyone has at least one memorable moment with, is **DEFLECT**. So what if I took that element and ran with it?

The **RONIN** rebake's identity is "the anti-ranged melee unit." You can still use it as just a guy with a sword if you want, and you can do so much more freely now that it no longer has the dangerous multiplicatively-scaling multi-attacks by tier that used to turn it into a blender at higher levels. But within its optionals you'll now find a variety of tools designed to hinder and harm PCs who rely heavily upon ranged firepower. **INSTINCT MODE** now triggers upon hostile ranged attacks, including those not even aimed at the **RONIN**, while **CHARGED BLADE** now lets you literally damage someone with their own gun.

Looping back to the base systems, one of the other big changes is that the **RONIN** no longer gains bonus damage on critical hits as a matter of course. The **ECHO EDGE** optional has been folded into a new baseline trait, **COUNTER-BALLISTIC SUITE**, which serves as the new form of additional damage dealing. This makes the **RONIN** roughly still as deadly as it was (by Tier 1 standards, again, scaling multi-attacks are out of the picture, so it'll never be as deadly as it was at Tiers 2-3 and for the better), but in a way that's less down to random chance and more telegraphed. And of course, if you choose to engage the **RONIN** in honorable melee combat, they won't have a chance to put these new tricks to use.

SIZE
1

SCOURER

Striker



TIER 1		TIER 2		TIER 3	
HULL: +1	SYSTEMS: +0	HULL: +2	SYSTEMS: +0	HULL: +3	SYSTEMS: +0
AGILITY: +0	ENGINEERING: +2	AGILITY: +0	ENGINEERING: +3	AGILITY: +0	ENGINEERING: +4
HP: 10	Armor: 2	HP: 13	Armor: 2	HP: 16	Armor: 2
Evasion: 8	E-Defense: 8	Evasion: 9	E-Defense: 9	Evasion: 10	E-Defense: 10
Speed: 4	Size: 1	Speed: 4	Size: 1	Speed: 4	Size: 1
Heat Cap: 8	Save Target: 10	Heat Cap: 10	Save Target: 12	Heat Cap: 12	Save Target: 14
Sensors: 8		Sensors: 8		Sensors: 8	

TACTICS

SCOURERS deal a great deal of damage when they focus on single targets, attacking them multiple times. They can be used to crack tough or slow moving opponents very easily. However, they are much less effective when forced to switch targets, and need to remain still in order to repeatedly fire their **THERMAL LANCE** without overheating.

OPFOR NOTES

- Shorter than average range, average speed, and lacking any movement abilities means proper positioning is important to maximize the effects of the **THERMAL LANCE** and **FOCUS DOWN**. Be aware that even beneficial movement off-turn will prevent **COOLING MODULE** from working.
- Tough against energy damage and with good **ARMOR**, but otherwise low **HP**.
- Works best with allies that can protect them while they establish a firing position or lock enemies down so they can't move out of range.

BASE SYSTEMS

Thermal Lance

Heavy Cannon, +1/2/3, +1 ♦, 4 ⚡ (Self)
[✓8] [6/8/10 ⚡]

Focus Down

Trait

When the **SCOURER** hits with the **THERMAL LANCE**, targets take **5/6/7 ⚡** if they were also successfully hit with the **THERMAL LANCE** in the previous round.

Cooling Module

System

At the start of their turn, the **SCOURER** clears all **heat** if they haven't moved – including involuntary movement – since the end of their previous turn.

Ablative Shielding

System

The **SCOURER** has **RESISTANCE** to energy damage.

OPTIONAL SYSTEMS

Supercharged

Trait

Characters affected by **Focus Down** are also **SHREDDED** and **SLOWED** until the end of their next turn.

Emergency Vent

System

When the **SCOURER** exceeds their **HEAT CAP**, becomes **JAMMED**, or becomes **STUNNED**, they become **INVISIBLE** until the end of their next turn.

Pulse Laser

System, Protocol, Recharge 6+

The next time the **SCOURER** makes an attack with the **THERMAL LANCE**, they can attack two targets at a time, dealing **half damage** on hit. This system automatically recharges whenever **COOLING MODULE** activates.

Melt

System, Quick Action, Recharge 5+

The **SCOURER** makes a **ranged attack** against an object, deployable or **DRONE** within $\checkmark 10$, dealing **20 AP** damage on a success. On hit, all characters within a $\odot 2$ radius of the target are splashed with molten slag, and count as being successfully hit with the **THERMAL LANCE**.

Thermal Overload

Trait

If the **COOLING MODULE** does not activate at the start of the **SCOURER**'s turn, the **THERMAL LANCE** gains **+4 RANGE**, and on hit all other characters in a $\odot 1$ area around the target take **3/4/5 A**.

DESIGNER'S NOTES

Unlike the **ASSAULT**, the **SCOURER** is a ranged striker that has a much more solid identity beyond "guy with a gun," and I like them for that reason. The dynamic with their **COOLING MODULE** makes them fun to mess with, rewarding players for interrupting their self-cooling, and **Focus Down** nicely telegraphs their power in ways that gives targets a chance to respond. All in all, it's a real solid NPC.

Most of the tinkering here is in the optionals, and I'll just start by saying "what the hell is up with **FLASH LENS**?" Again, why does this NPC need a big AoE **JAMMED** ability? That is completely outside the **SCOURER**'s wheelhouse, and is entirely unnecessary. Sorry, but I don't think a **STRIKER** needs the ability to apply one of the rudest status debuffs in the game in a $\Delta 5$ area.

Setting that aside, it's largely a matter of touching up some stuff here and there. For example, **MELT** has always been something of a lackluster optional, but by tying it into the **SCOURER**'s gameplan of wanting to hit people who are primed for **Focus Down**, it makes it a more interesting self-combo piece, and likewise the new version of **PULSE LASER** (no longer an optional weapon) does the same thing, spreading around the **SCOURER**'s pool of potential targets to, well, focus down.

THERMAL OVERLOAD, meanwhile, takes things in a different direction, giving the **SCOURER** a power boost whenever **COOLING MODULE** doesn't proc. It's not something the **SCOURER** can reliably trigger by itself, lacking any sort of off-turn movement, but with the right allies you could probably pull it off and do your best **TOKUGAWA** impression. Right up until your reactor melts down, anyway.



SCOUT

Support



TIER 1		TIER 2		TIER 3	
HULL: -2	SYSTEMS: +3	HULL: -2	SYSTEMS: +4	HULL: -2	SYSTEMS: +5
AGILITY: +2	ENGINEERING: -1	AGILITY: +4	ENGINEERING: -1	AGILITY: +5	ENGINEERING: -1
HP: 8	Armor: 0	HP: 8	Armor: 0	HP: 8	Armor: 0
Evasion: 12	E-Defense: 10	Evasion: 15	E-Defense: 13	Evasion: 18	E-Defense: 16
Speed: 6	Size: 1/2 or 1	Speed: 7	Size: 1/2 or 1	Speed: 8	Size: 1/2 or 1
Heat Cap: 6	Save Target: 11	Heat Cap: 6	Save Target: 13	Heat Cap: 6	Save Target: 15
Sensors: 20		Sensors: 20		Sensors: 20	

TACTICS

SCOUTS are support mechs designed to increase the damage dealt by their allies. They deal no damage themselves, but **MARKER RIFLE** assists allies in hitting and damaging priority targets and **REBOUND SCAN** prevents enemies from hiding or benefiting from being **INVISIBLE**. Like most support mechs, **SCOUTS** aren't especially resilient on their own, but **CLOAKING FIELD** can help keep them and their allies alive.

OPFOR NOTES

- Deals no damage on its own by default, but helps its allies deal more damage to make up for it.
- Serves as a major countermeasure to **INVISIBLE** enemies and those that are **HIDDEN**.
- Works well in conjunction with NPCs that struggle to get through **ARMOR** or **RESISTANCE** or that like additional **ACCURACY** on attacks.

BASE SYSTEMS

Marker Rifle

Main Rifle, Smart, +2/4/6, +1♦
[✓15] [0 damage]

On Hit: Target receives **LOCK ON**, and they become **SHREDDED** until the end of their next turn.

Sight

Trait

The **SCOUT** ignores **HIDDEN** and **INVISIBLE**.

Rebound Scan

System, Quick Tech, +2/4/6, Recharge 4+

The **SCOUT** makes a **tech attack** against a character in **SENSORS**. On a success, the target and all hostile characters within ✓3 of the target lose **HIDDEN** and **INVISIBLE** and can't regain either status or benefit from any cover until the start of the **SCOUT's** next turn. The **SCOUT** may choose to automatically hit allied characters with this **tech attack**; if they do, this system automatically recharges.

Cloaking Field

System, Quick Action, Recharge 6+

The **SCOUT** generates a ◉3 cloaking field that lasts until the end of their next turn. The **SCOUT** and any allied characters within the affected area are **INVISIBLE**, but the **SCOUT** is **IMMOBILIZED** while it is active.

OPTIONAL SYSTEMS

Spotter

Trait

While adjacent to the **SCOUT**, allied characters gain **+1♦** on all attack rolls.

Sensor Link

System, Full Action

The **SCOUT** chooses an allied character within $\sqrt{3}$ and patches their own sensor feed directly into that ally's systems, becoming **IMMOBILIZED** until the end of their next turn. That character gains the benefits of **SIGHT**. This effect lasts until the **SCOUT** is destroyed or until the end of the **SCOUT**'s next turn.

Orbital Strike

System, Full Action, Recharge 5+

The **SCOUT** chooses a space on the ground, within line of sight and $\sqrt{20}$; all characters know that it has been chosen. The **SCOUT** calls in an orbital bombardment that hits at the end of the next round, creating a $\oplus 2$ explosion centered on that space. Characters in the affected area must make **AGILITY** saves. On a failure, they take **12/16/20** energy damage and are knocked **PRONE**. On a success, they take **half damage** and remain standing.

Expose Weakness

Trait

Characters that are successfully attacked with the **MARKER RIFLE** gain a **SCOUT'S MARK**. Only one character can be marked this way at a time, and marking another character clears any marks from the last one. The next time an ally successfully hits a character with a **SCOUT'S MARK**, they may consume the mark to choose one of the following:

- The target takes **+1d6 bonus damage**.
- The target is knocked **PRONE**.
- The target is **pushed 2 spaces** in a direction of the attacker's choice and **IMPAIRED** until the end of their next turn.

Pathfinder

Trait

1/round, after the **SCOUT** makes a successful attack with the **MARKER RIFLE**, an allied character within **SENSORS** and line of sight may **BOOST** as a reaction.

DESIGNER'S NOTES

The **SCOUT** does something that I am extremely not a fan of, which is tying persistent debuffs to an unconsumed **LOCK ON**. In *Lancer*, most debuffs and conditions have a set endpoint, usually the start or end of someone's turn. There are exceptions, but those tend to be gated behind more involved prerequisites, like the **BREACHER'S BREAK ARMOR** requiring it to land multiple hits with a very inaccurate weapon.

The **MARKER RIFLE**, by contrast, is simply a long range, highly accurate weapon that paints someone with a **LOCK ON** that also hits them with **SHREDDED** and complete anti-stealth and lasts until the **LOCK ON** goes away. How do you make a **LOCK ON** go away if the GM decides not to consume it? Well, you can **STABILIZE**, and uhhhhh.

Inflicting a permanent, ongoing set of debuffs with a single **quick action** that then requires the target to spend what is likely a **full action** to get rid of them is, in my opinion, a poor dynamic to encourage. It puts the target inescapably on the back foot for very little opportunity cost.

As a result, the **MARKER RIFLE** has been completely refigured. For starters, it no longer ties anything to **LOCK ON** duration. Hitting someone with it now simply **LOCKS ON** to them, and also applies **SHREDDED** until the end of their next turn, no fuss, no muss. Second, the anti-stealth functionality has been completely shifted over to the new **REBOUND SCAN**, no longer a weirdly close-ranged ability but now a **tech attack** that can de-stealth people at a distance.

In terms of its optionals, the core rulebook **SCOUT** is probably most famous for **ORBITAL STRIKE**, which is a very funny ability that I'm happy to keep intact. **SPOTTER** is also fine, and plays into that **SCOUT/SNIPER** fantasy. The rest, however, could use some work. **EXPOSE WEAKNESS**, like **RETRIBUTION** earlier, has been consolidated down to a much simpler and more bounded $+1d6$ bonus damage, but now gives a selection of other options as well.

Meanwhile, I'm not particularly enamored of **SYSTEM FLAYER** (cool name though) and **DATAVEIL** belongs to the **MIRAGE** as far as this supplement is concerned, so those have been replaced with **SENSOR LINK** (another way for the **SCOUT** to pass along vital anti-stealth capabilities if it needs it) as well as **PATHFINDER**, something to spread the beneficial movement love further outside of just the **MIRAGE**.

SIZE
1

SEEDER

Controller



TIER 1		TIER 2		TIER 3	
HULL: +0	SYSTEMS: +2	HULL: +1	SYSTEMS: +3	HULL: +2	SYSTEMS: +4
AGILITY: +0	ENGINEERING: +0	AGILITY: +0	ENGINEERING: +0	AGILITY: +0	ENGINEERING: +0
HP: 12	Armor: 2	HP: 14	Armor: 2	HP: 16	Armor: 2
Evasion: 7	E-Defense: 10	Evasion: 8	E-Defense: 11	Evasion: 9	E-Defense: 12
Speed: 4	Size: 1	Speed: 4	Size: 1	Speed: 4	Size: 1
Heat Cap: 8	Save Target: 12	Heat Cap: 8	Save Target: 15	Heat Cap: 8	Save Target: 18
Sensors: 15		Sensors: 15		Sensors: 15	

TACTICS

SEEDERS specialize in area denial, controlling enemy movement with their mines. Since **SEEDERS** can place mines each turn, they can quickly turn part of the battlefield into a mess when left to their own devices. Allied characters don't trigger **SEEDERS**' mines until the **SEEDER** is destroyed, but are affected by them if they're caught in the explosion. **SEEDERS** have a variety of mine types at their disposal, allowing them to set up traps tailored to their enemies' weaknesses.

OPFOR NOTES

- As mines are visible on the map to all characters, they likely won't deliberately wander into their detonation range. Make use of **GRAV-GRENADE LAUNCHER** or **GRAV SPIKES** to move characters into them, or use them as a visible deterrent to encourage enemies to avoid areas of the map like critical objective points or chokepoints.
- High **SENSORS** and a good **SYSTEMS** score allows them to make use of actions like **LOCK ON** or **INVADE** from a distance while preparing minefields in advance.
- Works well in conjunction with allies that can move enemies around with forced movement, such as pushes, pulls, or **Knockback**.

BASE SYSTEMS

Grav-Grenade Launcher

Main Launcher, +2/4/6, Arcing
[✓8, ⊕1] [2/3/4*]

On Hit: Targets are pulled **1 space** in a direction of the **SEEDER'S** choice

Lay Mines

System, Mine, Quick Action, 1/turn

The **SEEDER** deploys one of the mines below in a free space within ✓3. Once deployed, the **SEEDER'S** mines detonate when a hostile character moves adjacent to them, creating a ⊕1 explosion that affects both allied and hostile characters.

- Sealant Mine:** Characters in the area must pass a **HULL** save or become **IMMOBILIZED** until the end of their next turn, then **SLOWED** until the end of their subsequent turn.
- Explosive Mine:** Characters in the area must pass an **AGILITY** save or take **8/12/16***. On a success, they take **half damage**.
- Shock Mine:** Characters in the area must pass a **SYSTEMS** save or become **JAMMED** until the end of their next turn, then **IMPAIRED** until the end of their subsequent turn.
- Thermite Mine:** Characters in the area must pass an **ENGINEERING** save or take **4/5/6** and have only line of sight to adjacent spaces until the end of their next turn. On a success, they take **half heat** only.

The **SEEDER** may have up to three mines deployed at a time; if they deploy another mine, one of their currently deployed mines of their choice disarms and deactivates. When the **SEEDER** is destroyed, its deployed mines remain active, but now detonate whenever **any** character moves adjacent to them.

Safety Net

Trait

The **SEEDER** never triggers or sets off **MINES** or other proximity-based systems unless it chooses to do so.

OPTIONAL SYSTEMS

Grav Spike

System, Quick Action

A character within line of sight and $\checkmark 5$ must succeed on a **SYSTEMS** save, or a grav spike attaches itself to them. The **SEEDER** can detonate all grav spikes as a protocol, causing targets to automatically take **4/5/6 * AP** damage and be pulled **3 spaces** in a direction of their choice. Characters can remove a grav spike from themselves by passing a **SYSTEMS** save as a **quick action**.

FASCAM

System, Full Action, Recharge 6+

The **SEEDER** launches a rocket which scatters a field of explosive micromines over a $\oplus 3$ area within **SENSORS**; this area can overlap with obstructions (like cover or terrain) when deployed, but not characters. Characters who enter this area or make any movement while within it for the first time in a round must pass a **SYSTEMS** save or step on a mine, taking **5/6/7 ***. Only one field of micromines can exist at a time, and if a new one is created, the previous one deactivates.

Speed Deployer

Trait

LAY MINES may now deploy up to three mines at a time instead of just one. If the **SEEDER** deploys more than one mine at a time this way, this trait can't be used again until one of their mines detonates or is disarmed by a hostile character.

Hopping Mines

Trait

Mines deployed with **LAY MINES** also activate when hostile characters fly or move over or adjacent to them, up to **10 spaces** high. The mines jump up to **10 spaces**, detonating and affecting all characters within their area.

Last Line

Trait, Reaction, Limited 1

Trigger: A hostile character moves within $\checkmark 3$ of the **SEEDER**.

Effect: Choose a mine that can be deployed with **LAY MINES**; the triggering character immediately detonates a hidden mine buried under the ground of that type. This reaction may still be used even if the **SEEDER** is destroyed.

If a hostile character is aware of this trait (i.e. via **SCAN**, or automatically when the **SEEDER** is destroyed), they may attempt a contested **SYSTEMS** check against the **SEEDER** as a **quick action** while the **SEEDER** (or its wreck) is within **SENSORS**. If that character succeeds, this trait is disabled. This check automatically succeeds against destroyed **SEEDERS**.

DESIGNER'S NOTES

So here's the thing about **SEEDERS**; a long while back, Tom apparently suggested in the course of a conversation that **SEEDER** mines were supposed to be genuinely hidden from players, like hidden information Battleship-style. I wasn't present for this conversation and it was never part of any official errata, so I can only relay this secondhand.

Now is this actually the intent behind **SEEDER** mines, in a game that otherwise has no hidden info or "fog of war" going on? For the purposes of this supplement, the answer is one that's irrelevant and that I have no interest in trying to figure out. What is relevant is that the **SEEDER** rebake's mines operate 100% identically to PC mines in every respect. They are visible on the map when placed, they detonate when characters move adjacent to them instead of directly on them, and that's the end of that.

How do the rebake **SEEDER'S** mines work? Go to page 106 in the *Lancer* core rulebook and you'll have all the answers you need. Making **SEEDER** mines work the same as PC mines is, to me, important because the fewer weird exceptions there are between shared mechanical systems, the easier it is for everyone to figure out and remember how things work on both sides of the table.

So besides that, what else has changed? Well, a bunch of stuff. For one, **SEEDERS** are now limited to a max of three deployed mines at a time. This falls in line with other changes made throughout this supplement as part of my "keep the battlefield less cluttered by accumulating deployables" initiative. The **SEEDER** can still continue to place mines as needed, old ones will just deactivate as they do. This means the **SEEDER'S** role is more about actively curating a living minefield as the situation warrants rather than hanging back and playing *Stardew Valley* until the PCs wander into their part of the map.

STUN MINES are also gone, for reasons I hope should be explanatory by this point, replaced with **THERMITE MINES**. **DET SPIKE**, kind of a weird and unnecessary system, has been replaced with **FASCAM** to give the **SEEDER** more area coverage if they need it, while **TRIPWIRES** is wholly unnecessary with **SEEDER** mines now covering more of a trigger radius by default.

GRAV SPIKE remains, along with an adjustment to the **GRAV-GRENADE LAUNCHER** which gives it omnidirectional movement instead of just **Knockback**, enabling the **SEEDER** to more actively push people into their mines. And finally, **LAST LINE** gives you the ability to play with a bit of that "hidden mine" fantasy if you really want, in a more controlled and less cumbersome fashion.



SENTINEL

Defender



TIER 1		TIER 2		TIER 3	
HULL: +2	SYSTEMS: +1	HULL: +3	SYSTEMS: +2	HULL: +4	SYSTEMS: +3
AGILITY: +1	ENGINEERING: +1	AGILITY: +2	ENGINEERING: +2	AGILITY: +3	ENGINEERING: +3
HP: 16	Armor: 1	HP: 20	Armor: 1	HP: 24	Armor: 1
Evasion: 8	E-Defense: 8	Evasion: 11	E-Defense: 11	Evasion: 13	E-Defense: 13
Speed: 4	Size: 2	Speed: 4	Size: 2	Speed: 5	Size: 2
Heat Cap: 8	Save Target: 10	Heat Cap: 8	Save Target: 12	Heat Cap: 8	Save Target: 14
Sensors: 10		Sensors: 10		Sensors: 10	

TACTICS

SENTINELS are "punishment" defenders that focus on establishing dangerous zones of **OVERWATCH** to protect allies and lock down areas on the map. They are fairly short-range attackers, relying on positioning to get the most from their kit, and don't have the means to directly mitigate or redirect damage the way other defenders do.

OPFOR NOTES

- A flexible, well-rounded unit combining good damage with area-denial and zone control capabilities.
- **EYE OF MIDNIGHT** is a potent way to increase the effectiveness of **OVERWATCH**, but **SLOWED** can interfere with other abilities such as **BODYGUARD** and **WRATH-LOCK**. Consider which is likely to be more useful at any given moment.
- Works well with a variety of compositions, but benefits from being in the thick of things and close to allies where its damaging **COMBAT SHOTGUN** and **OVERWATCH** capabilities can be put to good use.

BASE SYSTEMS

Combat Shotgun

Main CQB, +1/2/3, Reliable 2/3/4
[✓5, ✘3] [6/8/10 ⚔]

Retractable Sword

Main Melee, +2/4/6
[✘1] [4/5/6 ⚔]

Eye of Midnight

System, Quick Action

The **SENTINEL** becomes **SLOWED**, but can take the **OVERWATCH** reaction **1/turn** instead of **1/round**. Additionally, they may attack with **OVERWATCH** using the **COMBAT SHOTGUN** when hostile characters enter, leave, or exit spaces within their **THREAT** no matter whether they started their movement there. Once activated, this effect lasts until it is deactivated as a **quick action**.

Guardian

Trait

Adjacent allied characters can use the **SENTINEL** for **hard cover**.

OPTIONAL SYSTEMS

Punisher Ammunition

Trait

Characters hit by the **SENTINEL'S OVERWATCH** attacks also become **SLOWED** until the end of their next turn.

Bodyguard

Trait, Protocol, Reaction

The **SENTINEL** chooses an allied character within $\checkmark 5$ as their ward and gains the **REFLEXIVE BLOW** reaction, which can be taken as many times per round as it is triggered.

Reflexive Blow

Reaction

Trigger: A hostile character attacks the **SENTINEL'S** ward.

Effect: The **SENTINEL** may move their **SPEED** towards their ward by the most direct route possible, then attack the triggering character with **OVERWATCH**. This reaction interrupts and resolves before the triggering action, ignores **engagement**, and doesn't provoke **reactions**.

Wrath-Lock

Trait, Reaction, 1/round

Trigger: A hostile character in line of sight moves.

Effect: The **SENTINEL** may **BOOST** towards the triggering character, and the triggering character gains **LOCK ON**.

Impaler

System

1/round, when the **SENTINEL** hits with **OVERWATCH**, their target must pass a **HULL** save or become **IMMOBILIZED** and **JAMMED** until the end of their next turn.

Marker Shells

Trait

Characters damaged by the **SENTINEL'S COMBAT SHOTGUN** (including **Reliable** damage) gain a **SENTINEL'S MARK**. Whenever the **SENTINEL** makes an **OVERWATCH** attack against a marked character, they gain **+1♦** and ignore **INVISIBILITY**. All **SENTINEL'S MARKS** are cleared at the start of the **SENTINEL'S** turn.

DESIGNER'S NOTES

The **SENTINEL** is a pretty solid, well-rounded unit that struggles just a bit to accomplish its primary objective. Ironically, I think the **SENTINEL** makes a better "generic guy with a gun" than the **ASSAULT** does, forced to advance closer before shooting, relatively tough but without any defensive surprises.

Nonetheless, the **SENTINEL'S** primary aim is to be an **OVERWATCH**-oriented zone controller, a defender of the punishment variety. However, with shorter range than its cousin the **ARCHER** and with how the **OVERWATCH** rules in particular work, punishing those who leave but not those who enter, it can be hard at times for the **SENTINEL** to really make players feel properly threatened by its **THREAT** zone.

To address this, the **SENTINEL** rebake borrows from the famously useful PC-side **VANGUARD** talent. When **EYE OF MIDNIGHT** is active, the **SENTINEL** can now use **OVERWATCH** against characters entering its **THREAT** radius as well as leaving it. This makes them much more effective at punishing people who try moving past them to get to whatever it is they're guarding.

Their **COMBAT SHOTGUN** is also the beneficiary of **Reliable** damage, making it the third NPC in this supplement to feature it as part of their base kit. Like the **ARCHER**, the **SENTINEL** having **Reliable** damage makes their reaction attacks more punishing and less something that could potentially whiff outright, and this comes into play even more with the new **MARKER SHELLS** optional. **WRATH-LOCK** is a cool name but the core rulebook version is sort of anemic in practice, so I shamelessly stole it for a revised version of **RAPID RESPONSE**. **BODYGUARD** works more or less how it used to, but with some added movement to ensure the **SENTINEL** is properly able to exact retribution.

Oh, and I also made it bigger. The **SENTINEL** joins the ranks of other rebaked NPCs like the **BREACHER** and **BOMBARD**, going from **SIZE 1** to **SIZE 2**. This upscaling not only makes it easier to use its **GUARDIAN** trait to provide cover for its allies, larger ones included, but it increases its overall map footprint, allowing it to threaten more of an area with potential **OVERWATCH** attacks. As with its upsized cousin the **BREACHER**, the **SENTINEL** has had its **SPEED** slightly reduced, going from **5/5/6** to **4/4/5**, and once again due to its larger size equaling a larger radius of effective coverage.

SIZE
1

SNIPER

Artillery



TIER 1		TIER 2		TIER 3	
HULL: -2	SYSTEMS: +2	HULL: -2	SYSTEMS: +3	HULL: -2	SYSTEMS: +4
AGILITY: +1	ENGINEERING: +0	AGILITY: +2	ENGINEERING: +0	AGILITY: +3	ENGINEERING: +0
HP: 10	Armor: 0	HP: 12	Armor: 0	HP: 14	Armor: 0
Evasion: 10	E-Defense: 8	Evasion: 13	E-Defense: 9	Evasion: 16	E-Defense: 10
Speed: 4	Size: 1	Speed: 4	Size: 1	Speed: 4	Size: 1
Heat Cap: 6	Save Target: 11	Heat Cap: 6	Save Target: 13	Heat Cap: 6	Save Target: 15
Sensors: 15		Sensors: 15		Sensors: 15	

TACTICS

Rightly feared, **SNIPERS** are devastating when it comes to dealing focused, long-range damage. Using **SNIPER'S MARK**, they can deal direct structure damage, bypassing most conventional defenses such as **ARMOR** or **RESISTANCE**. Opponents can avoid this with clever use of cover, or by dropping **PRONE**. The **SNIPER'S** main downside is a lack of mobility, as their rifle possesses both **ORDNANCE** and requires a **full action** to either fire or reload.

OPFOR NOTES

- Long range and high single-target damage, but requires direct line of sight.
- The **ANTI-MATERIEL RIFLE** has a longer range than that of **SENSORS**, which means that acquiring **LOCK ON** against distant targets will require teamwork from allies.
- Works well on maps with elevated positions where it can acquire long, uninterrupted sightlines, and with allies that can support it with **ACCURACY** or help negate **INVISIBLE**.

BASE SYSTEMS

Anti-Materiel Rifle

Superheavy Rifle, +2/4/6, +1♦, AP, Loading, Ordnance
[✓20] [10/15/20 ♂]

This weapon does not gain **ACCURACY** from attacking **PRONE** targets.

Sniper's Mark

System, Full Action

A character within ✓20 and line of sight gains the **SNIPER'S MARK**. Against targets with the **SNIPER'S MARK**, the **SNIPER** gains +1♦ on attacks with the **ANTI-MATERIEL RIFLE** and may choose to deal **1 structure damage** instead of its usual damage on hit; attacks made against a character with a **SNIPER'S MARK** this way can't be redirected, rerolled, or forced to miss by hostile effects except for **INVISIBLE** and **DIFFICULTY**.

Characters know when they have the **SNIPER'S MARK**. They ignore its effects if they are in **cover** (i.e. behind **hard cover** or within a zone that grants **soft cover**) or **PRONE**. On their turn, characters with the **SNIPER'S MARK** may drop **PRONE** as a **free action**.

The **SNIPER** can only mark one character at a time, but can transfer the **SNIPER'S MARK** to another character within ✓20 and line of sight as a **full action** or whenever the **SNIPER** reloads the **ANTI-MATERIEL RIFLE**.

Climber

Trait

The **SNIPER** treats all solid surfaces as flat ground for the purposes of movement; they can move and remain stationary on any surface without penalty, including overhanging and vertical surfaces, although they begin to fall if they are knocked **PRONE**.

OPTIONAL SYSTEMS

Sharpshooter

Trait

The **SNIPER** can attempt a called shot before attacking characters with a **SNIPER'S MARK** using the **ANTI-MATERIEL RIFLE**. This attack functions as usual, with an additional effect on a successful attack. The **SNIPER** may choose from the following:

- **Target Head:** Targets must pass a **HULL** save or only be able to draw line of sight to adjacent spaces until the end of their next turn.
- **Target Legs:** Targets must pass an **AGILITY** save or be **IMMOBILIZED** until the end of their next turn.
- **Target Hardpoints:** Targets must pass a **SYSTEMS** save or become **JAMMED** until the end of their next turn.
- **Target Body:** Targets must pass an **ENGINEERING** save or become **SHREDDED** until the end of their next turn.

Shift Sights

Trait, Protocol, Recharge 5+

The **SNIPER** may transfer the **SNIPER'S MARK** to a character within $\checkmark 2$ of the currently marked character.

Defensive Grapple

System, Recharge 4+, Quick Action, Reaction

The **SNIPER** uses a grappling hook to fly to any free space that ends on an object or surface within $\checkmark 5$, including vertical and overhanging surfaces. The **SNIPER** also gains the **RELOCATION** reaction.

Relocation

Reaction, 1/round

Trigger: A hostile character in line of sight moves.

Effect: The **SNIPER** uses **DEFENSIVE GRAPPLER**.

Moving Target

Trait, Reaction, 1/round

Trigger: A hostile character in line of sight and $\checkmark 20$ moves.

Effect: The **SNIPER** interrupts the movement. The character must either immediately stop, give up all remaining movement, and fall **PRONE**, or they gain the **SNIPER'S MARK** (or it transfers to them if another character already has it); if they already have the **SNIPER'S MARK**, the **SNIPER** instead may make an immediate attack against them with the **ANTI-MATERIEL RIFLE**.

Deadeye

Trait

The **SNIPER** gets **+1♦** on attacks with the **ANTI-MATERIEL RIFLE** against characters that did not move their **SPEED** or more during their turns.

DESIGNER'S NOTES

There's a very unusual dynamic with **SNIPER'S MARK**, where in many cases, especially as you go up in tier, the **SNIPER** might not actually want to spend time marking a target versus just simply shooting them. And why not? Their weapon deals big damage with exceptional accuracy, and it already requires reloading, so any actions not spent doing either shooting or reloading is a big drain on the **SNIPER'S** action economy. There are cases where dealing **1 structure damage** directly, though certainly psychologically impactful, can be less effective than simply dumping **15** or **20 HP** worth of damage into someone and letting it overflow into successive structure bars.

So reworking **SNIPER'S MARK** was a big element of this rebake, trying to find a way to make it and the dynamic of hitting the deck to avoid it more worthwhile and engaging on both ends of the scope... this is why the **ANTI-MATERIEL RIFLE** no longer gains **ACCURACY** against **PRONE** targets, because going prone in *Lancer* doesn't mean it's harder to shoot you, quite the opposite in fact, which can make voluntarily going prone against a **SNIPER** feel kind of silly when what you're doing is just making it easier for them to score a hit on you anyway.

Rather than giving **SNIPER'S MARK** more raw offensive power, a thing I don't think the **SNIPER** needs, I've focused on making it more about the the impending threat, unable to divert or reroll the attack outside of things like cover or Invisibility... no **NOAH**, no **SISYPHUS**, no **CAMUS' RAZOR**, if the **SNIPER** has you marked, your choices are limited.

A number of the reworked optionals play into this dynamic, like **SHARPSHOOTER** (formerly **SELECTIVE LOADER**) and **SHIFT SIGHTS**. Maybe the biggest change here is to **MOVING TARGET**, previously a favorite way to juice the **SNIPER'S** action economy with free reloads or off-turn shooting, it now no longer enables the same sort of tactics it once did. Some GMs may see this as a big nerf, but I'm of the opinion that as ominous as **MOVING TARGET** can be, it's healthier for the **SNIPER** to not have ways to circumvent those particular restrictions.

Of the **SNIPER'S** defensive optionals, I elected to cut **SHROUD CHARGE** (functionally similar to the core rulebook **ASSASSIN'S CLOUD PROJECTOR**, renamed in this supplement to **SHROUD PROJECTOR** in order to really mess with people) in favor of the more distinct **DEFENSIVE GRAPPLER**, which neatly ties into the **CLIMBER** trait as well.

SIZE
1

SPECTER

Striker



TIER 1		TIER 2		TIER 3	
HULL: -2	SYSTEMS: +1	HULL: -2	SYSTEMS: +2	HULL: -2	SYSTEMS: +3
AGILITY: +3	ENGINEERING: +0	AGILITY: +4	ENGINEERING: +1	AGILITY: +5	ENGINEERING: +1
HP: 10	Armor: 0	HP: 10	Armor: 0	HP: 10	Armor: 0
Evasion: 10	E-Defense: 8	Evasion: 14	E-Defense: 10	Evasion: 18	E-Defense: 12
Speed: 4	Size: 1	Speed: 5	Size: 1	Speed: 6	Size: 1
Heat Cap: 7	Save Target: 10	Heat Cap: 7	Save Target: 12	Heat Cap: 7	Save Target: 14
Sensors: 5		Sensors: 5		Sensors: 5	

TACTICS

SPECTERS are mobile strikers that shine against foes that make the mistake of being caught alone. Use **PROWL** along with their high **SPEED** to get them across the front lines so they can find vulnerable solo targets, like snipers and artillery. **SPECTERS** are permanently **INVISIBLE**, which is key to their survivability; they aren't very resilient, but they can **HIDE** any time, provided their **TACTICAL CLOAK** isn't disabled.

OPFOR NOTES

- Mobile and difficult to hit, prefers seeking out isolated targets.
- Performance of the **MONOWIRE SWORD** degrades against targets with **ARMOR**.
- Works well alongside allies that can use forced movement to separate enemies from each other, and against targets that prefer to sit far in the backline without an escort.

BASE SYSTEMS

Monowire Sword

Main Melee, +2/4/6
[3] [5/6/7]

ARMOR is doubled against this weapon.

Prowl

System, Quick Action

The **SPECTER** moves spaces equal to their **SPEED**, then becomes **HIDDEN**. This movement ignores **engagement** and doesn't provoke **reactions**.

Tactical Cloak

Trait

The **SPECTER** is permanently **INVISIBLE**. As a **quick action 1/round**, a character can engage in a contested **SYSTEMS** check with the **SPECTER** to attempt to disable their cloak; all characters are aware of this. The **SPECTER** must be within their **SENSORS** for them to attempt this check, and it may be attempted even if the **SPECTER** is **HIDDEN**. If they succeed, this trait is disabled until the end of the **SPECTER**'s next turn. If they fail, the **SPECTER** may **teleport** their **SPEED**.

Hunt

Trait

The **MONOWIRE SWORD** deals **double damage** when no other characters are adjacent to the target besides the **SPECTER** (bonus damage is not doubled).

OPTIONAL SYSTEMS

Step

Trait, Quick Action, Recharge 5+

The **SPECTER** teleports to a **free space** within $\checkmark 50$ and line of sight.

Drain Systems

System, Full Tech, +2/4/6

The **SPECTER** makes a **tech attack** against an adjacent character. On a success, the target becomes **STUNNED**. This effect lasts until a character other than the **SPECTER** starts their turn adjacent to the target or moves adjacent to the target.

Lure

System, Quick Tech, +2/4/6, Recharge 4+

The **SPECTER** makes a **tech attack** against a character within **SENSORS**. On a success, that character must choose: move their **SPEED** towards the **SPECTER**, or become **SLOWED** and **IMPAIRED** until the end of their next turn.

Ghostwalk

System, Full Action

The **SPECTER** becomes **INTANGIBLE** until the start of their next turn and moves spaces equal to their **SPEED**. At the start of their next turn, their next attack with the **MONOWIRE SWORD** gains **+1♦** and deals **+1d6 bonus damage** on a critical hit. This effect does not stack.

Machine Pistol

Auxiliary CQB, +2/4/6
[$\checkmark 5$, $\ddagger 3$] [3/4/5 \ddagger]

The **SPECTER** can move **2 spaces** in any direction before or after attacking with this weapon. This movement ignores **engagement** and doesn't provoke **reactions**.

DESIGNER'S NOTES

Another NPC that once boasted tier-scaling multi-attacks, but no longer. With that dead and buried, the **SPECTER** is free to continue tormenting people with the other element that players everywhere hate, **INVISIBILITY**.

And players really do seem to hate invisible enemies, to a degree that is sometimes funny. Stick one invisible enemy in an OPFOR and that's the one they'll remember. The **SPECTER**, an NPC defined by being permanently invisible, is therefore naturally pretty infamous. Doing a ton of damage with multiple attacks, each of which is also getting an additional +5 damage due to **HUNT**, probably helps contribute to those unpleasant memories.

Both the **MONOWIRE SWORD** and **HUNT** have been refigured in this rebake to be less rude and encourage the predation of squishy, unarmored backliners, but in my infinite mercy I've also give PC groups too stubborn to pack a **LOTUS PROJECTOR** a way to address the see-through elephant in the room, baking in a way to break the **SPECTER'S TACTICAL CLOAK** directly into the trait itself. It's not the most action efficient thing in the world, but it isn't meant to be... much like **IMPROVISED ATTACKS**, this is something you do if you're desperate and have no better options and you really want to kill this guy now.

Out of all the NPCs with systems and abilities that cause **STUNNED**, I actually decided to let the **SPECTER** keep **DRAIN SYSTEMS** because I think its interactive dynamic is more interesting than **SAP** or **STUN MINES**. I then decided to lean into that angle and give the **SPECTER** another **tech attack** in **LURE**, and a fancier, **INTANGIBLE**-utilizing version of the old **WEAKNESS ANALYZER** in **HOSTWALK**, adding some **MOURNING CLOAK** flavor to things while increasing the amount of stuff the **SPECTER** can actively attempt beyond just sneaking and stabbing.

I kept the **MACHINE PISTOL** too. It's a very superfluous weapon in the core rulebook version outside of making heroic sacrifices for the **MONOWIRE SWORD**, but with a little bit of extra mobility attached to it, I think it serves enough of a purpose to justify keeping around.



SUPPORT

Support



TIER 1		TIER 2		TIER 3	
HULL: +1	SYSTEMS: +0	HULL: +1	SYSTEMS: +1	HULL: +1	SYSTEMS: +2
AGILITY: -2	ENGINEERING: +2	AGILITY: -2	ENGINEERING: +4	AGILITY: -2	ENGINEERING: +6
HP: 15	Armor: 1	HP: 18	Armor: 1	HP: 22	Armor: 1
Evasion: 8	E-Defense: 8	Evasion: 10	E-Defense: 10	Evasion: 12	E-Defense: 12
Speed: 5	Size: 2	Speed: 5	Size: 2	Speed: 5	Size: 2
Heat Cap: 8	Save Target: 10	Heat Cap: 8	Save Target: 12	Heat Cap: 8	Save Target: 14
Sensors: 10		Sensors: 10		Sensors: 10	

TACTICS

SUPPORTS are bulky mechs that can't deal any damage but have access to powerful **HP** restoration and condition-clearing effects. Despite their resilience, they have no way to defend themselves and need to remain close to their allies in order to be effective. **RESTOCK DRONES** are vulnerable to being destroyed before they can be used by allies, so be sure to deploy them carefully to ensure they aren't wasted.

OPFOR NOTES

- Fast and reasonably tough for a **SUPPORT** unit, but completely without any way of dealing damage to enemies outside of **IMPROVISED ATTACK**.
- While many traits and systems require adjacency or only work within $\nearrow 5$, longer-reaching **SENSORS** enables the use of supplementary abilities such as **LOCK ON** and **INVADE** from a distance. Up close, **RAM** and **GRAPPLE** can be used to assist allies as well.
- Works well against enemy compositions that rely heavily upon imposing debilitating conditions such as **IMMOBILIZED** or **JAMMED**, and can work together with a wide variety of allies depending on optional systems (such as using **DESENT HARDPOINTS** to increase the mobility of slower allies).

BASE SYSTEMS

Sealant Gun

System, Quick Action

The **SUPPORT** chooses a character within line of sight and $\nearrow 5$, allied or hostile:

- Allied:** The target clears all **burn**, but becomes **SLOWED** until the end of their next turn.
- Hostile:** The target must pass an **AGILITY** save or become **SLOWED** until the end of their next turn. Succeed or fail, a $\odot 1$ area around them becomes **difficult terrain** for the rest of the scene.

Restock Drone

System, Drone, Quick Action, Recharge 5+

Restock Drone (Size 1/2, HP 5/8/10, Evasion 10, E-Defense 10, Tags: Drone)

This **DRONE** can be deployed hovering in a space within $\nearrow 5$. The next time an allied character moves through or adjacent to the drone, it clamps on and discharges its reserves, letting them either regain **5/8/10 HP** or reload one **LOADING** weapon.

Nano-Repair Cloud

Trait

While they are adjacent to the **SUPPORT**, allied characters roll twice on all saves and mech skill checks and choose the higher result.

OPTIONAL SYSTEMS

Desant Hardpoints

Trait

Adjacent, non-**IMMOBILIZED** allied characters can climb onto the **SUPPORT** as a **quick action**. While riding, they occupy the same space, move when the **SUPPORT** moves (even if they're **SLOWED**), and benefit from **soft cover**. If they or the **SUPPORT** are knocked **PRONE**, **STUNNED**, **IMMOBILIZED**, or destroyed, they land **PRONE** in adjacent spaces. Riders can climb down as part of any movement away.

The **SUPPORT** can carry one **SQUAD** or characters whose own combined **SIZE** is less than their own.

Remote Cloud

System, Quick Action

The **SUPPORT** releases a $\oplus 2$ nanite cloud within $\checkmark 5$. Allied characters within this area gain $+1\oplus$ on all checks and saves. This effect does not stack with other **REMOTE CLOUDS**. The cloud lasts until the end of the scene, until the **SUPPORT** is destroyed, or until the **SUPPORT** uses this system again.

Remote Reboot

Trait, Full Action, Recharge 6+

The **SUPPORT** clears any two of the following conditions currently affecting an allied character in $\checkmark 5$: **IMPAIRED**, **JAMMED**, **STUNNED**, and **SLOWED**. That character may then either move up to their **SPEED** or stand from **PRONE**.

Empowered Cloud

Trait

When they start their turn adjacent to the **SUPPORT**, allied characters may clear one condition. The **SUPPORT** takes **4** \ddagger for each condition cleared this way.

Latch Drone

System, Drone, Full Action, Recharge 6+

Latch Drone (SIZE 1/2, HP 5/8/10, Evasion 10, E-Defense 10, Tags: DRONE)

This self-deploying **DRONE** clamps onto a character within $\checkmark 5$, occupying the same space and moving with them. While the drone is attached, the target regains **5/8/10 HP** at the start of each of their turns and gains $+1\oplus$ on all checks, saves, and attacks. Enemies can target the drone with attacks. Only one **LATCH DRONE** can be deployed at a time, and if a new one is deployed (or the **SUPPORT** is destroyed) the old one disintegrates and is destroyed.

DESIGNER'S NOTES

The **SUPPORT**, the NPC named for its role, is an interesting unit in theory, possessing virtually no offensive capability whatsoever outside of **IMPROVISED ATTACKS**. No guns, not even any hacks beyond the basic **Invade**, it is in theory the purest support that a support can get.

In practice? In practice it's a lot of optionals that overlap with each other (hey look, yet another way to clear conditions) or are of dubious value (a full action **Recharge 6+** to let someone regain... **2 HP**).

Most of the changes are in the optionals list, which is full of clunkers. You do not need both **REMOTE REBOOT** and **DEFENSIVE PULSE**, pick one and stick with it. I stuck with **REMOTE REBOOT** and jazzed it up a bit, then made **REMOTE CLOUD** more worth taking by replacing its negligible **HP** restoration with something more distinct.

Of course, it wouldn't be an I-can't-believe-it's-not-a-**LANCASTER** without its own version of **MULE HARNESS**, opening up a new dimension of allied mobility enhancement. That plus a base **SPEED** increase helps the **SUPPORT** respond to critical situations where proximity for traits like **NANO-REPAIR CLOUD** and **EMPOWERED CLOUD** (yeah I kept that one too, but I gave it a **heat** tax so you can't get too comfortable with the free condition clears) is vital.

Baseline, it's largely the same except that the **RESTOCK DRONE** can now help reload things for people who don't necessarily need the healing, just a little quality of life tweak to broaden the **SUPPORT**'s portfolio. **DRONE HP** values are also standardized between the **RESTOCK DRONE** and **LATCH DRONE**. I've been doing that throughout the rebakes where I feel it's necessary, shooting drones is already a bit of a niche use of one's time that I don't think the **LATCH DRONE** needs to scale the way it does.



WITCH

Controller



TIER 1		TIER 2		TIER 3	
HULL: -2	SYSTEMS: +4	HULL: -2	SYSTEMS: +5	HULL: -2	SYSTEMS: +6
AGILITY: +1	ENGINEERING: +0	AGILITY: +2	ENGINEERING: +0	AGILITY: +3	ENGINEERING: +0
HP: 12	Armor: 0	HP: 14	Armor: 0	HP: 16	Armor: 0
Evasion: 8	E-Defense: 12	Evasion: 10	E-Defense: 16	Evasion: 12	E-Defense: 20
Speed: 5	Size: 1/2 or 1	Speed: 5	Size: 1/2 or 1	Speed: 5	Size: 1/2 or 1
Heat Cap: 8	Save Target: 12	Heat Cap: 8	Save Target: 14	Heat Cap: 8	Save Target: 16
Sensors: 15		Sensors: 15		Sensors: 15	

TACTICS

WITCHES are no-nonsense controllers that use **TEAR DOWN** to inflict **heat** and **BLIND** to shut down ranged attackers. **PREDATORY LOGIC** gives them a tool to use against characters with powerful heavy weapons, especially ones with **LOADING** or **LIMITED** charges. Targets generally have opportunities to mitigate their more potent abilities, though this often comes at the cost of their actions.

OPFOR NOTES

- High **heat** dealing capability and access to powerful hard control systems, but has only limited means to deal actual damage.
- Multiple abilities gain power when used against targets in the **DANGER ZONE**. Prioritize dangerous foes and use **TEAR DOWN** to quickly ramp their heat higher, or take advantage of enemies that put themselves in the **DANGER ZONE** for various benefits.
- Works well against targets that accumulate self-heat, and against ranged attackers reliant on heavy weapons.

BASE SYSTEMS

Tear Down

System, Quick Tech, +2/4/6

The **WITCH** makes a **tech attack** against a character within **SENSORS**. On a success, the target takes **1/2/3** \ddagger immediately, and then a further **4** \ddagger at the start of the **WITCH**'s next turn; this effect does not stack. If an affected target or an adjacent hostile character takes the **STABILIZE** action, they can choose to end the effect of this system in place of cooling their mech.

Blind

System, Full Tech, +2/4/6

The **WITCH** makes a **tech attack** against a character within **SENSORS**. On a success, the target takes **2/3/4** \ddagger and must pass a **SYSTEMS** save or only be able to draw line of sight to adjacent spaces until the end of their next turn. If the target succeeds, they become **IMPAIRED** until the end of their next turn instead. Characters in the **DANGER ZONE** make this save with **+1** \ominus .

Predatory Logic

System, Quick Tech, +2/4/6, +1 \oplus , Recharge 6+

The **WITCH** makes a **tech attack** against a hostile character within **SENSORS**. On a success, the target immediately uses a non-**SUPERHEAVY** weapon chosen by the **WITCH** to attack a character within **RANGE** also chosen by the **WITCH** as a **reaction**. If the target takes the **BRACE** reaction in response to this **tech attack**, they ignore the effect of this system; characters in the **DANGER ZONE** can't take the **BRACE** reaction against this attack.

Blur

Trait

The **WITCH** counts as **INVISIBLE** against characters in the **DANGER ZONE**.

OPTIONAL SYSTEMS

Dark Cloud

Trait

The additional **heat** dealt by **TEAR DOWN** on the **WITCH**'s next turn increases to **7 ⚡** if the target is in the **DANGER ZONE**.

Chain

System, Quick Tech, +2/4/6

The **WITCH** makes a **tech attack** against a character within **SENSORS**. On a success, the **WITCH** chains their target's systems to a space within $\sqrt{3}$ of the target. If the target moves more than **3 spaces** from that point (voluntarily or otherwise), they take **2/3/4 ⚡** and become **JAMMED** until the end of their next turn, but the effect ends. Otherwise, they are chained until the **WITCH** is destroyed or **STUNNED**, or until the end of the scene.

Petrify

System, Full Tech, +2/4/6

The **WITCH** makes a **tech attack** against a character within **SENSORS**. On a success, the target becomes **SLOWED** until the end of their next turn. When **SLOWED** expires, they then become **IMMOBILIZED** until the end of their next turn. When **IMMOBILIZED** expires, they then become **STUNNED** until the end of their next turn. Clearing any of these conditions (e.g. with **STABILIZE**) prevents further conditions from occurring on subsequent turns.

This system can't be used again while it is currently in the process of affecting a character, and it can only be successfully used **1/scene** on each character.

Pain Transference

Trait

Whenever a character takes additional **heat** dealt by **TEAR DOWN** on the **WITCH**'s next turn, all other hostile characters within $\sqrt{3}$ of that character also take the same amount of **heat**.

Immolate

System, Full Tech, +2/4/6, +1 ⚡, Limited 1

The **WITCH** makes a **tech attack** against a character within **SENSORS**. On a success, the target takes **burn** equal to their current **heat**. If the target is in the **DANGER ZONE**, all characters of the **WITCH**'s choice within a $\odot 2$ area around the target must pass a **SYSTEMS** save or take half the amount of **burn** that the target takes. On a miss, the target takes **2 ⚡** and becomes **IMPAIRED** until the end of their next turn.

DESIGNER'S NOTES

The **WITCH** is likely what most people think of when they think of a "controller," the ur-controller, tossing around debuffs and heat left and right. Its kit is loaded with dangerous and iconic abilities... everyone has a **PREDATORY LOGIC** story, everyone remembers the time a **DARK CLOUD** empowered **TEAR DOWN** blew out their reactor.

With that in mind, I wanted to keep the **WITCH** rebake as close to that as possible, but with a more refined identity, and what better for the NPC that defines threatening people with heat than having it gain power against targets in the **DANGER ZONE**? All those **NUCLEAR CAVALIERS** out there are about to have a real bad time.

The thing about the new **PREDATORY LOGIC** dynamic is that even using the core rulebook version, **BRACING** it still shuts it off, it just doesn't explicitly say so... **PREDATORY LOGIC** is an attack, you can **BRACE** against it, and then the "can't use reactions" penalty kicks in, and since **PREDATORY LOGIC**'s attack is a reaction, you're basically trading one set of bad outcomes (shooting an ally in the face) for another (the post-**BRACE** hangover). This version clearly spells it out just so people know it can be done, then takes away your ability to do so if you're sitting in the **DANGER ZONE**. Likewise, **BLUR** has gone from a relatively underwhelming trait (on-turn **INVISIBILITY** is rarely a factor in **WITCH** survivability) to something that can frustrate those strikers who like to run hot.

PETRIFY has received a big timing adjustment to its various stages so it flows more intuitively, and like **TEAR DOWN** now has a way for players to clear it, giving them more incentive to do so. **PAIN TRANSFERENCE** has been adjusted to hook into **TEAR DOWN** specifically, and to do so passively, no longer requiring a one-two punch setup. In the base kit, **BLIND** is no longer on a recharge to give the **WITCH** a more robust set of core options, but now requires a full action versus the quick that it used to, albeit with a consolation prize.

But of course, the flashiest new addition is **IMMOLATE**, a single-use ability to put the fear of **heat** in players from a different angle. Everyone thinks "what's the worst he's gonna do, hack me?" right up until their mech catches on fire.

BESPOKE GRUNTS

GRUNT

Variable

TIER 1		TIER 2		TIER 3	
HULL: +0	SYSTEMS: +0	HULL: +1	SYSTEMS: +1	HULL: +2	SYSTEMS: +2
AGILITY: +0	ENGINEERING: +0	AGILITY: +1	ENGINEERING: +1	AGILITY: +2	ENGINEERING: +2
HP: 1	Armor: 0	HP: 1	Armor: 0	HP: 1	Armor: 0
Evasion: 8	E-Defense: 8	Evasion: 9	E-Defense: 9	Evasion: 10	E-Defense: 10
Speed: 4	Size: 1	Speed: 4	Size: 1	Speed: 4	Size: 1
Heat Cap: N/A	Save Target: 10	Heat Cap: N/A	Save Target: 12	Heat Cap: N/A	Save Target: 14
Sensors: 10		Sensors: 10		Sensors: 10	

GRUNTS are specialized NPCs with the following rules:

Chaff

GRUNTS have **1 HP** and can't gain more, nor can they gain additional **STRUCTURE** or **STRESS**. Unlike other characters, they never take damage when they succeed on a save – regardless of the weapon or system used – but otherwise take damage normally. They are immediately destroyed when they take any amount of **heat**.

Rank and File

GRUNTS can't take templates.

Necessary Modifications

During scenes which take place in zero-g environments, **GRUNTS** may deploy with modifications which allow them to move normally.

Mass Produced

GRUNTS all have the same **Mech Skills** and **Core Stats**; these may be modified by their type. When creating **GRUNTS**, choose which type they will be; **ARTILLERY-TYPE**, **CONTROLLER-TYPE**, **DEFENDER-TYPE**, **STRIKER-TYPE**, or **SUPPORT-TYPE**.

ARTILLERY-TYPE

Choose either the **DMR** or **SHOULDER MORTAR** weapon:

DMR

Main Rifle, Ordnance, +0, +1♦
[✓15] [6/7/8∅]

This weapon gains **AP** against targets with **LOCK ON**.

Shoulder Mortar

Main Cannon, Arcing, Ordnance, +1/2/3, +1◊
[✓15, ♦1] [4/5/6★]

Targets with **LOCK ON** hit by this weapon take **+2 bonus damage**.

Survival Pistol

Auxiliary CQB, +1/2/3
[✓5, ♦3] [2/3/4∅]

The **ARTILLERY-TYPE** can move **2 spaces** in any direction before or after attacking with this weapon. This movement ignores **engagement** and doesn't provoke **reactions**.

Reflex Targeting

Trait

The **ARTILLERY-TYPE** has **+5 SENSORS**, and may take the **LOCK ON** and **SEARCH** actions before attacking with **ORDNANCE** weapons.

CONTROLLER-TYPE**Hostile Sync**

System, Full Tech

Choose a hostile character within **SENSORS**. While this ability is active, the **CONTROLLER-TYPE** is **IMMOBILIZED** but that character becomes **IMPAIRED**. This effect lasts until the **CONTROLLER-TYPE** ends it as a **protocol** or until they are destroyed.

Destabilize

System, Quick Tech, +1/2/3

The **CONTROLLER-TYPE** makes a **tech attack** against a character within **SENSORS**. On a success, the target is pushed **2 spaces** in any direction and must pass a **SYSTEMS** save or be knocked **Prone**.

Electro-Chaff

System, Quick Action, Limited 1

The **CONTROLLER-TYPE** creates an electro-chaff zone in a free $\oplus 1$ area within $\checkmark 5$ that lasts until the end of the scene. Hostile characters that start their turn in the area or move into it for the first time on their turn take **2/3/4 ⚡** and must pass a **SYSTEMS** save or become **SLOWED** until the end of their next turn. A character can disperse this area by passing a **SYSTEMS** check as a **quick action** while adjacent to it.

Reinforced Systems

Trait

The **CONTROLLER-TYPE** has **+2 E-DEFENSE** and ignores the first amount of **heat** they take during the scene.

DEFENDER-TYPE**Shotgun**Main CQB, Knockback 2, +1/2/3
[$\checkmark 5$, $\otimes 3$] [4/5/6 ⚡]**Interpose**

Trait, Reaction, Limited 1

Trigger: An allied character adjacent to the **DEFENDER-TYPE** is hit by a non-**SUPERHEAVY** ranged or melee attack.

Effect: That character gains **RESISTANCE** to the triggering attack. The **DEFENDER-TYPE** is then destroyed.

Ablative Armor

Trait

The **DEFENDER-TYPE** is **SIZE 2**, and begins each combat with **3/4/5 Overshield**.

Guardian

Trait

Adjacent allied characters can use the **DEFENDER-TYPE** for **hard cover**.

STRIKER-TYPE

Choose either the **ASSAULT RIFLE** or **HEAVY BLADE** weapon. If you choose **HEAVY BLADE**, the **STRIKER-TYPE** has **+2 SPEED**:

Assault RifleMain Rifle, +1/2/3
[$\checkmark 10$] [4/5/6 ⚡]

On Critical Hit: The **STRIKER-TYPE** deals **+2 bonus damage** and may immediately **BOOST** as a **free action**.

Heavy BladeHeavy Melee, Knockback 1, +2/4/6
[$\otimes 1$] [6/7/8 ⚡]

On Critical Hit: The target must pass a **HULL** save or be knocked **PRONE**.

Double Time

Trait, Protocol, Limited 1

The **STRIKER-TYPE** moves up to their **SPEED** in any direction.

Assault Armor

Trait

The **STRIKER-TYPE** has **+2 Evasion** and **+1 Armor**.

SUPPORT-TYPE**Power Transmission**

System, Full Action

An allied character within $\checkmark 5$ gains **+1 ⚡** to all attacks, checks, and saves until the start of the **SUPPORT-TYPE**'s next turn. This effect does not stack, and it immediately ends if the **SUPPORT-TYPE** is destroyed.

Recon Drones

System, Full Action

A hostile character within **SENSORS** gains **LOCK ON**, then an allied character within **SENSORS** may move **2 spaces** in any direction.

Stabilizer Drones

System, Quick Action, Limited 1

An allied character within **SENSORS** gains **3/4/5 Overshield** and clears **IMPAIRED** and **SLOWED**.

DESIGNER'S NOTES

The biggest fundamental issue with the **GRUNT** template is that it's simultaneously meant to encapsulate 30+ distinct NPC classes, none of which were designed with "being grunts" in mind. This makes creating and assigning grunts to an OPFOR a much more difficult task than many GMs assume, which inevitably leads to the extremely common occurrence where a new GM goes "oh, **ASSAULT GRUNTS**, I can use these as filler" and adds a half dozen of them, unaware that what they've actually created is a distributed **ASSAULT** that gets to shoot six times per round.

GRUNTS, as a unit type in tactical games, are intended to serve the purpose of pulling player attention in different directions, spreading out the number of potential threats they have to deal with across a wider area and diffusing their attacks by drawing them into weaker targets that, if left alone, will nonetheless pose a persistent problem. But the problem is that if those grunts hit just as hard as standard NPCs, it can be difficult to strike the right balance, especially when your prospective grunt pool runs the gamut from units with more modest damage all the way up to high-damage strikers and artillery units.

In my experience, grunts and similar enemy types are better served being designed specifically for that purpose, and so that's what these bespoke **GRUNTS** are for. Completely self-contained units built for the specific purpose of *being grunts*, no worrying about which of several dozen NPC classes to gruntify, no worrying about whether or not you should use optional systems, you pick the grunt for the role you want, you make at most one choice if it's one of the ones that has an either-or build decision, and off you go.

This does mean you don't have the potential breadth of variety that **GRUNT** as a template gives you, but my personal opinion is that the value in that choice is often illusory, that a lot of the NPC classes don't really make for great grunts, which is understandable because they weren't really meant to be. And handling grunts this way massively simplifies and streamlines OPFOR creation, which I feel more than makes up for it.

I would still apply these bespoke **GRUNTS** judiciously, probably not deviating far from the core rulebook's evaluation of **GRUNTS** in an OPFOR as being worth roughly 0.33 to 0.5 of a normal NPC when it comes to budgeting. Extra bodies and extra actions still have a weight of their own, and even with more deliberately bounded damage and to-hit values, they aren't something I would overuse any more than I would overuse any other non-**GRUNT** NPC.



SECTION 2

REVISED TEMPLATES

VETERAN

TEMPLATE FEATURES:

Reinforced Template Feature

The **VETERAN** gains **+1 Structure** and **+1 Stress**.

Veterancy Template Feature

The **VETERAN** gains **+1♦** on all checks and saves for one mech skill (chosen at creation): **HULL**, **AGILITY**, **SYSTEMS**, or **ENGINEERING**.

Limitless Template Feature

The **VETERAN** can **OVERCHARGE**. Instead of the standard cost, they always gain **1d6 ♫**.

Veteran Traits Template Feature

The **VETERAN** gains either a **General Veteran Trait** or the **Class Veteran Trait** corresponding to their NPC class.

GENERAL VETERAN TRAITS:

Feign Death Trait

The first time that the **VETERAN** is destroyed each combat, they are actually feigning death - they appear to be destroyed, but have **1 HP**. Characters adjacent to the **VETERAN** can reveal this with a successful **SYSTEMS** check or pilot skill check; otherwise, the **VETERAN** remains unnoticed until they move or take action.

Lesser Sight Trait

The **VETERAN** ignores **INVISIBLE** for characters within $\checkmark 3$, and hostile characters in $\checkmark 3$ can't **HIDE** (though they remain **HIDDEN** if they were already).

Lightning Reflexes Trait

Whenever the **VETERAN** is attacked using any **HEAVY** or **SUPERHEAVY** weapon, first roll **1d6**. On **5+**, the attack automatically misses. This effect does not stack with **INVISIBLE**.

Parting Gift Trait, Quick Action

The **VETERAN** can **Self-Destruct** (see *Lancer* p.72).

Self Repair Trait, Full Action

1/scene, the **VETERAN** regains all **HP** and clears all conditions that weren't caused by their own systems, etc.

CLASS VETERAN TRAITS:

ACE

Air Superiority Trait

1/round, when the **ACE** hits a hostile character with a ranged attack, that character must pass an **AGILITY** save or immediately land if **flying** (this counts as falling without any damage), and additionally become unable to fly or take reactions until the end of their next turn.

AEGIS

Mobile Emitter Trait

The **AEGIS** is **SLOWED** while **DEFENSE NET** is active instead of **IMMOBILIZED** (this can't be cleared or prevented by **REGENERATIVE SHIELDING**).

ARCHER

Rock and Roll Trait

As a protocol, the **ARCHER** may choose to become **IMMOBILIZED** until the start of their next turn. If they do, **SUPPRESS** can be used against two targets instead of one and **MOVING TARGET** may be used **2/round**. Each target triggers and resolves **MOVING TARGET** separately, and a target damaging the **ARCHER** only ends the effect of **SUPPRESS** on that target.

ASSAULT

Commando Trait

The **ASSAULT** may move **2 spaces** before or after attacking with the **COMBAT KNIFE**. This movement ignores **engagement** and doesn't provoke **reactions**. The **COMBAT KNIFE** gains **Thrown 5**, and when thrown automatically returns to the **ASSAULT** at the end of their turn.

ASSASSIN

Whirling Death Trait

Whenever the **ASSASSIN** reduces a hostile mech to **0 HP** (causing structure damage or destroying them), they may immediately choose a new target for **ASSASSIN'S MARK**.

BARRICADE

Remote Assemblers Trait

When the **BARRICADE** uses **MOBILE PRINTER**, it can print cubes out to $\checkmark 10$.

BASTION**Close Protection**

Trait

Characters benefiting from **GUARDIAN'S** hard cover or being protected by **FRIENDLY INTERDICTION** may use the **BASTION'S ARMOR** instead of their own whenever they take damage.

BERSERKER**Rending Cleave**

Trait

On hit with the **CHAIN AXE**, the **BERSERKER** deals **2/3/4 ⚔** damage to a different character adjacent to either the target or the **BERSERKER**.

BOMBARD**Danger Close**

Trait

When the **BOMBARD** makes an attack with the **BOMBARD CANNON**, they may exclude one character of their choice in the area from the attack.

BREACHER**Leadwall**

Trait

Whenever the **BREACHER** misses all attacks with the **DUAL SHOTGUNS**, they may make one additional attack for free.

CATAPHRACT**Crashing Charge**

Trait

The **CATAPHRACT** may push characters affected by **TRAMPLE 1 space** in any direction.

DEMOLISHER**Heavy Tread**

Trait

All other characters treat a **⊕2** area around the **DEMOLISHER** as **difficult terrain**.

ENGINEER**Turret Nest**

Trait

All **DEPLOYABLE TURRETS** within **↙3** of the **ENGINEER** gain **soft cover**. While the **ENGINEER** is within **↙3** of four or more turrets, they also gain **soft cover**.

GOLIATH**Oppression**

Trait

When the **GOLIATH** uses **CRUSH TARGETING**, they may affect every hostile character within **SENSORS**. If they do, affected characters only take **+1 ⚔** to attacks instead of **+3**.

HIVE**Abrade**

Trait

1/round, on a hit with the **HUNTER-KILLER NEXUS**, the **HIVE** may force the target must pass a **SYSTEMS** save or become **SHREDDED** until the end of their next turn.

HORNET**Acrobat**

Trait

Any time an attack misses the **HORNET**, they may move up to **2 spaces** in any direction as a reaction.

MIRAGE**Sensor Lag**

Trait

1/round, whenever the **MIRAGE** teleports an allied character, the **MIRAGE** may teleport **3 spaces** in any direction as well.

OPERATOR**Spec Ops**

Trait

The **OPERATOR** is equipped with an NHP co-pilot and gains the **AI** tag. Their mech is autonomous and can even function without a pilot. This NHP ignores cascade and grants the **OPERATOR IMMUNITY** to **IMPAIRED**. The **OPERATOR'S** pilot can also **DISMOUNT**. While on foot, the pilot uses the **HUMAN** class and can take all actions available to PC pilots, including **JOCKEY**. When the **OPERATOR** is destroyed, the pilot can immediately **EJECT** before **SELF-ERASURE** (bringing the NHP with them).

PRIEST**Power Rerouting**

Trait

Characters linked to the **PRIEST** with **INVESTITURE** can **OVERCHARGE**. Instead of the usual cost, the **PRIEST** takes **1d6 ⚔**.

PYRO**White Hot**

Trait

The **FLAMETHROWER** does **+2 ⚔** on hit.

RAINMAKER**Concussion Warheads**

Trait

1/round, when the **RAINMAKER** consumes **LOCK ON** as part of a successful attack with the **MISSILE PODS**, they may knock the target **PRONE**.

RONIN

Angled Deflection

Trait

When the **RONIN** uses **REBOUND**, on a roll of **4+** they may choose to have the attacker repeat the attack against themselves or against another hostile character within $\sqrt{3}$ of the attacker.

SCOURER

Thermal Dissipation

Trait

Whenever **COOLING MODULE** activates, the **SCOURER** creates a **⊕2** area of **soft cover** around themselves that lasts until the start of their next turn.

SCOUT

Tactical Reposition

Trait

When the **SCOUT** uses **CLOAKING FIELD**, up to two allied characters within the affected area may immediately move their **SPEED** to any other free spaces within the affected area. This movement ignores **engagement** and does not provoke **reactions**.

SEEDER

Mag Mines

Trait

Whenever one of the **SEEDER's** mines is detonated by a hostile character, they may move all of their other deployed mines up to **2 spaces** towards the hostile character nearest to them; if two or more hostile characters are equally close to a mine, the **SEEDER** chooses one. All mines must end this movement in free spaces.

SENTINEL

Eye of the Storm

Trait

When **EYE OF MIDNIGHT** is active, the **SENTINEL** may attack with both the **COMBAT SHOTGUN** and **RETRACTABLE SWORD** each time it takes the **OVERWATCH** reaction.

SNIPER

Blinding Laser

Trait

Whenever a character gains the **SNIPER's MARK**, the **SNIPER** may force them to pass a **SYSTEMS** save. If they fail, they become **IMPAIRED** and **SLOWED** until the end of their next turn.

SPECTER

Silent Stalker

Trait

The **SPECTER** can become **HIDDEN** while **ENGAGED**, and while **HIDDEN** can move through (but not stop in) spaces occupied by hostile characters.

SUPPORT

Whitewash Coordinator

Trait

When the **SUPPORT** uses **SEALANT GUN** on an allied character, it does not cause them to become **SLOWED**. When used on a hostile character, the target is also knocked **PRONE** if they fail the **AGILITY** save.

WITCH

Enfeeble

Trait

When the **WITCH** uses the **INVADE QUICK TECH** action, on hit the target is also **SLOWED** until the end of their next turn.

DESIGNER'S NOTES

I don't care for the **VETERAN** template. So much of it is full of weird, unwieldy, niche, and sometimes unfun options that I end up falling back on the same handful of choices over and over. There is rarely if ever a time I find myself wanting to give an NPC an NHP co-pilot that does nothing, nor do I feel like being rude to the auxiliary weapon users in the party by giving someone **STEEL JAW** out of nowhere. I also find the way it scales by tier to be awkward and often unnecessary.

The impetus behind this revised version of the **VETERAN** template was both to create more interesting options, but also to do away with the experience of "poring over a list of choices and trying to decide which one I actually want." Originally, this template was just the class-specific traits (plus **LIMITLESS**) which would have made applying it as easy as "pick the template and check which trait you get, done," but I felt that adding a few general options would flesh things out just enough to keep it from feeling one-note or too niche.

I like the idea of class-specific upgrades, as it gives **VETERAN** units more of a unique identity rather than feeling cut from the same cloth. It also helps keeps things focused on upgrades that those NPCs in particular stand to benefit from more than being tossed a bunch of random building blocks and told to figure it out yourself. Should the **HACKER** trait go on the **WITCH**, or is that too much hacker per hacker? Will **HEADSHOT** be too annoying on this NPC, or too useless? With all the other decisions GMs have to make when building an OPFOR, I don't think the core rulebook **VETERAN** template provides sufficient payoff for the amount of extra effort it often involves.

Baking **LIMITLESS** into the base template was done for two reasons. First, this version of **VETERAN** no longer scales by tier, and so giving every **VETERAN** one additional base trait helps make up for that, and second, I think **LIMITLESS** is a good trait at providing texture to NPCs. It gives Veterans a dash of additional action econ in a way that's distinct from **ELITES**, more condensed into a single turn but not as broad as having two entire activations, and it applies self-heat in the process, which creates situations that players can respond to and exploit.

ULTRA

TEMPLATE FEATURES

Best of the Best

Template Feature

The **ULTRA** can't take the **ELITE** or **GRUNT** templates.

Resilient

Template Feature

The **ULTRA** gains **+5 HP**.

Reinforced

Template Feature

The **ULTRA** gains **+3 Structure** and **+3 Stress**.

Shock and Awe

Template Feature

The **ULTRA** takes two separate turns each round. They regain spent **reactions** each time they take a turn. If the **ULTRA** is facing five or more hostile characters when combat begins, the **ULTRA** takes a third turn each round.

Deadly

Template Feature

The **ULTRA** deals **+1d6 bonus damage** on critical hits.

Juggernaut

Template Feature

At the start of the **ULTRA's** turn, they may clear one condition. If they do, they choose one:

- Become **IMPAIRED** until the end of their turn.
- Take **5 ↘** that can't be reduced in any way.
- Instead of two **quick actions** or a **full action** during their turn, they may only take one **quick action**.

Auto-Repair Functions

Template Feature

At the end of the **ULTRA's** turn, they may repair one destroyed weapon or system of their choice. If they do, they choose one:

- Become **JAMMED** until the start of their next turn
- Take **1d6 ↘**.

Legendary

Template Feature

The **ULTRA** rolls all **structure damage** and **overheating** checks twice and chooses either result.

Reflex

Template Feature

The **ULTRA** can **OVERWATCH** unlimited times per round.

Advanced Kit

Template Feature

The **ULTRA** chooses 1-2 additional optional systems from their class.

Ultra Systems and Traits

Template Feature

The **ULTRA** chooses 1-3 options from the **Ultra Systems and Traits** list.

ULTRA SYSTEMS AND TRAITS

Aceso Flock

System, Full Action, Recharge 6+

Up to two allied characters within $\checkmark 5$ gain **4/5/6 Overshield**, and while they have this **Overshield** they have **IMMUNITY to IMPAIRED and JAMMED** (clearing those conditions if they already have them).

All-Theater EX Suite

System

The **ULTRA** can **hover** whenever they move.

Grind Maniple

System, Quick Tech, +2/4/6

The **ULTRA** makes a **tech attack** against a character within **SENSORS**. On a success, a swarm of tiny, hard to hit drones clamp onto the target, causing them to take **2▲** each time they take any action or reaction until the end of their next turn.

Harbinger Rockets

System, Full Action, Recharge 6+

The **ULTRA** launches a salvo of powerful rockets, targeting one space of their choice occupied by each hostile non-**DRONE** character within $\checkmark 30$ and line of sight; all characters know that these spaces have been chosen. At the end of the next round, these rockets impact, creating a $\oplus 2$ explosion centered on each targeted space. Characters in these affected areas must pass an **AGILITY** save or take **10/14/18*** and become **SHREDDED** until the end of their next turn. On a success, they take **half damage** only.

HOR_OS v?? Puppet Crasher

System, Quick Tech, +2/4/6, Recharge 5+

The **ULTRA** makes a **tech attack** against a hostile character within **SENSORS**. On a success, they take **2/3/4 ⚡**, gain **LOCK ON**, become **IMPAIRED** until the end of their next turn, and move their **SPEED** in a direction of the **ULTRA's** choice. This movement is involuntary, but provokes **reactions** and **engagement** as normal and doesn't count as **Knockback**, pushing, or pulling.

Ontolotactical Array

System, Limited 6

Whenever an allied character within $\checkmark 10$ attempts an attack roll, check, or save, the **ULTRA** may grant them additional **ACCURACY** on that roll by expending charges from this system; this doesn't take an action, but can't be used if the **ULTRA** is **JAMMED** or **STUNNED**. Up to 2 charges can be expended per roll this way. The **ULTRA** regains 1 charge each time they end their turn without having made any attacks or forced any saves, and each time they take **stress** or **structure damage**, to a maximum of 6.

Orbital Eye

System, Quick Tech, Recharge 5+

All hostile characters in a $\oplus 2$ area within **SENSORS** gain **LOCK ON**.

Repulsion Field

System

When hostile characters start their turn adjacent to the **ULTRA** or become adjacent to the **ULTRA** for the first time on their turn, they take **2/3/4 ⚡ AP** and must pass a **SYSTEMS** save or be knocked back **2 spaces** and become **IMPAIRED** until the end of their next turn.

Sidereal Realignment

System, Quick Tech

Up to three characters within **SENSORS** are pulled **1 space** in any direction of your choice. Characters that have one or more conditions (**IMPAIRED**, **SLOWED**, etc) may be pulled **2 spaces** instead.

Siege Shield

System

This system replaces **RESILIENT**. The **ULTRA** gains **RESISTANCE to all damage from attacks that originate beyond $\checkmark 3$** .

Slivershielding

System

This system replaces **RESILIENT**. The **ULTRA** becomes permanently **INVISIBLE**.

Short-Cycle Lance

System, Full Action

This powerful lance weapon automatically begins charging during the **ULTRA's** turn, which is visible to all characters. Set a **Charge Die, 1d6**, starting at **6**. At the start of each of the **ULTRA's** turns, reduce the value of the **Charge Die** by 1, then roll **1d6** as though this system was **Recharge 5+**: on **5+**, reduce the value by another 1. The value is also reduced by 1 each time the **ULTRA** takes **stress** or **structure damage**.

When the **Charge Die** reaches **1**, the Ultra may reset it to **6** and, as a **full action**, draw a $\checkmark 30$ path. All sources of cover, terrain, objects, and deployables smaller than **SIZE 5** are completely annihilated, and then all characters within the affected area must pass an **AGILITY** save or take **1 structure damage**. On a success, they are reduced to **1 HP**.

Suppression Pulse

System, Quick Tech, Recharge 6+

All hostile characters in a $\oplus 2$ area within **SENSORS** must pass a **SYSTEMS** save or become **JAMMED** until the end of their next turn. On a success, they become **IMPAIRED** until the end of their next turn.

Volley Module

System, Full Action

The **ULTRA** adopts a stable stance and prepares one of their weapons. On their next turn, as a **protocol**, the **ULTRA** uses the prepared weapon to attack any number of characters once, as long as they are within **RANGE**, and aren't in cover or **PRONE**. All characters are aware of this attack and can choose to drop **PRONE** as a **free action** on their turn to avoid being targeted.

Wolfhound Missile

System, Drone, Quick Action, Recharge 6+

Wolfhound Missile (SIZE 1/2, HP 10/12/14, EVASION 10, E-DEFENSE 10, Tags: DRONE, IMMUNITY to PRONE, SLOWED, and IMMOBILIZED).

The **ULTRA** deploys the **WOLFHOUND MISSILE** in an adjacent space and picks a target in $\checkmark 30$ and line of sight. At the start of the **ULTRA**'s turns the missile makes its own standard move, flying **4 spaces** towards its target, **8** if the target has **LOCK ON**. It moves directly, maneuvering around cover and terrain if needed. When the missile moves adjacent to its target, or collides with any character, it creates a $\oplus 2$ explosion. Characters in the affected area must pass an **AGILITY** save or take **14/20/28 ***. On a success, they take **half damage**.

Any hostile character that attempts to move a **WOLFHOUND MISSILE** (i.e. with **Knockback**, push, pull, etc) must pass a contested **SYSTEMS** check against the **ULTRA**. If they fail, the movement is ignored, and the missile immediately moves another **4 spaces** towards its target.

Argus Armor

Trait

The **ULTRA** has **6 ARMOR** instead of its normal value. Each time they roll a **structure damage** or **overheating check**, they lose **2 ARMOR** to a minimum of **0**. While at **0 ARMOR**, the **ULTRA** gains **+1♦** on all attacks.

Devastator

Trait

1/round, when the **ULTRA** makes a successful attack, they may deal **30 * AP** damage to an object or piece of terrain within line of sight. All characters adjacent to that object or piece of terrain take **3/4/5 ⚔**.

Greater Sight

Trait

The **ULTRA** ignores **INVISIBLE** for characters within $\checkmark 10$, and hostile characters in $\checkmark 10$ can't **HIDE** (though they remain **HIDDEN** if they were already). As a **quick action 1/round**, a character can engage in a contested **SYSTEMS** check with the **ULTRA** to attempt to disable this trait; all characters are aware of this. The **ULTRA** must be within their **SENSORS** for them to attempt this check. If they succeed, this trait is disabled until the end of the **ULTRA**'s next turn. If they fail, that character gains **LOCK ON** and becomes **IMPAIRED** until the end of their next turn.

Evasive

Trait

The **ULTRA** gains **+4 EVASION** (to a maximum of 20), **+1♦** on all saves, and **-1 Structure**.

Legion

Trait

The **ULTRA** gains **+4 E-DEFENSE** (to a maximum of 20) and **+1♦** on all tech attacks.

Limitless

Trait

The **ULTRA** can **OVERCHARGE**. Instead of the standard cost, they always gain **1d6 ⚔**.

Superior Shielding

Trait

This trait replaces **RESILIENT**. At the start of the **ULTRA**'s turn, the **ULTRA** chooses one damage type – **kinetic**, **explosive**, or **energy damage** – and gains **RESISTANCE to that damage** until the start of their next turn. The **ULTRA** can't gain **RESISTANCE** to more than two of these damage types at a time, whether from this or any other system.

Superior Construction

Trait

The **ULTRA** gains **+5 HP**. When using **JUGGERNAUT**, the **ULTRA** may clear two conditions at a time instead of one. Different costs must be chosen for each condition cleared this way.

Superior Frame

Trait

When using **JUGGERNAUT**, the **ULTRA** may clear either **SLOWED** or **IMMOBILIZED** by taking **4 ⚔** instead of the usual costs.

Superior Reactor

Trait

While the **ULTRA** is **EXPOSED**, all attacks against them are made with **+1 ⚔**. Whenever the **ULTRA** takes **kinetic**, **explosive**, or **energy damage** while **EXPOSED**, they clear **EXPOSED** immediately afterward and clear all **heat**.

Supreme Logistics

Trait, Quick Action

1/turn as a **quick action**, the **ULTRA** may either repair a destroyed weapon or system belonging to them or an adjacent ally, or reload one **LOADING** weapon belonging to them or an adjacent ally.

Supreme Melee

Trait, Free Action

1/turn as a **free action**, the **ULTRA** may **GRAPPLE** or **RAM**. The **ULTRA** counts as **1 SIZE** larger for the purpose of grapples (up to a maximum of **SIZE 3**), and on a successful **RAM** they knock targets back **2 spaces** instead of **1**.

Supreme Mobility

Trait, Free Action

1/turn as a **free action**, the **ULTRA** may **BOOST**. One allied character they start this **BOOST** adjacent to may immediately **BOOST** as a **reaction**.

Unstoppable

Trait

The **ULTRA** gains **IMMUNITY** to **PRONE**, and may ignore involuntary movement (**Knockback**, push, pull, etc) by taking **1 ⚔** per point of movement ignored; this damage can't be reduced in any way.

Hellfire Projector

Heavy CQB, +1/2/3

[△5] [3 ⚔ + 4/5/6 ⚔]

Attacks with this weapon create up to two **△5** areas, which cannot overlap.

HyperDense Blade

Heavy Melee, Knockback 2, Reliable 2/3/4,

+2/4/6

[☒2] [6/7/8 ⚔]

On Critical Hit: The target is knocked **PRONE**, and the **ULTRA** can make another attack with this weapon against a different target within range. Only one additional attack can be made this way per turn.

If the **ULTRA** adopts a stabilized stance as a **protocol** and becomes **IMMOBILIZED** until the start of their next turn, attacks with this weapon gain **+1 ⚔** and deal double **Knockback** on hit.

Miniaturized Railgun

Heavy Rifle, AP, Ordnance, +1/2/3, +1 ⚔

[☒10] [6/7/8 ⚔]

The **ULTRA** may ignore **Ordnance** when attacking with this weapon. If they do, it gains **4 ⚔ (Self)** and makes attacks with **+1 ⚔**.

Nova Missiles

Auxiliary Launcher, Seeking, +1/2/3

[☒15, ☒1] [4/6/8 ⚔]

If the **ULTRA** does not make any other attacks during their turn, they may attack with this weapon at the end of their turn as a **free action**.

Ravager Turret

Heavy Cannon, +1/2/3, +1 ⚔

[☒10] [4/5/6 ⚔]

This weapon attacks every hostile character within line of sight and **RANGE**.

Wraith Nexus

Main Nexus, Smart, +1/2/3, +1 ⚔

[☒10] [3/4/5 ⚔]

On Critical Hit: The target must pass a **SYSTEMS** save, or the **ULTRA** chooses one:

- The target becomes **SLOWED** until the end of their next turn
- The target becomes **SHREDDED** until the end of their next turn
- The target only has line of sight to adjacent spaces until the end of their next turn.

DESIGNER'S NOTES

The *pièce de résistance* of this project, the **ULTRA** is undeniably one of the most evocative elements a GM can add to their OPFOR. The **ULTRA** is, after all, supposed to be a foe on par with the PCs, if not strictly mechanically than narratively and in terms of vibes, and to fulfill that role they're decked out to the nines with all sorts of bells and whistles, many of which are designed to help ensure that they don't immediately eat shit and die upon contact with the players.

It's worth noting that **ULTRAS** are not raid bosses. An **ULTRA** isn't intended, nor designed, to be able to withstand an entire PC squad on their own, and this revised template doesn't attempt to alter that dynamic in any fashion.

That said, my feelings on the core rulebook's **ULTRA** template can be boiled down to two broad points:

- There are too many **ULTRA** traits which grant it immunity to various status debuffs on top of it inherently automatically clearing such conditions for free. While wanting the **ULTRA**, a significant chunk of the OPFOR budget, to not get hard crowd-controlled into irrelevance is understandable, layered immunities and auto-clears wind up creating a situation where player tactics are overtly encouraged to begin and end with "just shoot it until it's dead." This makes choosing such optionals a tricky proposition, as the wrong one can lead to a boring or unenjoyable fight without intending to.
- The majority of the **ULTRA'S** optional systems, traits, and weapons are focused around Defender- and Striker-type options... more guns, more defenses, more immunities, that sort of thing, without much in the way of support for other NPC types or roles. Sure, you can make an **ULTRA WITCH**, but you don't really get a extra witchy **WITCH** out of the deal so much as a **WITCH** that has damage resistance or a big gun or something.

And so these are the primary issues that this revised **ULTRA** template looks to address. For the first part, virtually all of the various "the **ULTRA** gains **IMMUNITY to X and Y**" traits are gone, replaced by traits which hook into an equally revised **JUGGERNAUT** template feature. The **ULTRA** can still automatically clear conditions, but now has to pick a cost to do so, some self-damage or downgrading the condition to **IMPAIRED** or losing some of their actions, and they have additional traits that can expand on this in various ways. This means that **ULTRAS** can still shrug off nasty conditions like **JAMMED** or **SHREDDED** or even **STUNNED**, but the players will still accomplish something with those debuffs.

The idea here is to promote more of a feeling of interactivity and reward a variety of tactics and abilities beyond just raw **damage** (or raw **heat**), and to make it feel less like a dick move on the GM's end to explore the breadth of options on offer.

It's worth noting that this does, objectively, mean that this version of the **ULTRA** is less "powerful," unable to easily shrug off as much stuff without cost or consequence, but this simply means that the point about **ULTRAS** not being solo boss fight material should be kept in mind when designing an OPFOR around an **ULTRA**. The flipside is

that without as many punitive hard-immunity type traits, GMs should ideally feel more confident in being able to pick what options they please and play as hard as those options allow for. Keep these adjustments in mind so you're not caught going "wow this seems like a nerf compared to my usual **Tier 3 SUPREME MELEE EXTRA DEADLY RONIN**."

On the subject of the revised **JUGGERNAUT**: taking **IMPAIRED** as a cost for clearing a condition does mean that certain **ULTRAS** will be able to do so with much less consequence. **ULTRAS** that don't make many attacks, for example, or that rely more on things like passive abilities or saves, will be able to do so without losing much. Plus there's the **RPV** template which applies permanent **IMPAIRED**, or the **AEGIS** which is immune to **IMPAIRED**. Can you combo these with the new **JUGGERNAUT** and always slam-pick **IMPAIRED** as the cost for clearing conditions? Yes, though at this point the outcome isn't really meaningfully much different from a core rulebook **ULTRA** in terms of condition clear, and still notably different in terms of things like destroyed weapon/system repair, to say nothing of other factors. If you decide you want every **ULTRA** you make from now on to be an **RPV** and/or **AEGIS**, that's up to you, though I think it'll make your **ULTRA** battles a bit one-note. Regardless, "these specific sorts of **ULTRAS** are more condition-resistant" is, in my opinion, still a significant step up from "all **ULTRAS** are this condition-resistant," and you can even look at it as a factor that adds more differentiation to various types of **ULTRA**.

To the second bullet point, I've added more options to the **ULTRA** in general, many of them focused on Controller- and Support-type systems and effects. **GRIND MANIPLE** makes its reappearance, parted out from the **HIVE**, alongside a host of new tech attack and utility options. New systems like **HARBINGER ROCKETS** and **ONTOLOTACTICAL ARRAY** give the **ULTRA** brand new capabilities that can significantly alter their role in a fight, while old standbys like the **SHORT-CYCLE LANCE** have been reworked to be a bit more dynamic and a bit less "the GM rolled hot on their recharge rolls and fired the SCL three times in a row."

Along the way, a few other **ULTRA** traits have been removed or reworked, mainly those dealing with making the **ULTRA** hit harder or attack more, such as **EXTRA DEADLY** or **SUPREME MELEE**. These traits have always been things that require the GM to walk a tightrope when it comes to balance... put **SUPREME MELEE** on an actual melee striker and it can quickly scale out of control, but put it on a less suitable unit and it can feel superfluous. As for **EXTRA DEADLY**, I'm just not really a big fan of "the **ULTRA** does even more damage at random intervals than it already does." I think it's okay for that to not be a thing.

There are also an expanded selection of **ULTRA**-specific weapons to choose from. A lot of optional weapons have been removed from various NPC rebake selections, and so fleshing out the **ULTRA** weapon catalogue felt like a good way to reincorporate that sort of thing (aside from cross-classing, of course). Nothing makes players sit up and take notice than seeing that *this* enemy, unlike the others, is also carrying a big sword.