

TRAVELLER

Mercenary

CREDITS

Classic Traveller

Marc Miller

Loren Wiseman, John Harshman, Frank Chadwick, Darryl Hany,
Winston Hamilton, Tony Svajlenka, Scott Renner, Doug Poe,
David MacDonald, Wayne Roth, Paul R. Banner.

Mongoose Traveller

AUTHOR

Bryan Steele

EDITOR

Richard Ford, Nick Robinson

INTERIOR ILLUSTRATIONS

Andrew Dobell, Phil Renne, Carlos Nuñez de Castro Torres, Marco
Morte, Tony Guaraldi-Brown, Javier Charro Martinez

SPECIAL THANKS

Marc Miller, Tom O'Neill, Brian Caball, Aidan Rafferty, Robert
Eaglestone, Loren Wiseman, James Maliszewski, Donald McKinney,
William Hostman, Martin Costa, Mike West

PLAYTESTERS

Adam Gulwell, Alexander Fennell, Roger Calver, Dave Lai, Scott
Hughes

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	2
ARMY AND MARINE CHARACTERS	5
CREATING A MERCENARY	15
NEW SKILLS AND SPECIALITIES	37
MERCENARY TICKETS	42
RECRUITING UNIT MEMBERS	62
NEW COMBAT RULES	71
MERCENARY HEADQUARTERS AND MILITARY BASES	80
NEW EQUIPMENT	92
INDEX	107

Mercenary ©2008 Mongoose Publishing. All rights reserved. Reproduction of this work by any means without the written permission of the publisher is expressly forbidden. All significant characters, names, places, items, art and text herein are copyrighted by Mongoose Publishing.

This game product contains no Open Game Content. No portion of this work may be reproduced in any form without written permission. To learn more about the Open Game License, please go to www.mongoosepublishing.com.

This material is protected under the copyright laws of the United Kingdom and of the United States. This product is a work of fiction. Any similarity to actual people, organisations, places or events is purely coincidental.

Traveller is a trademark of Far Future Enterprises and is used under licence.

Printed in the USA.

INTRODUCTION

In the worlds of *Traveller* there are countless souls sailing across the sea of stars in search of fame, fortune and perhaps some deeper meaning to it all. Some are looking for the answer to the eternal questions of their civilisation, others simply want to get away from it all and find something better in the void. Anything can happen in the stretches of emptiness between worlds, and sometimes this can mean trouble. For the unprepared, this is often fatal. If someone cannot protect themselves from the dangers of the universe, there are always others who will – for a price.

Traveller: Mercenary is a guide to the gritty life of the hired gun. These specialised few are often more than just soldiers looking for some side money, they are frequently members of units of like-minded militants that devote their lives to pulling the trigger. It is a hard life to enjoy, and a harder one to be successful at. Wherever there are spacefarers, there will be violence; where there is violence there is a need for mercenaries.

From freelance soldiers of fortune to ranking grunts of a structured military charter, there are mercenaries from all walks of life across the universe. It is a good life of adventure for most travellers, and for those fortunate enough to survive a long enough while in 'the life', wealth, fame and adventure is almost certainly assured. Of course, there is always the chance that the mercenary dies a horrible death fighting a battle they never should have been involved with – but that is just the hazards of the job, is it not?

Mercenaries within Traveller

From the basic character creation methods and tables found in the core *Traveller* rulebook, players can create military-minded characters or just combat-oriented characters from other walks of life. Although anyone can sell their services to the highest (or not so highest) bidder to become a mercenary by the strictest definition of the term, true mercenaries are a lot more than just a gun for a paycheck.

Traveller allows for any character to become gunslingers or swordsmen if they wish to practice at those skills, but mercenaries are dedicated to making it their livelihood. They require more focussed training and attention than a common soldier would; they are mostly fighting for the credits – not for orders, their planet or the Emperor. This makes them invest far more to protect their own skins, and they have to be sure that their training must be better than anyone they might go up against.

Mercenaries are commonly stereotyped as being violent, callous and purely self-serving. Although some may be, it is not always the case. Groups of mercenaries can be tighter and more fraternal than familial brothers, and some charters have been around long enough to have multiple generations of mercenaries raised in their ranks.

Just as it would be in the military, mercenaries must decide what is more important to them on a ticket – their morals or their bank accounts?

In *Traveller*, mercenaries are generally accepted by the spacefaring culture. They are a monitored and standardised private force that the rich and powerful can call upon to help them with their military needs. The types of groups that hire mercenaries are vast; as are their reasons for doing so. Companies might require a group of escorts to protect something from their rivals, or they could seek someone to strike at the competition in a more direct fashion than with price wars or corporate takeovers. Governments often use mercenaries to do what their armed services cannot, either morally or sometimes even legally. Private parties rarely have the funds or connections to acquire a mercenary ticket, but those that do can have the strangest and most unique motives. In effect mercenaries are far more prevalent than in our reality; they exist to fill the roles that others fall short of.

The use of mercenaries is a vital part of the small skirmishes that often take place on the frontier borders of expanding space. Full militaries are too structured or limited in their abilities to function as they should; their hands commonly tied with political or corporate red tape. As interests move beyond the limits of law and government, mercenaries are the best solutions for many of the hazards found in the less well travelled regions of space. The mercenaries do the job, the employers reap the awards, and everyone goes home happy; in theory, at least.

Mercenaries do what they feel they can and must do in order to pay their bills, fill their stomachs and pass the time. While this makes them individualistic and unpredictable, it also makes them numerous and somewhat expendable – all perfect traits for Player Characters in a *Traveller* game.

Mercenaries in Specific Traveller Settings

This book is written with a general setting in mind, specifically one that has legalised mercenary activity for the use on the space frontier (like that of the *Third Imperium* setting). This does not mean that every setting or culture will have the same rules and limitations on the existence and use of mercenaries. One government might freely utilise mercenary groups to put down threats, but the next could think all mercenaries are nothing but criminals.

The overall usage of mercenaries is limited by the designed setting of the Referee, as he may or may not want to make his game 'easy' for his mercenary Player Characters.

What This Book Adds to Traveller

Traveller: Mercenary brings a new type of character to the table – the professional mercenary. Whether it is a member of a bodyguard service in the private sector or a plasma-slinging paramilitary guerrilla, players can turn their normal *Traveller* characters into something else entirely. This book is written to expand the scope of *Traveller* to include these professional soldiers-for-hire in many ways.

Most readers will look into the first chapter as the main reason they are picking up this book. The start of the book is devoted to the creation of mercenary Player Characters. It is filled with new career paths, advancements and mishaps that can shape a character to become the best mercenary they can. From the first term that he qualifies to do so, a character can begin the life of a true mercenary. No matter if they left the armed services on their own or at gunpoint, they might be able to find profit in selling their services here. The new career paths listed in this book are designed to be used in addition to those found in the core rulebook – not replace them.

The book also contains a chapter dedicated to the addition of new skills that *Traveller* characters can now utilise. These skills range in use and purpose, but they can be important to characters devoted to professional soldiering. Although designed to appear in the creation tables for the mercenary career paths, these new skills can also be acquired by some of the core *Traveller* careers; how this is possible is noted here as well.

Mercenaries do not simply wander around looking for their next job. They are commonly sought out and hired on an official and legal contract. These contracts are collectively called ‘tickets’ in *Traveller*, and they represent a fully-enclosed mission that the mercenaries are being hired to accomplish. Mercenary tickets are the bread-and-butter of a mercenary’s life, sometimes literally. This book includes the full description for Referees of how to create individual mercenary tickets for their games. Either using the detailed facets of ticket creation or the random tables given in this book, a Referee can not only quickly draw up a mission for their players to set out on, but also can know how much something like that would pay. The use of mercenary tickets is a standard in the business, and this book tells readers precisely how they work and how to create them.

As mercenaries leave behind their freelance or order-taking days in search of becoming something more, they might decide to start their own mercenary groups or charters. They will need to recruit new members in order to do this effectively. This book offers a good system on how any given character, not just mercenaries, can go out and recruit hirelings and subordinates. If any character is skilled and convincing enough, they could acquire the men they are looking to lead.

With the addition of more militarily-leaning missions and tickets, this book also brings a few new additions to the way larger battles and combats work in *Traveller*. With new rules concerning morale, suppression fire and the like will allow Referees to bring a new style

of gritty realism or heroism to their battles. These rule additions will turn a common fire fight between larger groups from a clunky dice-rolling frenzy to a full scale conflict worthy of media attention.

Whether in a true military or a private mercenary unit, active combat forces need a place to recover, rearm and re-equip. Commanding officers need stations where they can plan everything the unit needs and important documents should be stored safely in case of an unexpected leadership change. This book contains a detailed list of possible bases and headquarters useful to Referees in order to create the central locations of their game’s mercenary and military units.

A good mercenary is only as good as the equipment he is trained to use, and this book brings a host of new bits of gear for just that reason. Adhesive bandages, gyro-stabilised hip rigs, and anti-personnel airburst artillery rounds are just a few examples of the new and fantastic equipment this book unveils. With so many wonderful new toys to choose from, Player Characters might join a mercenary ticket just to get access to some of them!

Traveller: Mercenary is not just a guide to living the life of a hired gun. It serves as a collection of useful rules additions and augmentations to the entire system, bringing a brand new facet of adventure and excitement to the *Traveller* system.



MERCENARY SLANG AND LEXICON

The following is a short collection of common terminology used by many mercenaries and their allies in the *Traveller* universe. Players of mercenary characters should pay attention to these words and phrases, as their employers, partners and employees will often use them in common parlance.

Ace(d) – Any one-shot/one-strike kill; as in 'I aced him with my seventy-six, right in the eye!'

'Act the Part' – Overplaying a dramatic stance as a mercenary in order to earn a bigger reputation

Aggro – Becoming overly violent or aggressive; as in 'Whoa! Why all the aggro? It was just a joke!'

Bar Tab – A tongue-in-cheek term used to describe the amount of money spent on supplies for a specific ticket

Black Op – Any ticket that cannot be officially or legally claimed; most often also a 'wet ticket'

Camo Job – Any ticket that will require the use of standard military fatigues, uniforms or other apparel; alternatively a ticket where the mercenary is hired by an armed service branch

Cloak and Dagger – Any ticket that requires stealth or anonymity

Dead Ticket – A mission that has been tried and failed; also used to describe a ticket that has passed its expiration without being undertaken

ETC – Anagram for 'estimated time to conflict'; as in 'I have the convoy in my sights, what is our ETC?'

FUBAR – Anagram for 'fouled up beyond all repair'; can also be used as a profanity; as in 'The evacuation site is crawling with hostiles, this ticket is FUBAR.'

Glassing – The use of high explosives or incendiary devices to deal with a lightly or unarmoured target

Heat/Hot – Slang term for violent conflict, as in 'Negative, I cannot get in yet. Too much heat out here to ignore. I could use some help.'

'High Tide' – A description of very high or unexpected activity in a conflict situation; as in 'Get that PGMP up here, it's high tide outside that bulkhead!'

Ice Cold Ticket – A mission that requires a low sense of morals and likely a great deal of violent action

JIR – Anagram for 'justifiable immediate response'; or the level of violent action that should be taken in response to opposing stimuli

'Low Tide' – A description of little or low activity in a possible conflict; as in 'Holster up your big guns guys, its nothing but low tide the rest of the way.'

Meatmonger – Derogatory term for any mercenary that is overly violent in situations where it is not necessary

Merc – Slang term for any mercenary; sometimes used by non-mercenaries in the derogatory

One-off Job – Any ticket from a new employer that has no current plans of re-hiring the mercenaries afterward

Park Walk – Any ticket that is appraised as being far easier than the overall skill level of the mercenary group signed on to it

Sandbag – Extremely derogatory term for a mercenary who is not holding up his share of a specific ticket; as in 'Move your sandbag ass, Hawkins! You are slowing us all down!'

'Take Two' – Anytime a skilled mercenary fails at a simple task and is forced to perform it again

Trial by Fire – A mercenary's first combat-based ticket

Zoo Trip – Any ticket that takes the mercenary to an unknown location with unknown flora/fauna that must be dealt with in some way

ARMY AND MARINE CHARACTERS

Although this supplement deals primarily with mercenaries and their careers there is also room to include slightly amended rules for army and marine characters. In addition to providing expanded Mishap and Events tables that remain true to those included in this book two new career options for military personnel are added - the (oceanic or wet) navy and air force.

Few planetary forces are based solely upon ground troops; many use extensive atmospheric air forces or hydrospheric naval fleets. Because of this, there is room for additional and alternative career options based on the Army career path in the *Traveller* core rulebook.

These options, (Wet) Navy and Air Force, are considered to have the same general form and function of the Army career path. They

are the localised armed forces for their government, although they might have attachments to space navies or interplanetary soldiering. Unless otherwise noted, these two career path options are considered to be interchangeable with the Army path for logistic purposes (perhaps with a little narrative adjustments here and there).

Referees and players can choose to make characters from these career options if it makes more sense (a water-world using (Wet) Navy instead of Army, for instance) or simply if they wish to do so.

Also included here are expanded Mishap and Event tables for the Army and Marine professions, allowing a greater variety in a character's career in keeping with the expanded tables found with all the new careers described within this book.

NEW ARMY MISHAPS

2d6 Mishap

- 2 Finding conditions to be inhumane under a barely sane commander during your current posting you desert and are now a wanted man. Gain 1d3 Enemies amongst the military, including your former commanding officer, who will try to bring you to justice.
- 3 You are involved in a disastrous campaign and barely escape off planet in a frantic and badly organised evacuation. This leaves you a long way from your own lines and you make 1d3 Contacts as you return home. However you find yourself a wanted man and are listed as AWOL by an inquisitorial commission that has come down hard on those even remotely involved in the debacle.
- 4 Your regiment merges with another due to budgetary constraints. You are one of those who are not offered a position within the new unit and are forced to leave the service.
- 5 You spend several days in the brig after getting into a fight with a superior officer. Gain that officer as a Rival as he has you ejected out of the service.
- 6 Severely wounded. Roll twice on the Injury table and take the lower result.
- 7 Your unit is slaughtered in a disastrous battle, for which you blame your commander. Gain him as an Enemy as he has you removed from the service.
- 8 Injured. Roll on the Injury table
- 9 You are sent to a very unpleasant region (jungle, swamp, desert, icecap, urban) to battle against guerrilla fighters and rebels. You are discharged because of stress, injury or because the government wishes to bury the whole incident. Increase Recon or Survival by one level but also gain the rebels as an Enemy.
- 10 You discover that your commanding officer is engaged in some illegal activity, such as weapon smuggling. You can join his ring and gain him as an Ally before the inevitable investigation gets you discharged, or you can co-operate with the military police – the official whitewash gets you discharged anyway but you may keep your Benefit roll from this term of service.
- 11 You are tormented by, or quarrel with, an officer or fellow soldier. Gain that officer as a Rival as he drives you out of the service.
- 12 You have a strong relationship with a munitions supplier which is deemed to be too close by your superiors and you are 'requested' to resign from the service. Gain the supplier as a Contact.

NEW ARMY EVENTS

d66 Events

- 11 Disaster! Roll on the mishap table, but you are not ejected from this career.
- 12 You are assigned to an urbanised planet torn by war. Gain one of Stealth 1, Streetwise 1, Persuade 1 or Recon 1.
- 13 You are assigned to a planet with a hostile or wild environment. Gain one of Vacc Suit 1, Engineer (any) 1, Animals (riding or training) 1 or Recon 1.
- 14 You are given a special assignment or duty in your unit. Gain a +1 DM to any one Benefit roll.
- 15 You are thrown into a brutal ground war. Throw Endurance 8+ to avoid injury; if you succeed, you gain one level in Gun Combat (any) or Leadership.
- 16 You are given advanced training in a specialist field. Throw Education 8+ to increase any one skill you already have by one level.
- 21 Surrounded and outnumbered by the enemy, you hold out until relief arrives. Gain a +2 DM to your next Advancement check.
- 22 You are assigned to a peacekeeping role. Gain one of Admin 1, Investigate 1, Deception 1 or Recon 1.
- 23 Your commanding officer takes an interest in your career. Either gain Tactics (military) 1 or take a +4 DM to your next Advancement roll thanks to his aid.
- 24 You are chosen for cross training in a different service. Roll for a skill in a Specialist assignment other than your own.
- 25 You are assigned to protected forces training, gain one of Vacc Suit 1 or Zero-G 1.
- 26 You are named in a law suit alledging war crimes against your unit. You gain 1d3 Enemies despite your proclamations of innocence (whether they are true or not).
- 31-36 Life Event. Roll on the Life Events table (see page 34 of the *Traveler* main rulebook).
- 41-46 Wartime Event. Roll on the Wartime Events table (see page 35).
- 51 You are assigned to Officer Training, gain a commission, if you are already an officer you are automatically promoted.
- 52 You are given special forces training. Gain one of Melee (any) 1, Gun Combat (any) 1, Survival 1, Combat Engineering (any) 1 or Explosives 1.
- 53 You are assigned to a teaching post. Throw Instruction 8+. Success increases your Instruction skill by one level.
- 54 A posting far from any conflict on an idyllic world leaves you with plenty of downtime. Gain one of Gambling 1, Carouse 1 or Streetwise 1.
- 55 You are assigned to the legal offices of your base, helping with court martial services. Gain one of Admin 1, Advocate 1, Investigate 1 or Deception 1.
- 56 You are assigned to Military Intelligence. Gain one level in Streetwise, Computer, Interrogation (any) or Deception.
- 61 You are assigned a position at an embassy. You are automatically promoted this term and gain Social Sciences 1.
- 62 Your unit is sent to combat insurgents. Throw Gun Combat or Stealth 8+ to avoid injury; if you succeed, you gain one level in Gun Combat (any) or Tactics (military).
- 63 Your ability at the card table makes you a legend amongst your unit, however not everyone is a good loser. Gain one rank in either Gambling or Carouse, but gain 1d3 Enemies.
- 64 A revolution overthrows the legitimate government of the world you are serving on. Your unit backs the government as it attempts to regain power, throw Tactics or Gun Combat (any) to avoid injury. You gain both an Ally and an Enemy as a result of the fighting.
- 65 Your immediate superior is a drunkard and incompetent. If you report him then you gain a +2 DM to your next Advancement roll. If you say nothing and protect him, gain him as an Ally.
- 66 You display heroism in battle. You may gain a promotion or a commission automatically.