**TRAVELLER 2020: STARPORTS**

There can be few more striking symbols of the far-reaching might of The Imperium than its network of Starports. Whether great, glistening star-cities or tiny frontier outposts, they mark the boundaries of its empire, the extent of its reach. Starports are also the intersections of galactic commerce: the ports where merchants and brave souls who traverse the edges of known space may seek refuge. They are the beginning and end of countless adventures, spanning innumerable worlds. They play host to the super-rich and provide cracks into which the dregs of society may fall. They are safety and civilization, endeavor and enterprise, skullduggery and subterfuge.

Every journey to a Starport is a chance to meet strange new people, to buy and sell exotic goods, or to become embroiled in a fresh adventure. By definition, the people using a Starport are exceptional – the folk who step beyond the bounds of normal life. Most are not Travellers in the true sense of the word, but they are individuals that have seen more and experienced more than most people ever will. They have tales to tell, secrets to share, dreams to realise. That makes them worth getting to know.

Added to this are the countless incidents – great and small – that constitute life within a Starport. Often, there is more going on inside a station than on the world where it is situated. New and exciting technology, alien creatures, mysterious artifacts – all find their way into Starports. Some are in the hands of smugglers; others are top secret projects overseen by shady corporate scientists. At any one time there are more plots being hatched, crimes investigated, and explorations planned than a single group of characters can ever hope to uncover. Add to this the fact that – on the bigger Starports – there are literally hundreds of ships docking/disembarking around a station (whether in orbit on down on a planet) at any given moment – every hour of the day, seven days a week.

The vast majority of Starports are managed by the Starport Authority (SPA). Under their guidance, travel between worlds remains a relatively safe and reliable affair. People can get where they need to be and, more importantly, trade continues to flow. The number and variety of Starports that fall under the SPA’s umbrella is immense. Settling such diversity against the needs of a huge bureaucracy, the SPA uses a Class system to delineate the various types of Starport.

Starports consist of two distinct sections – the Highport and the Downport. A Highport is an orbital platform or station providing docking and refueling facilities for non-streamlined ships, and in the case of larger ports – a place to relax and unwind, or to negotiate new business deals. A Downport is that part of a port located on a planet’s surface. Smaller ports tend only to have a Downport. Law levels tend to hover between 3 and 5 – meaning most visitors may carry sidearms and concealed light armor but anything more than that will likely attract the attention of Starport security.

Often springing up around larger Downports are Startowns – businesses and homes that thrive on the trade generated by the port. These range from carefully planned communities that work closely with the port to ragtag shanty towns bereft of law and order.

**Starport Classifications**

**Class E Starports**

These are true frontier outposts, often many days travel from even minor trade routes. They are typically equipped with a single landing area big enough for a few small craft or heavy freighter, a simple structure of some sort which serves as the port HQ, and some form of fence (XT-line) circling the perimeter. Inside, the Port Director and his small team administrate all matters. Class E ports have no refueling or repair facilities, though they do typically have a Scrap Pile (odds and ends from discarded ships). Craft may land on the pads on a first come, first served basis. In orbit or nearby to the planet, Class E Highports tend to be little more than an asteroid with part of its surface leveled for touchdowns to/from.

**Class D Starports**

These add a landing strip (on planets with atmosphere) and the ability to refuel visiting craft. They usually have a dozen or more landing pads (can accommodate up to 2000 ton ships). They have a cluster of buildings, a checkpoint for those entering the site, and metal fencing or concrete walls marking the XT-line. Craft wishing to land must contact the port on approach, and there is a docking fee (d6x10) Credits plus berthing costs of Cr10/day after the first. Class D ports provide limited amounts of warehousing space for traders to store cargo. Unrefined fuel is available at a cost of Cr100 per ton. Simple repair work can be carried out though delays are common. Class D Highports are similar to Class E, but also include an unrefined fueling station and a small structure on the asteroid.

**Class C Starports**

These see a regular flow of traffic and can deal with most manner of craft (up to 5000 tons). There are usually 50 or more landing pads, most with a hangar (with seals if on a planet with a hostile atmosphere). Docking fee of d6x100 Credits plus berthing costs of Cr100/day. Unlimited amounts of unrefined fuel available (Cr100/ton) and limited amounts of refined fuel is available (Cr500/ton). There is a HQ complex (with Flight & Traffic Control), customs and other services. The XT-line will be securely demarcated and monitored by the Security Directorate. There are enough parts available for unlimited Hull repairs and 50% chance replacement parts for damaged systems are available. The largest Class C ports have a modest shipyard. Half of these ports include a constructed Highport – which are little more than refueling and repair stations with docking (for shuttle transfers to/from the planet below). The Downports usually have at least one hotel plus restaurants/entertainment venues.

**Class B Starports**

These size ports are significant hubs within the local and planetary economy, large enough to be settlements in themselves (often with an indigenous population supplemented by a stream of passengers and visitors). They contain hundreds of landing pads and hangars. They have unlimited supplies of refined fuel. There will be a shipyard, and repair facilities capable of all manner of repairs for most any vessel up to 10,000 tons. Many types of ships (some new, mostly used) are available for sale. Docking fee of d6x500 Credits plus berthing costs of Cr200/day. The Downport is typically 10 square km with some underground areas, and will have luxury hotels, fine dining, casinos and shows. All manner of business concerns may be found – including the headquarters for some local and regional companies. There will always be a Startown covering an area at least as large as the port itself. 95% of them will have a Highport – docking, refueling, shuttle services – plus entertainment venues and hostels. At this size some Class B ports begin to suffer problems with organized crime. Accordingly, customs and security are typically tighter.

**Class A Starports**

With the capacity to accommodate an entire star fleet, these ports are true crossroads of the stars. All of these will have a Highport and a Downport. There is unlimited refined fuel and a full commercial shipyard, capable of construction or repair of any size vessel. All manner of ships (new and used) are available for purchase, as well as capability to modify and customized standard craft. The Highport can typically be seen from orbit. The Downport will be ringed by Startowns – a great sprawl of homes and businesses sustained by the flow of passengers and trade. The facilities often exceed those of a major city – every manner of entertainment is available, as is accommodations, casinos, and restaurants. Landing pads for ships of every shape and size are available, fully equipped with hangers (and on the Highport – with airlocks). Loading and unloading of all cargo (even exotic and dangerous) is fully catered for; loading times of 5 min per ton are typical. Docking fee of d6x1000 Credits plus berthing costs of Cr500/day. Those costs always include free limited cargo storage and light hull repairs as needed.