

# WATCH THE SKIES!

The Megagame of Alien Terror

## HUMAN HANDBOOK



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*Megagame  
Makers*

# WATCH THE SKIES!

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*You'd better pray to the Lord when you see those flying saucers  
It may be the coming of the Judgement Day  
It's a sign there's no doubt of the trouble that's about  
So I say my friends you'd better start to pray*

*They're a terrifying sight as they fly on day and night  
It's a warning that we'd better mend our ways  
You'd better pray to the Lord when you see those flying saucers  
It may be the coming of the Judgement Day*

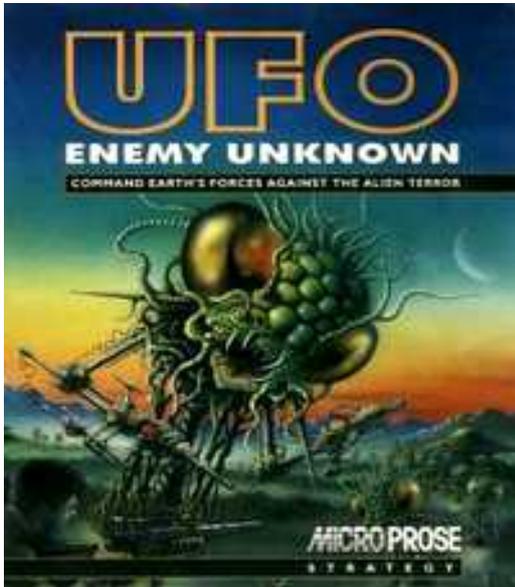
[Buchanan Brothers 1947]

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## INTRODUCTION



This megagame is inspired by the classic computer game 'UFO Enemy Unknown' and the more recent excellent XCOM game. Both games, whilst very absorbing at the tactical level are naturally thin on high level politics and diplomatic action. What I was interested in were some of the bigger issues facing a world under covert (or even overt) attack by an alien menace.

Hence a megagame.

The basic premise is that aliens from outer space are increasingly visiting earth to abduct, investigate, and terrorise. What is less clear are their motives. Are they ultimately aiming to subvert and take over, or perhaps render earth demoralised and weak

enough to invade, or is it some unfathomable motive comprehensible only to a twisted alien psychology? The truth is out there, somewhere.

The main part of the game is about how humanity as a collection of political entities decides to react to the current emerging crisis, alongside evolving global or regional crises that characterise our day to day world. Players will therefore have more than just space aliens to deal with – they will be responding to humanity as well

This handbook outlines the main game mechanisms so far as everyone on the human team understands them.

As the game develops so there will be new technologies, developments or events that may 'break' those basic rules. Control will explain if and when this happens.

So, enjoy your day ... and keep watching those skies!



**Jim Wallman**  
**Streatham 2014**

## GAME TIMETABLE

Each game turn takes 30 minutes and represents three months of real life activity.

9:30 – 10:00	Reception and booking in.
10:00	Welcome and introductory briefing
10:15 – 10:30	Teams get ready for the first turn
10:30 – 11:00	Turn 1 : Jan-Mar 2020
11:00 – 11:30	Turn 2 : Apr-June 2020
11:30 – 12:00	Turn 3 : July-Sep 2020
12:00 – 12:30	Turn 4 : Oct-Dec 2020
12:30 – 13:00	Turn 5 : Jan-Mar 2021
13:00 – 13:30	Turn 6 : Apr-June 2021
13:30 – 14:00	Turn 7 : July-Sep 2021
14:00 – 14:30	Turn 8 : Oct-Dec 2021
14:30 – 15:00	Turn 9 : Jan-Mar 2022
15:00 – 15:30	Turn 10 : Apr-June 2022
15:30 – 16:00	Turn 11 : July-Sep 2022
16:00 – 16:30	Turn 12 : Oct-Dec 2022
16:30	Plenary Debriefing
17:00	Clear up and leave



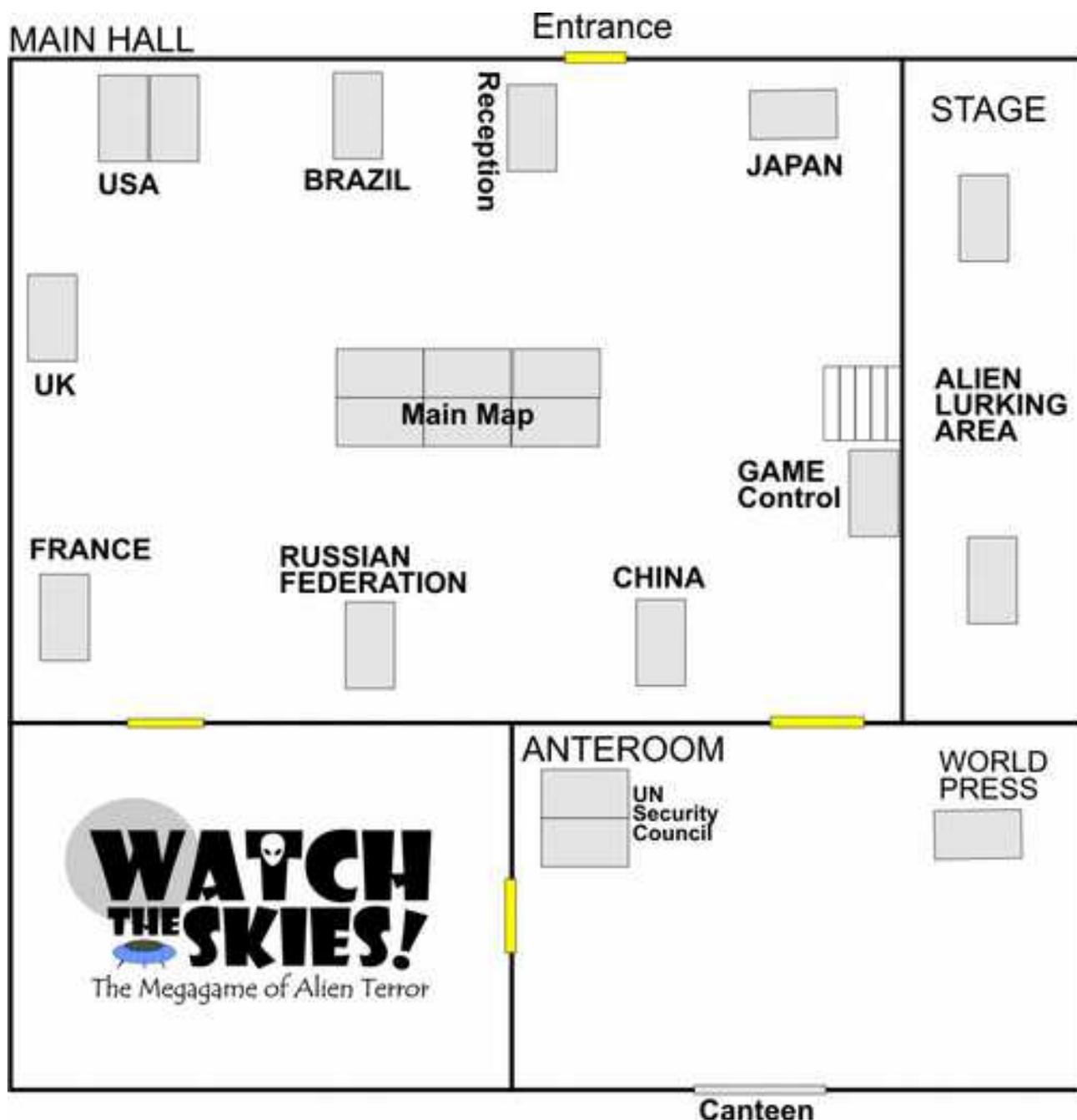
## GAME LAYOUT

Human teams of players will have their own table, with information as to their efforts to counter the Alien Menace.

The Aliens will Lurk in some dark corner of the hall, and concoct their grisly schemes (probably on a table).

The centre of action is a large map of the Earth, open to all. Interactions between the various unit types will take place on that map.

Political interactions and other communications take place off map.



## PLAYER ROLES

### Head of State / Deputy Head of State

The Head of State / Government leads and coordinates the team. The amount of autonomy as to decision-making depends on the political system. (See your individual team's National briefing).

### Foreign Minister / Diplomat

The Foreign Minister is the focal point for communication with other teams. Generally they will circulate, chatting and finding out things during the game. They can also task Agents, by passing instructions to the Command Player each turn.

The Foreign Minister will also be the team's default representative at the UN Security Council meetings.

### Chief of Defence Staff

This role is usually the Command Player (see below) responsible for the deployment and actions of all military units, including the advanced units used to intercept aliens. The Military player also keeps the team informed of the detail of action on the main map – perhaps reporting trends in alien activity, and the activity of other teams. This is the main means of following action on the main map for the other team members.

### Chief Scientist

Collecting alien technologies and deciding on priorities for research. Advising the team on options for further study, suggesting priorities for recovering specific items. Possibly also boasting about national scientific progress when meeting other Chief Scientists.

### Global Network News

The world media are represented by a Global Network News (GNN) team. They will be circulating among the teams recording interviews, videos and producing materials that reflect the current world situation.

GNN are serious journalists who will be busy all day. Teams can help them by providing press releases – though there are no guarantees that those press releases will be published unedited.



## TURN SEQUENCE & ACTIONS

During each turn, each human team has ONE designated Command Player (the aliens may have more than one). The Command Player is the **only** person from the team that goes to the main map and does things. Other players may not gather at the Main Map. The aim is that the map action is resolved in less than about 15 minutes, allowing time for Command Players to report back to their teams, and the teams to decide what to do next. At the same time the UN Security Council will be meeting to resolve the issues of the day. The other members of the team will be discussing their plans, and communicating or negotiating with other teams.

## Sequence of Play

There are two parallel themes – political and operational.

The **political theme** consists of semi-permanent sessions of the UN Security Council. The security council will be wrestling with a range of global issues.

The **operational theme** consists of military operations against the alien menace, or dealing with matters of global security etc.

Phase	Political	Operational	Time
1	UN Delegations go to the Security Council table	Players allocate resources (RP) on their base chart. These allocations are then fixed for the entire turn.	1 minute
2	UN Delegations at the Security Council discuss current issues and crises.	Command Players place units and resources on the map. RP allocated to Operations come with the unit markers and are placed on the map to indicate that the action has been paid for.	4 minutes
		Aliens place resources on the map (having seen what the humans have done)	
3	Draft and agree on any Security Council Resolutions	Resolve outcome of map actions and Collect item cards.	5 minutes
4		Resolve infiltration / agent actions	5 minutes
5	All Diplomats aim to return to their team to report back.	ALL command players MUST return to their tables – Human Advanced units and RP are collected from the main map. Conventional Battlegroups, Militia and Fleets remain on the map.	A few seconds
6	<b>Public Opinion Die Roll + TEAM DISCUSSION AND PLANNING FOR NEXT TURN</b>		15 minutes

## COMMUNICATION

Players may move freely between human player tables to communicate. Only Command Players can go to the Main World Map.

Where secret communications are required we recommend exchanging phone numbers and using text or messaging.

Communication between humans and aliens is different.

Aliens may not approach a human team table and humans may not visit the alien table.

If they wish to communicate it can be done by:

a. Radio broadcast. This is a public statement on Global Network News – speak to Media Control who will arrange a suitable time. Please do not just stand up and make an announcement as it will just turn the day into a chaotic shouting game.

b. Tight Beam Secure communications. This is done by passing a note – via Control.



There will be a Global Media Team (GNN) who will be asking questions about current global issues. Some of these issues will be related to the alien menace, others will relate to home-grown human on human interactions. How you respond to Global News will have an impact on your domestic population.

## THE UNITED NATIONS

The UN Security Council consists of permanent and temporary members.

Currently the five permanent members are:

- USA
- UK
- France
- China
- Russia



### Non-Permanent Members

Along with the five permanent members, the Security Council has temporary members that hold their seats on a rotating basis by geographic region.

These ten non-permanent members are elected by the General Assembly for two-year terms starting on 1 January, with five replaced each year. To be approved, a candidate must receive at least two-thirds of all votes cast for that seat, which can result in deadlock if there are two roughly evenly matched candidates.

In 1979, a standoff between Cuba and Colombia only ended after three months and a record 154 rounds of voting; both eventually withdrew in favour of Mexico as a compromise candidate.

A retiring member is not eligible for immediate re-election.

Member	Region representing	End of term
Chile	Latin America and Caribbean	End of Turn 4 (2020)
New Zealand	Western Europe and Other	End of Turn 4 (2020)
Netherlands	Western Europe and Other	End of Turn 4 (2020)
Chad	Africa	End of Turn 4 (2020)
Vietnam	Asia	End of Turn 4 (2020)
Japan	Asia	End of Turn 8 (2021)
Brazil	Latin America and Caribbean	End of Turn 8 (2021)
South Africa	Africa	End of Turn 8 (2021)
Nigeria	Africa	End of Turn 8 (2021)
Ukraine	Eastern Europe	End of Turn 8 (2021)

The voting for new non-permanent members depends on a number of factors, including how the permanent members have behaved and the overall global situation. Control will advise on this.



### **The Veto**

Under Article 27 of the UN Charter, Security Council decisions on all substantive matters require the affirmative votes of nine members. A negative vote or "veto" by a permanent member prevents adoption of a proposal, even if it has received the required votes.

Abstention is not regarded as a veto in most cases, though all five permanent members must actively concur to amend the UN Charter or to recommend the admission of a new UN member state. Procedural matters are not subject to a veto, so the veto cannot be used to avoid discussion of an issue. The same holds for certain decisions that directly regard permanent members. A majority of vetoes are used not in critical international security situations, but for purposes such as blocking a candidate for Secretary-General or the admission of a member state.

In practice the discussion in the period leading up to a vote on a resolution determines whether the vote is worth holding – so a proposal likely to be vetoed would not be put until a unanimous, or nearly so, agreement has been pre-arranged.

### **Issues**

Each game turn issues will arise that require a response from the UN Security Council. A Security Council Resolution is required in order for an international response to be formed. If the council fails to agree on a resolution then the issue is carried over to the next meeting (the next game turn).

There are variable consequences to this, depending on the seriousness of the issue. In general, failure to act is not good and may contribute to growing international unease (reflected in the Global Terror Track).

The wording of the Resolution may have additional impact on your domestic popularity as a government.

### **Security Council Resolutions**

In reality there is a long and very formalised format to UN Security Council Resolutions. There would not be time to replicate that in this game, as you only have a few minutes, so we will give you some blank proforma resolutions, allowing the Council to 'fill in the blanks' quickly and arrive at a formal resolution.

#### **Resolution 2499(2020)**

##### **Adopted by the Security Council Quarter 1 2020**

The Security Council,  
*Stressing* the urgency of the situation in [name of country affected]

*Deeply concerned* at the crisis unfolding there

*Recognising* the efforts of [anyone who has already done something with regard to the situation]

*Calls upon* [specific participants in the crisis]

*Calling upon* the International Community to [do something]

Acting under Chapter VII of the United Nations Charter,

*Demands that* [some action be taken by those involved]

*Requests that* [some other action be taken]

*Extends a Mandate* to [extend sanctions, use military force etc]

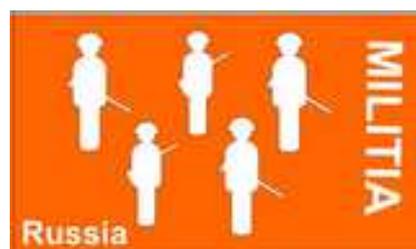
## Actions specified in the UN Security Council Resolution may include:

- Direct allocation of RP or cash (from your game resources) into the country affected to alleviate the crisis.
- Deployment of World Food Programme (WFP) resources – this assists with alleviating starvation and sickness and helps rebuild a damaged agricultural infrastructure. The UN starts with two free WFP 'deployments' at no cost to create or maintain. Additional deployments cost 1 RP per turn to create and maintain in the field.
- Deployment of UN High Commission of Refugees (UNHCR) resources – this assists with refugee management and setting up transit and temporary accommodation. The UN starts with two free UNHCR 'deployments' at no cost to create or maintain. Additional deployments cost 1 RP per turn to create and maintain in the field.
- Formation and deployment of International Peacekeeping or Protection forces. It costs 1 RP to create a UN Peacekeeping Force. It does not cost anything to maintain, but must be disbanded when its UN Security Council Mandate expires. Alternatively conventional (or even unconventional) military forces can be deployed in a region under a UN Security Council mandate.

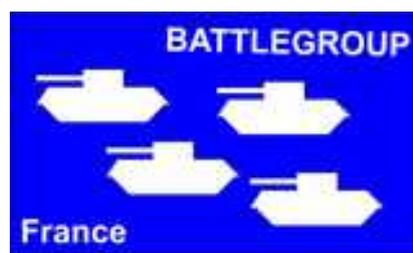


## UNIT TYPES

**Militia** – mainly second-line equipment, lots of infantry, low performance aircraft and helicopters. So far these have proved to be unable to have any impact on alien raids. Militia are treated as static. However, the Militia unit can help observation and detection. They can take up to 5 'hits' (which are marked by crossing off the soldier outlines)



**All-Arms Modern Battlegroups** – Current technology. Fast jets, modern armour, cyber weapons etc. So far conventional armies have been unable to make a significant impact on alien raids.



Modern battlegroups can be moved to anywhere in the same continental region in one turn (using an RP to do so), or to anywhere on the globe costing 3 RP. If outside their home country they need one RP per turn to be maintained (or they return home). The All

Arms Battlegroup can help observation and detection of alien activity. These units can only attempt to intercept alien activity in the same map area. They can take up to 4 'hits' (which are marked by crossing off the tank outlines)

**Strategic Nuclear Missile Forces** – representing all delivery systems combined. Not considered relevant in the current struggle at this stage – the action takes in or over human countries and cities.



Current missile technology cannot target anything in high orbit or on another planet.

Should they become relevant Control will let you know. The boxes represent the number of effective 'strikes' available.

**Fleet.** This represents a collection of all sorts of naval capabilities, including surface, subsurface and air resources.



Not considered relevant in the current struggle at this stage.

They can take up to 4 'hits' (which are marked by crossing off the ship outlines)

**Advanced Interceptor Flights** – developed using alien technology captured in the 1940s and 1950s. Outclasses every conventional air weapon – though in very small numbers. The best we have at bringing down flying saucers.



These units are too small to affect conventional Fleets, Battlegroups or Militia units, and so combat is not permitted between conventional and advanced units.

Their range is global, being able to cover any part of the planet from their home base.

**Advanced Assault Teams** – developed using alien technology captured in the 1940s and 1950s. Specialised teams using personal armour, laser weapons etc. They get in close on the ground and go toe to toe with the aliens.



Very good at countering terror raids and abductions.

These units are too small to affect conventional Battlegroups or Militia, and so combat is not permitted between conventional and advanced assault units.

Using integral transport these units can go to any point in the same continental area (Continental areas are marked by thick red dotted lines).

**Advanced Special Agent Teams** – the best agents in the world, with exceptional abilities. (Think, James Bond). These are not replicable, so try not to lose them. These are very good at resisting alien infiltration.

They can also be used to counter-infiltrate and remove Alien Influence in a country.

They can be used to support diplomatic action too when not hunting alien infiltrators.



**Hardened Base** – specially constructed underground base for operating the Advanced Assault Teams and Advanced Interceptors from. These have the capacity for 6 Advanced units of either type. The base also has a weird science lab for researching alien stuff, and an engineering bay for repairing or upgrading your units.

A base is camouflaged from space observation and in a secret, often remote, location. It has its own point defences, and if attacked, any assault teams or interceptors not deployed count toward the base defence.



In game terms, write the location of the base on the Base Chart at the team's table. It may not be attacked unless it has first been detected either by espionage or careful close reconnaissance.

## RESOURCES

### Resource Points

Each nation has a number of resource points (RP) that have been allocated to fighting the Alien Menace.

This represents not just cash but industrial activity, intellectual activity, political support, raw materials and other factors. RP cannot be traded or transferred between teams.

The number of RP each team has may vary as public opinion within their country varies (see below) – this represents political factors beyond your control (either your ability to siphon off resources clandestinely, or the limits placed on expenditure by your democratic processes, or simply what you can afford.

RP are allocated turn by turn by placing them on the team's Base Chart, or on the main map as required.



Once placed / allocated they may not be moved until the start of the next turn.



### Resource Use:

Activity	RP Cost
<b>OPERATIONS - Advanced</b>	<p>Use <b>one RP</b> per Advanced or Enhanced unit or Agent deployed on active service (= being used on the main map).</p> <p>The RP should accompany the unit to the map to indicate that it has been allocated to this.</p> <p>Undeployed units must be kept off the main map on your Base Chart.</p>
<b>OPERATIONS – Conventional Land Forces</b>	<p>Conventional Battlegroups and Militia remain on the map at all times. They do not cost RP to operate on home territory.</p> <p>Militia may not be moved outside home territory.</p> <p>Modern Battlegroups cost <b>1 RP</b> per unit per turn to deploy anywhere abroad within the same Continental Area or <b>3 RP</b> to operate in a different Continental Area.</p>
<b>OPERATIONS – Conventional Fleet</b>	<p>Fleets remain on the map at all times. They cost</p> <p>They cost <b>1 RP</b> per unit per turn to deploy at sea within the same Continental Area or <b>2 RP</b> to operate in a different Continental Area.</p>

Activity	RP Cost
<b>OPERATIONS - Nuclear</b>	<p>Nuclear Strike forces are not shown on the map.</p> <p>They do not cost RP to use, but have a limited number of strikes (see Team briefing).</p>
<b>Research</b>	<p>This represents researching a technology card that may have been acquired as a result of military or covert operations. The card is placed in the research lab on the Base Card. Only one card can be researched per lab.</p> <p>Any number of RP can be allocated to this. Roll 1d6 per turn and Score the number of RP allocated <b>or less</b> to achieve a research success.</p> <p>Many things have prerequisites – meaning research cannot <b>start</b> unless the prerequisite technology has been successfully researched. Sometimes previous successful research might give bonuses.</p> <p>As a result of successfully researching a card you will get a Research Report. These reports may be copied to friends and allies freely (Control will have spare copies).</p> 
<b>Form New Units</b>	<p>New Advanced Units (Assault teams or Interceptors) usually take 6 turns to build and require <b>1 RP per turn</b> whilst building. Only one unit of either type can be under construction at any one time in your base's construction &amp; training facility.</p> <p>Advanced Agents, Fleets, Modern Battlegroups and Militia <b>cannot</b> be built in the timescale of the game. They can be repaired, however.</p>
<b>Build New Facility – Research Lab</b>	<p>This adds a laboratory to allow you to do more research. It is built either at the same location as the main base, or in any named city.</p> <p>Costs <b>2 RP per turn</b> to build and takes <b>2 turns</b> to complete.</p>
<b>Build New Facility – Engineering Bay</b>	<p>Built either at the same location as the main base, or in any named city.</p> <p>Costs <b>2 RP per turn</b> to build and takes <b>2 turns</b> to complete.</p>
<b>Build New Facility – Construction and Training Facility</b>	<p>This adds the ability to build advanced units. Built either at the same location as the main base, or in any named city.</p> <p>Costs <b>2 RP</b> per turn to build and takes <b>2 turns</b> to complete.</p>

Activity	RP Cost
<b>Engineering - Upgrades</b>	This is using the results of successful research to improve your advanced units. It requires the use of one engineering workshop per unit being upgraded. Any number of RP can be allocated to this. Score the <b>number of RP allocated or less</b> on 1d6 to complete an upgrade task.
<b>Engineering Bay – repairs to high tech units</b>	<b>One RP</b> is required to repair <b>one unit</b> (no die roll needed). The repair takes one complete turn.  Only one unit can be repaired per turn and it halts any upgrade work.
<b>Media Activity</b>	Any number of RP can be allocated to this. See <b>Public Opinion</b> rule below.
<b>Diplomacy with Non-Played Countries</b>	Any number of RP can be allocated to this. See Diplomacy rule below.
<b>Repair a Conventional Battlegroup</b>	One complete turn and <b>2 RP</b> per strength point, repairs can only happen at a rate of one strength point per turn per unit.
<b>Repair a Conventional Militia Unit</b>	One complete turn and <b>1 RP</b> per strength point, repairs can only happen at a rate of one strength point per turn per unit.
<b>Search for Research Items on the Grey Market.</b>	Roll 1d6 and score the number of RP you have allocated to Grey Market or less to achieve.  Success means draw on research card at random from Collector's Pool. A natural 6 is always an automatic FAIL.

## NON-GOVERNMENTAL RESEARCH

All research can be diverted to commercial and/or economic development rather than for military/government development.

Any **unresearched** item card can be traded in for non-military benefits **instead** of researching it.

The card is consumed (the items disappear into private research labs or are dismantled or sold to collectors) and the team gain temporary RP equivalent to **double the tech level of the card**.



These are represented by YELLOW RP counters. Temporary RP are consumed by being used. They can be traded, transferred or exchanged freely.

You can also sell off **researched** items/cards, these generate one Temporary RP regardless of tech level, and are consumed in the process.

For every 5 RP gained in this way (cumulatively), your national public opinion score is moved up one level.

## PUBLIC OPINION

Public opinion is influenced by events and by RP allocated to improving public opinion. The level of public opinion will affect how your budget works, the more unhappy the public get the fewer resources are available.

If public opinion drops below level 1, general panic ensues and your government (i.e. the players) are forced to resign in disgrace. Lets hope you don't have to find out what happens after that.

The key policy issue facing everybody is whether the general public is told of the alien menace. 'Going public' causes a PR disadvantage, as the populations will react badly. However, whoever goes public first will suffer a larger PR disadvantage than those who follow.

Nobody knows what the benefits (or otherwise) of going public might be.

### AT THE END OF EACH TURN YOU MUST ROLL 1d6 for PUBLIC OPINION

Modify the die using these factors

-1	One or more Successful Alien Actions in your country.
-6	First roll after being first Nation to make Public the existence of the Alien menace
-3	On the turn the existence of the alien menace is made public
-2	One or more successful terror raids on a national city
-1	Successful Terror raid on the city of an Ally
+1	Each successful national military operation against the Aliens this turn
+1	Each RP allocated to Public Opinion

Final Score	Result
7 or more	Public Opinion rises one level
1 to 6	No change to Public Opinion
0 or less	Public Opinion drops one level
-4 or less	Public Opinion drops two levels

Control may also vary the score based on how your activities play out on the world stage,

**Global Terror**

There will be a Global Terror Track by the Main Map.

This represents the cumulative effect on the world's population of badly handled crises, disasters and alien activity.

If the Global Terror Track reaches the end of the scale then humanity descends into **Global Panic**.

This is generally thought to be a Very Bad Thing, so hopefully you will be able to avoid it happening.



**DIPLOMACY**

Countries on the map are not just empty spaces waiting to be occupied. Any action in a foreign country will require you to conduct diplomacy, or risk making enemies. Diplomacy must be targeted on a specific NPC. There are two things you might be seeking to do.

**OPTION 1. Get the country to be a formal ally.**

Success means you can send ground units there to fight aliens (or humans for that matter).

**OPTION 2. Get them to recognise the threat and defend themselves against Alien Infiltration.**

This will give them a bonus against alien activity. They get a 'Defended' Marker.



Roll 1d6 and score the number of RP you have allocated to Diplomacy or less to achieve – with the following modifiers to the die roll.

You must always allocate at least 1 RP to make a roll.

**A natural 6 is always an automatic FAIL.**

- +3 to die Country already infiltrated by Aliens
- +1 to die Hostile Human Agent acting against you.
- +2 to die Hostile or allied to a country hostile to you.
- 1 from die Country an Ally of one of your Allies.
- 1 from die Country is an immediate neighbour
- 2 from die One of your Agents is in-country

**Control may modify this to reflect the state of the Global Terror Track or the current political situation.**

## INTERCEPTION

- An Advanced Interceptor can intercept an alien saucer anywhere in the world.
- An Advanced Assault Team cannot intercept saucers as it fights on the ground – it can only intercept alien activities such as Terror Raids and Abductions.
- Alien Infiltration can only be countered by pre-positioned Agents.

### Advanced Interceptors

If there is an incoming Saucer, then Advanced Interceptors may be deployed to intercept it. They do this by moving the intercept to the saucer on the map and drawing an intercept card:

Look under 'INTERCEPT?'

Your interceptors will not be 'Enhanced' at the start – so ignore that.

If it says **YES**, then there is a successful intercept.

If the card says **DAMAGE** then **your** interceptor has been damaged in the action.

If the target was a decoy, you will be told.

If the Intercept of a saucer was successful then the aliens must take one of their own damage cards. If there is a shoot down result then an assault team is required to recover it.

If it is not recovered in the same turn then the saucer is lost (mainly to treasure hunters, and private corporate scavengers). Any research card generated as a result is not recovered but instead goes into the Private Collectors Pool (which can be accessed via the Grey Market).

If the intercept was unsuccessful then the saucer moves on to its intended mission – which



might be countered by Assault Teams or Battlegroups.

## Advanced Assault Teams and Battlegroups

If there is a terror raid on a city or an abduction within reach of an assault team or in the same country area as a battlegroup, then the team / battlegroup may attempt to intervene.

Draw an intercept card as above:

Look under 'INTERCEPT?'

Your assault teams will not be 'Enhanced' at the start – so ignore that.

If it says **YES**, then there is a successful mission and the aliens must take one of their own damage cards. If the target was a decoy, you will be told.

If the card says **DAMAGE** then **your** assault team has been damaged in the action **IF** this was a Terror Raid. Assault teams are not damaged by Abduction Raids.

If it is an Assault team involved (only) then there is also a chance of gaining one or more Tech Cards – Control issue these when you get them.

If the card shows “+ Tech Card” you get an **extra card**.

If a battlegroup was involved then any research card generated is not recovered but instead goes into the Private Collectors Pool (which can be accessed via the Grey Market).

