

According to the STAR FRONTIERS game glossary, the Star Law Rangers operate as an interstellar police force that "concentrates on finding Sathar agents, but also fights space pirates and other interstellar criminals." We also know that the Rangers have large territorial areas of authority because in the history section we find that Rangers "track the Sathar's agents from planet to planet and fight them on their own terms." Beyond that, there is little for an aspiring STAR FRONTIERS game referee or player to consider when dealing with Star Law forces. The purpose of this article is to fill in some holes that exist about this intergalactic organization and its members.

Before proceeding any further, let's look at a few facts and assumptions that will help define law enforcement and military authorities in the STAR FRONTIERS game.

* The peace of the Frontier region is maintained in space by the UPF Spacefleet (see the STAR FRONTIERS Knight Hawks game). We assume that actual authority in deep space is in the hands of the Spacefleet and not the Star Law.

* The defense of individual planets is the responsibility of their armies and militias. This is certainly true for civilized planets. Whether the armed forces are made up of volunteers, inductees, or mercenaries would depend upon the planetary government, its population and resources, etc. (in other words, the referee). It is safe to assume that matters of immediate local defense (riots, revolutions, massive pirate raids, etc.) usually fall under the authority of a planetary army and the space fleet it uses for orbital defense.

* Every large city will have its own police force to guard its citizenry and maintain law and order. Some planets might have police with wider territorial authority for counties, states, provinces, nations, or continents.

"Freeze! Star Law!"

*The interstellar police of the
STAR FRONTIERS® game*

By Kim Eastland

* Although the interstellar company most often referred to in the STAR FRONTIERS game is the Pan-Galactic Corporation, the Knight Hawks Campaign Book notes that it is only one of a half-dozen similar mega-corporations in the Frontier. It seems obvious that each mega-corp would want their own security force to guard their property and interests, to investigate industrial espionage, etc. No one mega-corp security force would be trusted by any other to always stay within its corporate authority.

* In addition to the above, innumerable other law enforcement agencies would be at work: high-tech mercenaries hired by rich individuals as body guards, private investigative firms licensed to operate locally or planet-wide, and so forth.

As you might guess, the problem of interplanetary security is a big one. If the theft of a Pan-Galactic Executive Vice President's personal belongings occurred, it would bring in Pan-Galactic's Security Force, any private firms that the VP had employed, and (if notified) the city authorities. If the felon was loose on the planet, that might bring in all planetary investigators authorized to keep the local peace. If certain major crimes were committed during the robbery, say the theft of a government shuttle for a getaway, the armed forces might now be involved.

However, if the fugitive leaves the planet and escapes into deep space, would the Spacefleet be involved? What happens if one of the possessions stolen was a device that would be of interest to a hostile alien race? Could a Port Loren beat cop try to arrest a Sathar in deep space? Obviously, there must be a law enforcement agency with far-reaching powers and jurisdiction that can work with different local agencies while transcending their limitations. This is the job of Star Law.

The exact crimes and jurisdictional areas that Star Law would be involved with can be laid out by individual game

referees. What is given here is a suggested organizational structure for Star Law. We hear a lot about the Rangers, a glamorous branch of Star Law, but in fact they are only one small part of a stellar agency dedicated to galactic peace.

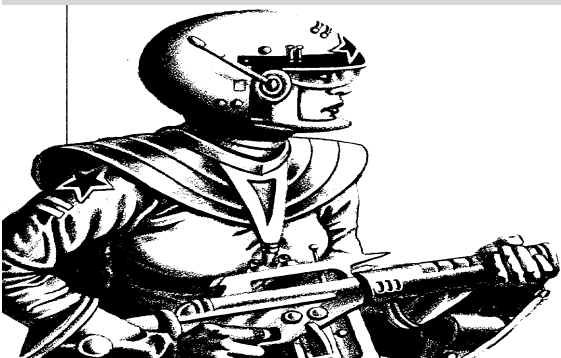
We know that Star Law Headquarters is located in the city of Port Loren on the planet Gran Quivera ("The Hub of the Frontier Sector") in the Preglar system. We also know there is a Star Law base on Morgaine's World in the same system. Beyond this, we can create some "basic facts" as a foundation for Star Law.

1) A Star Law base exists on every civilized world of any size in the Frontier Sector. These bases range from large complexes to one-man offices, depending upon that world's needs.

2) Star Law itself does not own a great fleet of ships or an army of combat vehicles. Each base would probably have an array of fast, light armed vehicles for planetary and interplanetary transportation, such as flit-boards, rocket bikes, skimmers, etc.

3) Star Law would not have vast armies of combat personnel because the UPF and individual planetary governments would not want a powerful Star Law undermining their own powers and authority. Instead, Star Law would have numerous agents with wide-ranging authority who would not pose a threat to city or regional police forces or planetary armies.

4) Star Law personnel would have the power to call the UPF's attention to major transgressions by city or planetary governments, though they try to avoid matters arising from local politics. They can get military assistance from Spacefleet or other authorities if deemed necessary by the UPF Security Council. An individual Star Law agent's firepower would be impressive since he must often uphold the law when working with few allies. An average Star Law



mission team would include 2-6 members.

5) Any ventures beyond the Frontier "on the Rim" (as the unexplored and possibly dangerous systems are called) or into alien space (neutral or enemy) would be officially undertaken by Star Law. Any unofficial ventures would be made by mercenaries, bounty hunters, etc.

6) Residents of the Frontier Sector who are not of the four main races but who have clean records and initiative might also be Star Law officers. Indeed, when dealing with the Rim, they might be more desirable as agents than one of the major races.

7) All investigations of known hostile races (Sathar, Mechanons, Zuraqqor, etc.) would be made under the authority of Star Law. A Star Law agent's authority level would be very great in this area.

8) Investigations dealing with possible crimes committed by Star Law personnel would be handled by a special branch of Star Law Internal Affairs that answers only to the UPF Security Council.

9) All investigations of other established security forces (Spacefleet, world armies, etc.) or interplanetary governing bodies (such as the United Planetary Federation) would be handled by special investigation committees appointed by the Star Law Captain-General.

10) Under article 15 of the Securities Act, a Star Lawman of Ranger rank or above may commandeer any ship, private or UPF-owned, not engaged in an active defense of UPF space for the purposes of pursuing enemy agents in or out of the Frontier.

11) Under article 12 of the Securities Act, a Star Lawman of any rank can impose Stellar Law in a city, county, or continent if he deems it necessary to maintain civil obedience.

12) Under article 13 of the Securities Act, a Star Lawman of Ranger rank or above may also impose Stellar Law on an entire planet if he deems it necessary to maintain civil obedience.

13) Under article 14 of the Securities Act, the Star Law Captain-General may impose Stellar Law on an entire system if he deems it necessary to maintain civil obedience or UPF security. Only the UPF Security Council can declare Stellar Law on the entire Frontier.

14) Star Law retains its authorities during both peacetime and wartime.

Star Law Ranking

Although there are many different positions within Star Law and various grades within those positions, there are

only a few that STAR FRONTIER game players or referees need concern themselves with. The titles and definitions of those positions are:

1) Star Law Deputy Officer (DO): A Star Law DO is a rookie officer, fresh out of the academy. He or she is in effect a lower-grade City Officer and is assigned to assist someone of a higher rank, usually a full City Officer. After a period of time, usually one to three years, the Deputy Officer is evaluated and may be promoted to a higher grade. On rare occasions a DO might be promoted into positions as high as a Chief Agent, depending upon his background, skills, and abilities. A Star Law DO cannot be immediately promoted to Ranger status, however.

2) Star Law City Officer (CO): A Star Law CO may have many Deputy Officers below him. Usually a CO is a Star Lawman who has authority only over a particular city. COs work only in major cities on highly advanced planets.

3) Star Law Planetary Officer (PO): A Planetary Officer may have many Deputy Officers below him; on major civilized planets, he may command some COs as well. A Planetary Officer cannot exercise his authority on another planet unless ordered to do so by his Commanding Officer at Port Loren.

4) Star Law Deputy Agent (DA): Star Law DAs may command numbers of Deputy Officers, POs, and COs. A Deputy Agent governs investigations that assist other law enforcement and security forces. DAs can command POs and COs in their planetary system only.

5) Star Law Chief Agent (CA): A Chief Agent is one rank above the DA and can command all officers below his rank. He has the power to override the authority of other security forces within his planetary system when dealing with investigations there. A CA is extremely powerful within his system.

6) Star Law Ranger: Rangers are a sort of cross between DAs and CAs in authority, except they can exercise their power in any system within the Frontier Sector. They operate one level above CAs in the Star Law chain of command, but usually work with other security forces rather than commanding them. Rangers are usually called in when hostile alien intrigue is suspected (Sathar plots in particular).

7) Star Law Marshals: This unusual position is usually awarded to Rangers whose jurisdiction extend into the Rim systems. Some Marshals patrol the Rim exclusively. They have authority over other Star Law Rangers and all lower

ranks. Their numbers are few and turnover is high. They usually work alone.

8) Star Law Commanders: A Star Law Commander is a Marshal empowered to venture into alien space. He has complete authority to operate in the UPF's best interests there. In the Frontier and Rim, he can command all of the above levels of Star Lawmen. Commanders are the only persons in Star Law who can legally kill an intelligent lifeform without any evidence but their own word. Only a handful of Commanders exist, and they report to the UPF Security Council along with the Star Law Captain-General.

Other sections of Star Law that might come into play are:

1) Star Law Posse: A group of Star Law Troopers whose mission is to help out Star Lawmen in trouble. They can only be assembled by a Marshal, Commander, or Star Law HQ. Their stats are usually normal for their race, and they should be armed and armored competitively by the referee. NOTE: The posse does not exist to haul the player's "afterburners" out of the fire all the time. They can help if the referee has swamped the players with foes.

2) Star Law Penal Officers: The worst criminals in the Frontier Sector are kept at certain penal colonies. Maintaining these secluded prisons and the transport ships that conduct prisoners there is the business of Star Law Penal Officers. Outside of their penal functions, they operate at Deputy Officer rank.

3) Star Law Internal Affairs Agents: When investigating Star Lawmen, IA agents have the command capability of a Marshal.

4) Star Law Undercover Agents: While most Star Lawmen can go undercover, these agents are in "deep cover." They have maintained their cover for years and may not even reveal themselves to player characters, but can pass information to them secretly. They usually only answer to Star Law Marshals, Commanders, or HQ, and are found in high risk areas such as the Rim.

Star Law Authority

All Star Lawmen have the following powers in addition to those listed above:

1) The authority to detain, pursue, and warn or arrest anyone within their jurisdiction who breaks the law. The decision to warn or arrest is at the Star Lawman's discretion and dependent upon such factors as past record, severity of crime (speeding vs. possession of a weapon), attitude of lawbreaker, etc.

2) The authority to commandeer any

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vehicle and pilot it, or cause it to be piloted, in excess of normal legal regulations, in an attempt to fulfill section 1.

This authority does *not* include any overt actions that unnecessarily threaten society.

3) The authority to search a premises in an attempt to fulfill section 1 if due cause exists. In those cases where Star Law Command can be contacted immediately for confirmation, such must be obtained. In those cases where Star Law Command is more than ten minutes communications distance away *and* the Star Lawman decides that this wait is to the detriment of or dangerous to society, the Star Lawman may gain access to the premises in any fashion possible. In cases where a Star Lawman is in pursuit of a criminal or lawbreaker or is witness to a criminal act, then the Star Lawman may gain access to the premises in any fashion possible.

4) The authority to protect society, himself, or private property (in that order), whether in an attempt to fulfill section 1 or in the normal course of his activities, by whatever means necessary excluding measures which may be more harmful than that which is threatening society, himself, or private property.

5) The authority to close down any establishment, business, or operation which is either breaking a law or endangering society and the common good until the appropriate agency, governmental department, or proper level of authority can investigate the problem. (In some instances the Star Lawman himself must investigate the alleged crime).

Obviously, the Star Lawmen have a much greater level of authority than normal law enforcement agents, but they also have a much greater responsibility. Because of this, the screening of Star Law applicants is incredibly detailed and thorough, and includes Telol injections, psychoprobes, and rigorous indoctrination. In the entire history of Star Law (127 years), there has never been a recorded instance of a "bad apple" getting through the screening, though some Lawmen have gone bad after years of stress and exposure to criminal element.

To placate an always suspicious public, recent innovations such as the file computer and recorder helmet have been introduced into the Star Law ranks, especially among Lawmen working in highly dangerous or urban areas. The file computer is a specialized computer that does nothing but record information verbally fed into it by a

Star Lawman. These 15 cm. square devices are then tied into Star Law's mainframe computers at the end of every shift, and their info is dumped into the general information pool. Star Lawmen thus create a running account of their own activities, an open "file" on various suspects, and recordings of eyewitness accounts and testimonies. The info-pool contains a vast wealth of current information that can be made available whenever it is needed to Star Lawmen only.

A recorder helmet operates in much the same way and even has a file computer built in, but it also has a tiny visual scanner/recorder built in that can record the case visually as well. The helmet can either be broadcast to a local recording facility or use micro-discs in the built-in recorder to store the images.

Termination of cases and reassignment

A Star Lawman under the rank of Ranger can be called off a case or have his case closed by either a personal directive or general reassignment, both issued by Star Law Headquarters. Star Law Rangers can only have their cases closed or be reassigned by personal directive from Star Law HQ. Star Law Marshals cannot have their cases closed, but can be reassigned, but only by the Star Law Captain-General, and then another Star Lawmen of equal or higher rank must take over their cases. Star Law Commanders cannot be reassigned or have their cases closed, but they can be recalled by the Star Law Captain-General for briefing or debriefing. Star Law Commanders can be forcibly retired, but another Star Law Commander must take over the case, and the entire casefile and official actions ordered are reported to the Security council to prevent any cover-ups.

Final thoughts

Obviously, the number of scenarios that can be built upon the needs of the different types of Star Lawmen listed above is far greater than those for a "one-level" Star Law. Game referees might wish to start players as Star Law Deputy Officers and bring them "up through the ranks." The point at which PCs are promoted should be determined by the referee and should depend less on PC skill levels than on how PCs conduct themselves on cases. As in any law enforcement organization, the remuneration may not be high, but the excitement and satisfaction of a job well done is often reward enough.