

# SURFACE TENSION

The second adventure in the 'Legacy of Apoom-Zhah' trilogy  
*A Cthulhu Rising adventure by John Ossoway Autumn 2001*

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## KEEPERS BACKGROUND:

This adventure makes the assumption that the players have played 'SM01 The Dig', and requires at least one PC to be an officer (Officer Commanding: OC), and one to be a PsiCorps operative.

### 82 ERIDANI:

82 Eridani is a G5V main sequence yellow star located in the Outer Colonies, approximately 19.77 light-years from Earth. Four planets orbit 82 Eridani but only one orbits within a habitable region, the second planet.

### ARICEBO:

82 Eridani II, or Aricebo as it is known to the colony on the planet, is classified by the ICA as a class two colony world. When Hallidor Corp developed Aricebo as an agricultural colony, it needed minimal terraforming.

Aricebo's climate makes the planet excellent for growing crops, especially the genetically engineered crops developed by Biol Corp in partnership with Hallidor.

Aricebo is 78% landmass, with most water located in the northern hemisphere. It is here on the shores of this sea that Puerto Casado, the colony starport and capital city is located. In geosynchronous orbit above Puerto Casado is the Aricebo orbital cargo facility.

Aricebo has a population of 2.3 million, most dwelling in the northern hemisphere, where over 80% of the agricultural assets are located. The southern hemisphere is dotted with automated mines, mining metal from the ore-rich mountain ranges that dominate this region. Huge OCM tractors rove the steppe, piloted by company employees and private prospectors alike.

### THE ARICEBO CONFLICT:

Violent civil unrest has destabilised the Aricebo colony. Disputes over colonist share rights and living conditions has escalated into open conflict, which has now been raging for almost 4 months. Rebel union forces, backed by elements of the local ColSec garrison who have defected are fighting Hallidor security forces and ColSec troops still loyal to the ICA.

ColSec has declared the situation on Aricebo to be out of their control and as a result the ICA have ordered in the Colonial Marines.

Just days before the 8<sup>th</sup> ICM Marine Expeditionary Unit arrived at 82 Eridani, rebel forces seized control of Puerto Casado starport and are threatening to destroy the computer cluster that controls the interstellar beacon at the orbital cargo facility.

Marine Expeditionary Unit 8, comprising the 8<sup>th</sup> Battalion of the ICM is now in orbit and has taken control of the orbital cargo facility, but Command don't want to risk launching an assault on Puerto Casado until two objectives have been achieved:

1. A military Pathfinder vessel has arrived to serve as a temporary interstellar beacon should the computer cluster at Puerto Casado is damaged during the fighting.
2. Arrival of the 11<sup>th</sup> ICM Marine Expeditionary Unit from Wolf 359 (PCs company is part of this force).
3. A ICM staging post is deployed on the planet's surface, a safe distance from the fighting in and around the capital, to act as a supply dump for ground forces.

### PLOTS WITHIN PLOTS:

ICM intelligence believes that the force behind the rebels on Aricebo is a rival corporation working secretly against Hallidor. They are right: The Cheung Corporation, largest corporation in the Chinese Consortium, is supplying the rebel forces with equipment and military advisors, hoping to force Hallidor to pull out of Aricebo and sell their assets.

### BUT WHAT OF APHOOM-ZHAH?

With the patience of an aeons old cosmic entity, Apoom-Zhah sits now in the subconscious mind of The PsiCorps PC, waiting for an opportunity that will allow him to travel to Fomalhaut, where his father, Cthugha dwells. Such an opportunity soon presents itself with the arrival of the military pathfinder vessel Cook.

### WHAT PSICORPS AND MILISCI KNOW:

A fully functioning MiliSci R&D base now exists at Gamma Leporis IV, investigating the alien temple located on CS402.

In conjunction with Cenargo Corp and Psi Corps, it has been established that the temple is in fact an ancient prison, incarcerating an alien entity of unprecedented power. Somehow the events that transpired during the original Cenargo Corp funded dig and the ICM rescue mission have released part or all of the entity's life force, which escaped first into the mind of Oliver Black, then the PsiCorps PC.

After analysing the temple structure, MiliSci have constructed a prototype device that they believe will be able to extract the entity from a human mind safely and contain it indefinitely within a multi-phased meson field. As yet however, they have yet to test this prototype.

Even as the PCs arrive at the staging post from the MEU in orbit, a MiliSci vessel is enroute to 82 Eridani, it's mission to capture PsiCorps PC and place him/her in suspended animation, hopefully rendering Apoom-Zhah harmless during the journey back to their labs at Pandora...

### PLAYERS BACKGROUND:

*After a four and a half week sleep back to Wolf 359 on board the Romulus, you have been back at base a month before word of your next assignment begins to circulate the base. It is not long before the rumours are confirmed: you are shipping out with the 11<sup>th</sup> Marine Expeditionary Unit to help end the civil war at the Aricebo colony on 82 Eridani II.*

*You and the rest of Bravo Company are assigned to the Frigate Rommel, due to ship out to the conflict in 48 hours....*

### BRIEFING:

The Commanding officers and senior NCOs of Bravo Company join the commanding officers from the rest of the battalion for a briefing on the situation on Aricebo. Those present at the briefing from Company B are:

Captain Stiller	-	CO
1 <sup>st</sup> Lt Hernandez	-	EXO
Chen	-	Android EXO
2 <sup>nd</sup> Lt Drummond	-	1 <sup>st</sup> Platoon CO
2 <sup>nd</sup> Lt Christian	-	2 <sup>nd</sup> Platoon CO
2 <sup>nd</sup> Lt Kozlowski	-	3 <sup>rd</sup> Platoon CO
2 <sup>nd</sup> Lt Wei	-	4 <sup>th</sup> Platoon CO
2 <sup>nd</sup> Lt Finn	-	Aerospace CO

Sgt Franks	-	Gunnery Sgt
Sgt Hitler	-	1 <sup>st</sup> Platoon Sgt
Sgt Cleaver	-	2 <sup>nd</sup> Platoon Sgt
Sgt Kale	-	3 <sup>rd</sup> Platoon Sgt
Sgt Bitterman	-	4 <sup>th</sup> Platoon

### HANDOUTS:

Give the party OC the following items to serve as briefing information:

1. PCs copy of "The Aricebo Conflict" – a summary of situation on Aricebo
2. Information on the 82 Eridani star system
3. Information on Aricebo
4. Map of the Aricebo colony (map 1)
5. Information on the various military factions involved in the conflict.
6. Information on various vehicles and spacecraft involved in the conflict.

### ARRIVAL:

The journey from Wolf 359 to Aricebo takes 7 weeks. 48 hours before arrival at the second planet, the ship's computer wakes up the troops onboard each of the 3 frigates comprising the assault group.

The OC is summoned to the company briefing room by Chen, android EXO on board the Rommel.

### THE SITUATION REPORT:

*Sit down gentlemen.*

*We have received an update on the situation from the 8<sup>th</sup> MEU, which arrived in the 82 Eridani system 4 days ago.*

*Just days before the 8<sup>th</sup> arrived, rebel forces seized control of Puerto Casado starport and are now threatening to destroy the computer cluster that controls the interstellar beacon at the orbital cargo facility.*

*Marine Expeditionary Unit 8, comprising the 8<sup>th</sup> Battalion of the ICM is now in orbit and has taken control of the orbital cargo facility, but Command doesn't want to risk launching an assault on Puerto Casado until three objectives have been achieved:*

1. *The arrival of the 11<sup>th</sup> ICM Marine Expeditionary Unit from Wolf 359, that's us, gentlemen (PCs company is part of this force).*
2. *A ICM staging post is deployed on the planet's surface, 1100km down the coast from the capital, to act as a supply dump for ground forces.*
3. *A military Pathfinder vessel has arrived to serve as a temporary interstellar beacon should the computer cluster at Puerto Casado be damaged during the fighting.*

After fielding questions from his command staff, Stiller gives the platoons their assignments: Bravo Company is assigned to the staging post where they will join a battalion of Hallidor Corp security forces.

The 1<sup>st</sup> Platoon, commanded by the players OC is assigned to transport and med-evac duties planetside – any pilot PCs will be given transport duty piloting a heavy transporter, flying equipment from orbit down to the half-constructed base. The other PCs are assigned as guards on the flight (including loading/unloading).

#### **SERGEANT KALE:**

This encounter takes place whilst the OC is attending the briefing. The PsiCorps PC is alone somewhere on board the Rommel when he is confronted by 3<sup>rd</sup> Platoon Sergeant Kale and two grunts from his platoon, Banners and Vegilas. Sergeant Kale hates telepaths, and the encounter will go something like this:

Kale: “well well well if it isn’t the government spook.”

#### **STAGING POST ALPHA:**

The ICM staging post is almost two thirds complete, and is located on the edge of the town of Villa-Vincenzio, deep within ColSec-Hallidor held territory, approx. 1100km from Puerto Casado.

They land at the south end of the base with the other transports carrying Bravo Company (1 platoon per transport, plus heavy equipment).

Soon after landing, as Captain Stiller is assembling his command staff, a group of soldiers wearing the purple shoulder flashes of the Hallidor Security Force approaches. They are led by Captain Keyes.

PC non-coms help with unloading of equipment, and are then assigned their quarters. As they make their way across the base to the barracks the place is a hive of activity. There are Hallidor and ICM personnel everywhere, most involved in the construction of the base or the movement of equipment. The air over the base is filled with the whine and roar of dropships, fighters and transport craft that continually arrive and depart.

### **MISSION 1: SEARCH AND RESCUE**

Two days after arrival at Staging Post Alpha, the OC is summoned to see Capt. Stiller.

#### **The Situation Report:**

A ColSec shuttle has crashed approximately 500km north of the base, in forested foothills.

Captain Stiller has been ordered to send in a Search & Rescue team to the crash site, and rescue any survivors and recover the shuttle payload.

The mission is to be low profile: the shuttle came down close to Puerto Casado, site of most of the fighting on Aricebo.

OC is assigned to lead the Search & Rescue. He is to take a section from his platoon in a dropship and depart for the crash site immediately.

#### **THE CRASH SITE:**

The sky is overcast as the PCs dropship races low over the tree covered terrain, homing in on the locator signal from the ColSec shuttle.

Within minutes of picking up the locator signal, the crash site comes into view. From the air a line of burnt and smashed foliage stretches for a few hundred metres north of the shuttle itself, which has come to rest at the bottom of a wide forested valley, its nose buried in the red earth churned up by the crash. A thin pall of smoke drifts lazily from the blackened and buckled port engine.

As the PCs dropship nears the crashed shuttle a figure emerges from the side hatch and waves a white piece of cloth frantically.

#### **HOSTILES:**

There is precious little room to land his dropship, but a successful *Pilot* roll will allow for a safe landing about 60m from the crashed shuttle. Failing the roll will mean landing almost 200m away from the shuttle.

As the marines disembark, the figure can be seen to be wearing the uniform of a ColSec trooper. If the PCs go to his aid, the following happens once some of the marines reach the shuttle:

If there is a PC playing a pilot, his/her co-pilot hits him on the back of the head and shouts:

*“hey – check your sensors – we got bogies coming in from the north. I count 3 – no 4 – that’s 4 confirmed bogies.”*

The bogies are light gunships flown by rebels. About as big as a Bell UH-1, the gunships

carry a squad of 4 troops in each plus 2 door gunners, a pilot and co-pilot.

The pilot of the lead gunship detects the PC's dropship, and orders 2 of his flight to drop their troops early. The remaining 2 gunships accelerate hoping to catch the dropship on the ground.

#### **Rebel Soldier**

*Ex-ColSec*

STR: 14	Move: 3	RL: 8/5
CON: 13	HP: 13	LL: 8/5
SIZ: 13		AB: 8/5
INT: 14		CH: 8/6
POW: 12		RA: 8/4
DEX: 13		LA: 8/4
APP: 12		HD: 8/5

Attacks:	SR	A%	DAM
Assault Rifle	3/6/10	65	2d6
SSW	3/6/10	75	2d6
SADAR	4	50	3d6+6

*Armour:*

Combat armour (8AP)

*Notes:* The rebels carry one of the 3 weapons listed under attacks. All carry backup weapons, grenades and knives etc. The rebels aren't fanatics – if things go badly they will surrender to the PCs.

#### **Rebel Officer:**

*Ex-ColSec Lieutenant Alvarez, aged 33*

STR: 12	Move: 3	RL: 8/5
CON: 14	HP: 14	LL: 8/5
SIZ: 13		AB: 8/5
INT: 15		CH: 8/6
POW: 13		RA: 8/4
DEX: 16		LA: 8/4
APP: 14		HD: 8/5

Attacks:	SR	A%	DAM
Assault Rifle	3/6/10	65	2d6
SMG	3/6/10	75	1d10

*Armour:*

Combat armour (8AP)

*Notes:* Lieutenant Alvarez, like his men, isn't a fanatic or suicidal. If things go badly for his men he will order a retreat or surrender.

### **THE RESCUE:**

The ColSec soldier (private Mandela) is pleased to see the PCs. He explains that his shuttle was evacuating some Hallidor equipment and personnel from Puerto Casado when they were hit by a rebel launched SAM.

There were 7 people on board the shuttle.

#### **Warrant Officer Rogers (pilot):**

Rogers is un-conscious – she has several broken ribs and a broken collarbone.

#### **Corporal Wilson (co pilot):**

Wilson was killed during the crash. His neck is broken.

#### **PFC Mandela (guard):**

Mandela survived the crash with only cuts and bruises.

#### **PFC Al-Sadat (guard):**

Al-Sadat was killed by the explosion when the rebel missile struck the shuttle.

#### **Mr Morrison (Hallidor Corp):**

Morrison is dead, also killed by the explosion.

#### **Corporal Charvez (guard):**

Chavez has a broken arm.

#### **Mr Petersen (Hallidor Corp):**

Petersen is ok, and in the cargo bay checking that his cargo is ok.

### **THE CARGO:**

In the cargo hold is a crate 2m long by 1m wide by 1m deep, and is stencilled with the Hallidor Corp logo. Closer examination will reveal that the crate is designed to transport items in cold storage – a small console has a blinking green light and data readouts for whatever is within.

A *Computer Operation* roll to operate the console reveals that the crate contains a human body in cryogenic freeze.

If questioned about the contents of the crate, Petersen will say that the body is being transported off planet to Hallidor labs on Hallidon, and is part of an long-term medical research programme studying the effects of alien environments on the human body. It was donated to medical science after the individual died.

Whether the PCs believe this is another matter. Maybe all is as it appears and the body is what Petersen says it is. However paranoid PCs will be suspicious and this writer encourages Keepers to develop the crate and it's contents into an interesting spin off adventure if they so wish.

If the PCs survive, the return flight to Staging Post Alpha will be without incident.

### **THE LOST PATROL:**

A day after the Search & Rescue mission, the PCs hear that Platoon Sergeant Kale was killed during the night along with 4 other

members of 3<sup>rd</sup> Platoon, during a LRRP into the forest to the north of the base.

The last transmission received from the patrol stated that Kale was taking a squad of marines to investigate bright points of light seen to the west of the patrol's position.

Corporal Petrovic reported seeing a bright flash of light followed by gunfire. By the time he reached Kale's squad, they were all dead. Killed by the rebels.

#### **PETROVIC'S STORY:**

Petrovic has been debriefed by ICM, but if spoken to by any non-ranking PCs, will reveal that when he reached Kale's squad, they were indeed dead – but not killed by rebel gunfire. They were all burned alive. When Petrovic found them the bodies were still burning. What was strange was that none of the surrounding foliage was touched.

#### **THE TRUTH?**

What really happened to Sgt Kale and his squad? They were killed by Fire Vampires – servants of Cthugha summoned by Aphoom-Zhah while The PsiCorps PC slept. They were summoned to act as messengers to Cthugha who dwells at distant Fomalhaut.

The Fire Vampires went to find food to stock up on energy before their long journey. A group of humans out in the wilderness seemed the perfect opportunity to do just that, for Fire Vampires feed on the energy of all living beings. The coincidence that the leader of the humans was Sgt Kale is simply that: a coincidence. Paranoid PCs may see things differently...

### **MISSION 2: EVACUATION**

Two days after the incident with Sgt Kales patrol, the PCs platoon is ordered out on another mission.

#### **The Situation Report:**

A joint ICM-Hallidor mission to evacuate personnel from the Hallidor Labs is being put into action.

The Hallidor Labs are situated on high ground about 1km north-west of San Cristobal, a town over 1000km north from Staging Post Alpha. San Cristobal is the main colony town servicing the vast farmlands that dominate much of Aricebo's northern hemisphere.

1<sup>st</sup> Platoon Bravo Company is to accompany

elements of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Platoon, Fox Company, of the Hallidor Security Force 402<sup>nd</sup> battalion to the labs and evacuate personnel and as much equipment as possible.

Your transport will be a heavy transporter, with air cover provided by 2 Vulture fighters. Hallidor will also be using a transporter.

### **SAN CRISTOBAL:**

See Map 2. Population 0.38 million, San Cristobal is the main commercial centre for the colonists who live and work in the vast agricultural regions of Aricebo's northern hemisphere. It has all the features of a small colony city, including a fusion reactor power plant, ColSec barracks, direct monorail link with the other urban centres on the planet, basic spaceport facilities equipped to handle the transport ships that carry products offworld and an administrative centre.

Bitter street fighting has been raging in the eastern suburbs of San Cristobal for six days now, between Government troops (which comprise elements of the local ColSec garrison and Hallidor security forces) and a sizeable rebel force which includes well equipped ColSec defectors in its numbers.

The rebels have driven the Government forces into the south and west of the city, capturing the ColSec barracks and armoury in the process.

Government forces are currently engaged with rebels at the spaceport facility and in the administrative district of the city.

#### **LOCATIONS:**

##### **Administrative District:**

Located in the heart of the city is San Cristobal's administrative district. Much of the mirrored plexiglass facades and tree lined malls of the administrative district have been smashed and burned during the 6 day battle. Government troops are still engaged in heavy fighting with rebels in this area of the city.

##### **ColSec Barracks:**

Surrounded by perimeter walls and guard towers, the Colonial Security Force barracks at San Cristobal were built to house up to a battalion strength unit, including support vehicles and staff.

When the rebels attacked the city, over two companies of ColSec troops were present at

the barracks. At least a platoon's worth are known to have defected to the rebel forces, possibly more.

Rebel forces overran the ColSec barracks just over a day ago. In doing so they have secured a number of armoured vehicles and the ColSec armoury, which contained a sizeable supply of light to medium ordinance.

2 ColSec aerospace fighters have been lost to SAM-60 missiles during low level bombing runs on the barracks.

#### **Housing:**

Colonist accommodation accounts for almost a third of San Cristobal's buildings. The narrow walkways and rows of modular housing and retail units that make up the housing districts of the city have become a haven for snipers. The majority of San Cristobal's civilian population have fled the city for the outlying settlements, but the fighting has been so intense that a sizeable minority are known to be trapped in the housing districts.

#### **Main Roads:**

Many subroads criss-cross the city, but the main transport route that terminates at San Cristobal is in a different league. As wide as a six lane motorway and constructed from melted rock, this road is designed to carry large agricultural vehicles and ground transports. Several burned out examples can be seen on the main North-South highway.

This road runs from San Cristobal to Puerto Casado and Villa Vincenzia in the South.

Smaller roads run out east and west of the city. The west road bends to the north and via an underpass under the monorail it leads up to the Hallidor labs, while the east road runs out to the coastal estates of the company execs and colony leaders

#### **Monorail Station:**

The monorail route on Aricebo connects all three of the major urban regions on the planet. It provides a fast means of transport for colonists and for cargo. The monorail station is located just outside the starport facility. Think futuristic train station.

#### **Power Plant Control Centre:**

On the SE side of the city, this is the main control centre for the city's power supply. The powerlines from the fusion reactor 5km to the SE run into this complex of buildings. Power is regulated and assigned for use from here.

Government forces have based their command HQ at the control centre. It is heavily defended by ColSec troops backed up by Hallidor Security Force.

#### **Power Plant:**

5km south-east of San Cristobal is the fusion reactor that supplies the city with it's power. Resembling a huge domed metal structure on the surface, the majority of the powerplant is located underground.

Rebel forces have so far avoided attacking power plants on Aricebo. Nevertheless, each fusion reactor on the planet is garrisoned by ColSec troops.

#### **Shield Wall:**

The shield wall surrounds the entire city. 15 metres high, it is designed to protect city from the strong winds that occur during Aricebo's winter storms.

#### **Spaceport Facility:**

West of San Cristobal, just outside the shield wall is the spaceport facility. Smaller than it's counterpart at Puerto Casado, the landing fields can accommodate ships up to the size of the large transports that ship the harvested crops offworld. Thick black smoke pours from the ruined uplink tower, destroyed during the fighting. A grain transport, caught on the ground when the rebels attacked, lies with it's midsection split open. It has been burning for 6 days.

Fighting between Government forces and rebels is into it's second day at the spaceport. So far neither side has been able to gain the upper hand.

#### **Underground Storage Facility:**

Located next to the vehicle sheds at the East wall are the entrances to the underground storage facility. Crops harvested in the fields of Aricebo are stored in vast underground warehouses until transports arrive to take them offworld or to Puerto Casado. The rebels hold the underground storage facility, and it is suspected that this is where they have based their tactical HQ.

#### **Vehicle Sheds:**

Along the East wall are the huge vehicle sheds that house the vast agricultural machines and ground transports when they are not in use. Several of the vehicle sheds have been destroyed during the fighting. Rebel forces hold the vehicle sheds.

## HALLIDOR LABS (MAP 3):

Located on the high ground 3km north-west of San Cristobal is the Hallidor Crop Engineering laboratory complex. Here, Hallidor scientists study the effects of the alien ecology on new strains of genetically-engineered crops before allowing them to be cultivated commercially.

As the PCs ship approaches the labs, they can see lots of people milling around on the ground outside the large 'H' shaped building that is the main lab complex.

### LOCATIONS:

#### Landing Pad:

South of the main lab complex lies the landing pad. Large enough to accommodate up to 3 large transport ships, the landing pad is surrounded by a 10m high blast wall. At the southernmost end of the blast wall is the transponder tower that juts its jumble of communications masts over 100m into the sky.

#### Main Lab Complex:

A large 'H' shaped building, the main lab complex extends far below the ground into the hill on which it is built. On the floors above ground are the reception area, administrative offices and the living quarters and recreation areas for the staff. The labs themselves are all located below ground.

#### Perimeter Fence and Security Towers:

A 10m high electrified metal mesh fence runs around the entire site. Security towers bristling with state of the art surveillance devices and weapons are positioned at strategic points along its length.

#### Security Building:

Located at the main entrance to the lab compound and manned by Hallidor security personnel is the security building. All vehicles passing into and out of the compound must pass through here.

#### Vehicle Sheds:

North of the lab complex are the vehicle sheds. Transport vehicles used to move personnel between the labs and San Cristobal are stored here.

### ARRIVAL:

The transport craft rumble to a halt on the landing pad south of the main complex. As the marines and security troops disembark they are met by about a dozen men and women wearing coveralls emblazoned by the Hallidor

corp. logo. One, his name-tag identifying him as one doctor Ethan Grant, approaches the PC with senior rank and introduces himself. He explains that there are still people up at the lab complex, retrieving valuable company assets, and suggests the PCs and other troops should come help complete the evacuation.

### EVACUATION:

At the lab complex the PCs find about 40 colonists, some of whom are loading 2 trucks with equipment.

Lt Squires from Hallidor security takes command of the colonists loading equipment, while the PC most senior in rank must organise the remaining colonists and get them onto their transport. It during this operation that one of the colonists says she thinks there may be a couple of scientists still inside the lab complex. She remembers that Doctor Spears was worried about one of his experiments and took a couple of his staff back into the labs to retrieve what he considered to be 'some very valuable printouts'.

If questioned further, the colonist (Emma Sawyer, a biochemistry lab assistant) will state that Doctor Spears was working on gene manipulation of a 10<sup>th</sup> generation genetically engineered corn crop that Hallidor are developing. The gene manipulation labs are located on sub level 2. If asked, Sawyer will accompany the PCs into the lab complex and lead them to the labs.

As the PCs decide what to do, a radio message comes in from the pilot of one of the Vulture fighters circling overhead. Unidentified aerospace craft have been spotted inbound to San Cristobal from the SE – their current flightpath will take them directly over the Hallidor labs. The Vultures break off from circling the lab complex and roar away to the SE to warn the approaching craft away.

### WE GOT HOSTILES:

The following events take place regardless of whether all or only some of the PCs enter the lab complex looking for Dr Spears.

The evacuation is going as planned. All the Hallidor personnel are on board the ICM transport craft, except for a half dozen on board the other transport, and the missing 4 staff members.

A column of vehicles has emerged from San Cristobal and is heading for the lab complex. About 1.2km away, it can be seen that the

column is a mix of AFVs, APCs and light tanks. A radio message comes in from Government forces HQ in San Cristobal – elements of the rebel forces fighting at the spaceport have broken through and are heading for the high ground north-west of the city. Use stats for rebel troops listed earlier in the adventure. Mix the vehicles to a strength you see fit for your PCs. Same with troop numbers.

If your players crave a huge firefight, this is the place to do it.

### LOCATING DOCTOR SPEARS:

It is advisable that the PCs take a Hallidor employee with them to show them where the gene manipulation labs are.

If Emma Sawyer is with the PCs she will hurriedly lead them through the ground floor reception and offices and down a wide staircase into a large chamber containing 3 lifts along one wall. Two of these are designed for personnel (12 maximum in each) while one is a larger freight lift. There are also 2 stairwells down to the sub levels from here.

### SUB LEVEL 2 (MAP 4):

#### 1. Reception:

A large hexagonal chamber, where the floor and walls are a uniform grey colour. Entrances to the 2 stairwells are here. At one end of the room is a reception desk, behind which are security monitors (showing interior of all 3 lifts and the stairwells) and a signing in/out book, visitors passes etc etc. Behind the reception area is a wide entrance beyond which lie three 5m wide corridors.

**Corridor 1:** leads left. A yellow stripe along the wall is labelled 'visitors waiting room';

**Corridor 2:** leads straight ahead. A green stripe along the wall is labelled 'laboratories S2A-S2B'.

**Corridor 3:** leads right. A red strip along the wall is labelled 'security control'.

#### 2. Visitors Waiting Room:

A rectangular room. Comfortable looking chairs cluster around low coffee tables. There is a vid-screen on one wall, a couple of vending machines and a door that leads off to a bathroom.

#### 3. Security Control:

The armoured door to this room appears to have been forced from the outside. Inside the room are two individuals in unmarked combat armour that is camouflaged urban pattern.

These individuals are actually members of a 6 man commando team sent to Aricebo by the Cheung Corporation, the company secretly funding the Aricebo rebels. The team are there to steal company secrets, namely the current research that Hallidor are conducting into genetically engineered corn crops. The crops are engineered to grow in harsher conditions than normal, enabling their use on planets with borderline environments. They wear no insignia and carry nothing that would identify them as being linked to Cheung Corporation.

#### Cheung Corporation Commando

*Highly trained soldier*

STR: 16 (32)	Move: 3	RL: 10/5
CON: 16 (32)	HP: 15 (+8)	LL: 10/5
SIZ: 14		AB: 10/5
INT: 15		CH: 10/6
POW: 10		RA: 10/4
DEX: 16		LA: 10/4
APP: 10		HD: 10/5

Attacks:	SR	A%	DAM
Assault Rifle	2/5/9	75	2d6
Gauss Rifle	2/5/9	75	2d6+6
Rocket	3	75	3d6+6
Knife	7	70	1d4+2+1d6
Fist	7	75	2d3+1d6

*Armour:*

Battle armour (10AP) – urban pattern.

*Notes:* the commandos each carry 3 doses of combat drug, and there is a 65% chance that each commando will have administered a dose. If this is the case use stats and skills in brackets.

All the commandos look to be of Chinese or South East Asian descent.

The commando team will have seen the PCs arrive in the lift/stairwells on the banks of security monitors that fill the room. If any PCs approach down corridor 3, they will radio their comrades in lab S2A and warn them. One of them will then poke his assault rifle out of the security room and fire a grenade up the corridor. Roll PCs *Scan* with a –25% penalty to spot the rifle protruding from the doorway.

A *Luck* roll will result in only ½ damage from the grenade.

#### Commando 1:

Armed with an assault rifle, 3 magazines, 6 grenades of varying description, a combat knife and carrying a SADAR.

**Commando 2:**

Armed with an SMG, 5 magazines, 6 grenades of varying description, a combat knife and carrying a SADAR. She carries a compact electronics toolkit of the kind issued to comtechs and a sling carried portable comms uplink. The unit is locked out unless a 4 digit PIN is entered on the keypad. It offers a scrambled line to a waiting dropship within 5 minutes flight of the lab complex.

**4. Gene Labs:**

A square room 10m across. Out of each wall is a 3m wide corridor.

**Corridor 1:** a green stripe on the wall is marked 'laboratories S2A-S2B'. This corridor leads back to the reception area via the junction to the waiting area and security control.

**Corridor 2:** a sign on the wall here reads 'Sub Level 2 Lab Alpha (S2A)'.

**Corridor 3:** a sign on the wall here reads 'cryogenic storage facility'.

**Corridor 4:** a sign on the wall here reads 'Sub Level 2 Lab Beta (S2B)'.

**5. Sub Level 2 Lab Alpha (S2A):**

20m from the crossroads is the entrance to lab S2A. Watching the corridor from here is Commando 3 (see below). If his comrades in (3) managed to alert him, he will fire a burst from his assault rifle at the first colonial marine to appear in the corridor. He will then activate proximity mines he has secured to the corridor ceiling and grab his SADAR. Use the same stats as the commandos in (3).

**Commando 3:**

Armed with an assault rifle, 3 magazines, 6 grenades of varying description, a combat knife and carrying a SADAR.

Immediately upon entering the lab, there are 2 corridors (1.5m wide) leading left and right. Immediately across from the entrance is a wall covered in technology. Power conduits, blinking LEDs etc.

**5a: gene manipulation chamber:**

This room is sparsely furnished. A wall rack holds a row of environment suits. A computer terminal is the only other item in this room. There are 2 airlocks leading out here, opposite each other in the walls to the left and right of the entrance to the room.

Armoured glass windows look into the sealed rooms that the airlocks lead into. An intercom system is located next to each window.

Commando 4 is hiding in the airlock to the room where the 10<sup>th</sup> generation corn crop is growing (to the right of the entrance). She has a 50cm long silver cryogenic storage tube into which she is inserting corn seeds. A data disk inserted into the computer terminal is busy downloading Hallidor Corp. secrets.

**Commando 4:**

Armed with a gauss rifle, 3 magazines, 4 grenades of varying description, pistol, a combat knife and carrying a 50cm long silver cryogenic storage tube. She has a tattoo on her left shoulder (*Idea* roll: the tattoo could be reference to a military unit – if investigated upon the PCs return to base, the motif is the insignia of a unit in the ChinaCorps military.

**Search:** the computer is currently downloaded data from encrypted company files to a datadisk. The only unencrypted information of interest are brief details on the experiments going on in the hydroponics labs. Both are engaged in growing of genetically manipulated corn seeds. 8<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> generation.

Beyond the airlock where commando (4) was hiding is the unconscious body of a Hallidor employee. He has a nasty bruise on the back of his neck and needs medical attention.

**5b: testing chamber:**

A long room, with tables covered in scientific equipment lining the walls. There is an entrance at either end of the room.

**5c: data analysis:**

This room is lined with computer terminals. In here are the remaining 2 commandos, and the missing colonists. Doctor Spears is sitting at a computer terminal decrypting files for the commando squad leader. The other commando is restraining a female colonist.

The other colonist lies dead on the floor, shot in the head. Blood is pooling rapidly around the corpse. Dr Spears has been convinced by the killing of one of his assistants to comply with the commandos requests.

As the PCs enter, the commandos will both grab hostages and begin shouting at the marines to drop their weapons in broken English. The squad leader will immediately activate his comlink and inform the second squad outside to abort mission.

**Commando 5:**

Armed with a silenced SMG, 5 magazines, a combat knife, pistol, grenade launcher

currently filled with 3 proximity mines and a bandoleer of grenades of varying description. Also carries a small amount of plastic explosive and a set of demolition tools.

#### Commando 6:

##### Commando Team Squad Leader:

*Highly trained soldier*

STR: 16	Move: 3	RL: 10/5
CON: 16	HP: 15	LL: 10/5
SIZ: 13		AB: 10/5
INT: 16		CH: 10/6
POW: 14		RA: 10/4
DEX: 17		LA: 10/4
APP: 15		HD: 10/5

Attacks:	SR	A%	DAM
PPG	2/5/9	85	2d6+2/3d6+3
SMG	2/5/9	75	1d10
Knife	7	70	1d4+2+1d6
Fist	7	75	2d3+1d6

##### Armour::

Battle armour (10AP) – urban pattern.

##### Notes:

The squad leader is of Chinese descent, with greying hair and looks about 35. He will not answer any questions even if the PCs torture him.

If the mission is obviously a failure and he risks capture, his first priority will be to get an encoded message off to both the waiting dropship and the second team of commandos hidden above ground in the vehicle sheds. This second team is the heavy weapons team.

The dropship will fly in and attempt a pickup of the second team if the first team cannot be reached.

Any PCs above ground may witness this and become involved in a firefight with the second team (see later).

#### 6. Sub Level 2 Lab Beta (S2B):

Identical to lab S2A, apart from the crop age: in here 7<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> generation genetically engineered corn crops are being grown. The labs are deserted.

#### 7. Cryo Storage Facility:

This room is cold. There is an airlock at the entrance. Inside the airlock are environment suits, air packs, a medkit and some emergency equipment (fire extinguisher etc). Here Hallidor stores genetic material in cold storage until needed.

#### SECOND TEAM, MOVE OUT!

If your PCs are still after more combat, or if you just want to have an opportunity to prolong the adventure or get one of your PCs/NPCs

injured or killed, have the second team of Cheung Corporation commandos appear, waiting for their pickup. This encounter may be skipped if the party are in a bad way and need to pull out.

A small gunship appears from behind the hill to the north and drops out of site behind the vehicle sheds. If anyone goes to investigate they will run into a squad of heavily armed commandos climbing aboard. One commando is covering the retreat with his smart gun and the door gunner on board the gunship does likewise with an M88 minigun.

4 of the commando second team are wearing battle armour, 2 are in powered armour. These 2 are climbing into the rear of the gunship where the PA racks are.

##### Heavy Weapons Commando

*Highly trained soldier*

STR: 16 (32)	Move: 3	RL: 10/5
CON: 16 (32)	HP: 15 (+8)	LL: 10/5
SIZ: 14		AB: 10/5
INT: 15		CH: 10/6
POW: 13		RA: 10/4
DEX: 16		LA: 10/4
APP: 13		HD: 10/5

Attacks:	SR	A%	DAM
PPG	2/5/9	75	2d6+2/3d6+3
Smart Gun	2/5/9	75	2d6/3d6
SADAR	3	65	3d6+6
SMG (silenced)	2/5/9	65	1d10
Knife	7	70	1d4+2+1d6
Fist	7	75	2d3+1d6

##### Armour::

Battle armour (10AP) – urban pattern.

Notes: 2 of the heavy weapons commandos are armed with PPGs and carry 2x disposable SADARs each. A third carries a plasma beam and a silenced SMG, and a fourth carries a smart gun also with a silenced SMG.

the commandos each carry 3 doses of combat drug, and there is a 65% chance that each commando will have administered a does. If this is the case use stats and skills in brackets.

##### Powered Armour Commando

*Highly trained soldier*

STR: 16 (32)	Move: 3	RL: 12/5
CON: 16 (32)	HP: 15 (+8)	LL: 12/5
SIZ: 14		AB: 12/5
INT: 15		CH: 12/6
POW: 13		RA: 12/4
DEX: 16		LA: 12/4
APP: 13		HD: 12/5

Attacks:	SR	A%	DAM
PPG	2/5/9	75	2d6+2/3d6+3
M202	4	95	4d6:3mr
Vibroblade	6	75	4d4+1d6
Knife	7	70	1d4+2+1d6
Fist	7	75	2d6+1d6
<b>Armour:</b> powered armour (12AP) – urban pattern.			
<b>Notes:</b> these commandos wear powered armour, equipped with built in jump jets, a PPG and a modified M202 smart missile launcher.			
All the commandos look to be of Chinese or South East Asian descent.			

### RETURN TO BASE:

With everyone on board the transport craft, they blast off from the compound and roar away from the fighting back to Villa Vincenzia 1000km to the South.

### EJECT EJECT!

As the rescue teams soar away from San Cristobal and the Hallidor lab complex, a hidden rebel position south of the city fires a SAM-60 missile at the PCs transport craft.

One of the escorting Vultures, returned from their run-in with rebel craft ("shot two of the MFs down, the others bugged out") peels away, drawing the missile away from the bulky transport. Unfortunately, the Vulture is clipped by the missile during the manoeuvre, causing it to explode close to the fighter. The fighter goes into a spin, and the pilots of the transports see the 2 man crew eject to safety.

Do the PCs go and rescue the downed pilots or head back to HQ with the rescued colonists?

It is a decision only the party CO can make...

### BACK AT BASE:

As the transport carrying the PCs lands back at Staging Post Alpha, they are met by Captain Stiller and a platoon of troops from 3<sup>rd</sup> platoon.

Stiller orders the CO and the PsiCorps PC to join him at company HQ.

Once inside his office, Captain Stiller takes of his helmet and rubs his close cropped hair.

*"At ease gentlemen. It looks like the operation to take Puerto Casado can finally get*

*underway. A military pathfinder vessel, the UESV Cook has arrived in the system."*

At this point Stiller pauses, and frowns.

*"There's a PsiCorps officer onboard the Cook, a Lt-Colonel Richards. Apparently he's here with MiliSci authority and has orders for me to detain you (indicates the PsiCorps PC) until he arrives."*

Captain Stiller stands up and signals. The hatch to his office hisses open and 2 MPs enter.

*"I'm sorry (PCs name) but orders are orders. We'll sort this out as soon as this Lt-Colonel Richards arrives. You may be PsiCorps, but you've served my company well during your tenure."*

The MPs wear combat armour marked with the white "MP" badge and are armed with assault rifles (no grenades though). Fighting them isn't a good idea. It will get the PsiCorps either killed or arrested and out of the game for good.

The MPs take the PC to a holding area near the landing field and take up positions outside the room. He is disarmed and left in his officers fatigues.

### ENTER LT-COLONEL RICHARDS:

2 hours after the meeting with Captain Stiller, a sleek black Constrictor class gunship arrives at the base, marked with the Mu-Sigma Military Sciences motif ('MΣ').

Captain Stiller, the PC OC of 1<sup>st</sup> platoon, company EXO Lt Hernandez, the PsiCorps PC and 4 MPs meet the craft on the landing pad.

The ramp hisses open and MiliSci troopers wearing black battle armour disembark, closely followed by 2 officers, one a Lt-Colonel wearing Psi Corps insignia (think Sam Neill in *Event Horizon*), the other a Major wearing MiliSci insignia (think Brandi Svenning from *Mallrats*).

Everyone salutes and the Psi Corps officer introduces himself as Lt-Colonel Richards, and his companion (female) as Major Lovett from MilliSci.

### TRANSFERENCE:

Lt-Colonel Richards immediately orders the Psi Corps PC to be taken onboard his ship. When

Captain Stiller attempts to make a complaint, Lovett steps forward.

*"Gentlemen, your colleague is in good hands, and no harm is intended towards him. We are doing this for his own protection and yours."*

*Lovett pauses at this point and waits for Richards and the PC to disappear inside the ship.*

*"We have a possible bio-contamination situation here that needs to be contained. If we can go to your office Captain Stiller, I will brief you and your command staff as much as I can."*

#### **ON BOARD THE GUNSHIP:**

The Psi Corps PC is taken up the ramp onto the gunship, accompanied by Richards and 4 troopers. Once on board he is searched for concealed weapons and taken deep into the ship to an internal airlock marked with a bio-hazard symbol. Richards and two troopers take the PC into the airlock.

On the other side of the airlock is a small room fitted with a hypersleep capsule, standing next to which is Doctor Goodbody (the same that the PCs rescued at Gamma Leporis).

The troopers restrain the PC as Goodbody approaches with a tranq gun. As she does so Richards speaks:

*"Don't worry Lieutenant, this is for your protection and ours. We believe you have become contaminated by an alien entity during your recent mission to the Gamma Leporis system. We have developed a procedure that should enable us to extract it from your mind and into a containment field. Firstly, however, it is essential that we get you to Pandora ASAP."*

At that very moment, the PC suddenly blacks out...

It only appears to have lasted mere seconds, for when the PC comes to, he is lying on his back in the chamber, while an alarm sounds outside of the room.

*You become aware of an alarm wailing somewhere in the distance. You must have blacked out, because you find yourself sprawled on the floor of the room. As you sit up, you become aware that the two MiliSci troopers have their weapons aimed at you. One gestures to you with his rifle and speaks shakily:*

*"what the FUCK did you do psyker, what the FUCK did you do?!"*

*Just then, the airlock opens and Lovett enters flanked by two more troopers.*

*"What's going on here?! Where is Lt-Colonel Richards?!"*

*The guard points you again and answers:*

*"That fucking psyker did something to him sir, vaporised him!"*

*The trooper next to Lovett, obviously a senior NCO points at the trooper and shouts:*

*"You secure that shit Fryer, answer the Major's question."*

*Doctor Goodbody, who is now on the other side of the hypersleep capsule interrupts before the trooper can reply.*

*"Don't be a fool! Lovett – it would appear that Entity 402 has transferred itself to Richards. It's teleported itself away – we always theorised about molecular transference-"*

*Lovett interrupts:*

*"Ok ok – stand down trooper – it looks like what the telepath here (indicates you) was holding for us is gone."*

*She turns to the troopers flanking her:*

*"Sergeant Dinalt, search the ship for the Lt-Colonel. Taser guns only – we want him alive if possible. Corporal Wells, get me Pandora on SatComm ASAP."*

*As the two troopers disappear into the airlock, Lovett turns to you and smiles.*

*"I'm sure you will understand if we keep you here while certain checks are carried out to make sure that Entity 402 hasn't left anything of itself...behind?"*

*Activating her comlink, Lovett turns away from you and Goodbody and speaks quickly:*

*"Lt Chase, report to Doctor Goodbody in the bio-containment pod immediately, she needs your assistance."*

*Lovett turns back to you and before she leaves says one final thing:*

*"If your check out physically and psychically, I think you will be very interested to join the debriefing session."*

## DEBRIEFING:

A Psi Corps Operative, Lt Abby Chase, performs as psi-probe on the Psi Corps PC, and Doctor Goodbody performs some medical tests, but the PC checks out clean. The tests take 90 minutes.

He is then ordered to attend a briefing attended by:

Major Lovett, Military Sciences Division;  
Lieutenant Chase, Psi Corps  
Captain Stiller, CO of Bravo Company  
1<sup>st</sup> Lt Hernandez, Bravo Company EXO  
Chen, Bravo Company Android;  
1<sup>st</sup> Platoon OC (PC party OC);  
Psi Corps PC;

*Lovett enters the room and everyone stands and salutes. She waves everyone to sit down around the table.*

*"Ok ladies and gentlemen, here's the situation. We searched the ship, landing zone and the base with the help of Bravo Company, but were unable to locate Lt-Col Richards."*

*20 minutes ago, we received a signal from the Cook which is orbit. The signal came from the onboard android. It appears that Entity 402 has psychic powers beyond anything we have ever seen. The android reported that Lt-Col Richards was onboard the Cook and has used unknown means to effect some kind of change in the crew.*

*5 minutes after this message, the Cook then powered up it's engines and began to move out of orbit.*

*The destroyer Bradley is on an intercept course, attempting to disable the Cook before it can get into position to activate it's star drive."*

*Lovett pauses.*

*"The information you are about to hear is classified, and as members of the United Earth military you all know the penalty for leaking classified military intelligence to unauthorised personnel.*

*Elements of Bravo Company were involved in the rescue mission to the Cenargo Corporation funded archaeological dig in the Gamma Leporis star system.*

*There is now a MiliSci research base at CS402, the moon orbiting Gamma Leporis IV where a the alien temple of unknown origin was discovered by Praxis Mining over 8 months ago EST.*

*We have since discovered that the temple is some kind of ancient alien prison, built to*

*incarcerate....what? That we do not know exactly, except that the entity is ancient and totally alien, and possesses psychic powers the like of which are beyond anything we could possibly imagine.*

*Somehow, the actions of Cenargo Corporation and Professor Guggenheim have released what is now classified as Entity 402, which escaped by using the mind of Psi Corps operative Oliver Black as a vessel. Our scientists theorise that while Entity 402 could possess any sentient creature, it would not be able to use it's powers. However, once in the mind of someone trained to project their thoughts, a member of Psi Corps for example, the victims mind acts as a host from where Entity 402 can project psychic power.*

*We believe that Entity 402 jumped into the mind of (Psi Corps PC) in a similar manner, and has now done the same with Lt Col Richards.*

*Once tracing Entity 402 to (Psi Corps PC) we had intended freezing him in cold sleep, hopefully incarcerating it for transport to our base at Pandora\*.*

*Once there, we had hoped to extract Entity 402 using technology developed from our research at the temple on CS402. However now matters are more....complicated."*

*Just then a MiliSci trooper enters the room and rushes up to Major Lovett, whispering something into her ear. Lovett frowns and looks up to address you all.*

*"It seems that the situation has worsened. I have just received word that the Bradley failed to stop the Cook from jumping out of the system.*


*We have to move to our backup plan. Bravo Company is to be broken up into smaller teams and, accompanied by support personnel from Military Sciences and Psi Corps, will jump to possible star systems along the Cook's last plotted trajectory. The Cook is to be disabled and Richards is to be captured alive if possible."*

## THE END?

The adventure ends nicely primed for the final instalment of this trilogy I dubbed "The Legacy of Apoom-Zhah".

Bravo Company are shipped back up to the Rommel in orbit. Once on board the PCs and the rest of 1<sup>st</sup> Platoon are to wait for their passengers to arrive from Psi Corps and Military Sciences.

This adventure will be concluded in part 3 of the Legacy of Apoom-Zhah: The Stars Are Also Fire.

Planet 2 (Id: 2267): Aricebo								
Orbit radius	:	0.4 A.U.						
Type	:	Steppe						
Density	:	1.2 Earth density						
Diameter	:	11888 km						
Gravity	:	1.12 Earth gees						
Mass	:	0.973 Earth masses						
Escape velocity	:	11.41 km/s						
Atmosphere		:	Standard					
-Pressure	:	0.947 atm						
-Oxygen	:	0.134 atm						
-Composition	:	Nitrogen/Oxygen						
-Molecule limit	:	6						
Mineral resources:				Water : Oceans				
-Metal ore	:	70		%Water	:	22		
-Radioactive ore	:	40		%Ice	:	0		
-Precious metal	:	12		%Clouds	:	47		
-Raw crystals	:	30		Albedo	:	0.39		
-Precious gems	:	11		Boiling Point	:	98 °C		
Orbital period	:	118 days		Temperature:				
Rotation period	:	45 hours		Average Temperature	:	32 °C		
Orbital inclination	:	2 °		Effects of eccentricity	:	+/-0 °C		
Eccentricity	:	0.004		Maximum increase	:	+10 °C		
Axial tilt	:	16 °		Maximum decrease	:	-11 °C		
Magnetic field	:	0.22 gauss		Maximum day increase	:	+3 °C		
				Maximum night decrease	:	-22 °C		
				Equator increase	:	+8 °C		
				Polar decrease	:	-29 °C		
Satellites : 3								
Diameter (km)	Orbit Kmx1000	Type	Gravity (xG)	Atmos Type	Mine	Temp °C		
6104	713	Desert	0.62	Very thin	20/1/1/1/1	31		
792	1664	Chunk	0.07	Vacuum	13/1/1/1/1	23		
4964	237	Rock	0.27	Vacuum	16/1/1/1/1	20		
Unusual Characteristics: High Humidity								
Notes: 82 Eridani II, or Aricebo as it is known to the colony on the planet, is classified by the ICA as a class two colony world. When Hallidor Corp developed Aricebo as an agricultural colony world, the planet needed only minimal terraforming. Aricebo's climate make the planet excellent for growing crops, especially the genetically engineered crops developed by Biol Corp in partnership with Hallidor.								
Aricebo is 78% landmass, with most water located in the northern hemisphere. It is here on the shores of this sea that Puerto Casado, the colony starport and capital city is located. In geosynchronous orbit above Puerto Casado is the Aricebo orbital cargo facility. There are 2 other major population centres on Aricebo: Villa Vincenzia and San Cristobal.								
Aricebo has a population of 2.3 million, most dwelling in the northern hemisphere, where over 80% of the agricultural assets are located. The southern hemisphere is dotted with automated mines, mining metal from the ore-rich mountain ranges that dominate this region. Huge OCM tractors rove the steppe, piloted by company employees and private prospectors alike.								

## THE ARICEBO CONFLICT: OVERVIEW:

Violent civil unrest has destabilised the Aricebo colony. Disputes over colonist share rights and living conditions has escalated into open conflict, which has now been raging for almost 4 months. Rebel union forces, backed by elements of the local ColSec garrison who have defected are fighting Hallidor security forces and ColSec troops still loyal to the ICA.

ColSec has declared the situation on Aricebo to be out of their control and as a result the ICA have ordered in the Colonial Marines.

Just days before the 8<sup>th</sup> ICM Marine Expeditionary Unit arrived at 82 Eridani, rebel forces seized control of Puerto Casado starport and are threatening to destroy the computer cluster that controls the interstellar beacon at the orbital cargo facility.

## FACTIONS:

### **Colonial Security (ColSec) Forces:**

A regiment strength force of ColSec troops was stationed on Aricebo prior to the current conflict. Of these, at least a battalion's worth has defected to the rebel forces, taking with them a sizeable amount of weapons and equipment, including ground vehicles and aerospace craft. ColSec also has 2 Type 41 frigates in orbit.

The majority of the remaining ColSec force loyal to the UEF is located in and around Puerto Casado. During the rebel assault on Puerto Casado, the ColSec forces were split in half, with most of the force being forced to pull back north of the city. Echo Company, under the command of Captain West, was cut off from the withdrawal and is now surrounded by rebel forces in the city power plant.

### **Interstellar Colonial Marine (ICM) Forces:**

The UEF has deployed 2 Marine Expeditionary Units (MEUs) to Aricebo, in 6 Type 71 destroyers. Each MEU comprises of a battalion of ICM infantry each supported by a squadron of Vultures in addition to Cobra dropships and transport craft. Planetside ICM forces are concentrated in and around Villa Vincenzia, approximately 800km south of Puerto Casado.

### **Hallidor Corp Security Forces:**

Hallidor Corp has deployed a regiment of it's security forces to Aricebo. Prior to the conflict the company maintained a company strength unit to guard restricted company property at the colony. Hallidor forces are currently split between Puerto Casado and Villa Vincenzia. Those forces at Puerto Casado are organising the evacuation of colonists and other company personnel caught up in the fighting.

### **Rebel Forces:**

Intelligence reports estimate the strength of the rebel forces on Aricebo to be that of a division, well equipped with ColSec and captured Hallidor Corp weapons and equipment. It is thought that they committed a sizeable portion of their aerospace capability in the assault on the orbital cargo facility, most of which were either destroyed or captured by the 8<sup>th</sup> MEU during it's capture of the facility just hours ago.

The precise location of the rebel's main base of operations is at this time unknown, but thought to be somewhere in the mountainous southern hemisphere.

Support for the rebels amongst the population of Aricebo is thought to be running at 20-25%, placing it at approximately 0.5 million colonists. It is important to note that EarthGov and the ICA want the colony to be pacified with minimal loss of life; this applies to both the colonial population and to the warring factions.