DARK STAR ONE

www.darkstar-one.com

GAME MANUAL

ACTION ASCARON LINE

The way it's meant to be played

ASCARON

CONTENTS

DARK STAR ONE

GAME MANUAL

- GUIDE TO THE GALAXY -

EPILEPSY WARNING

Please read before playing.

A very small percentage of individuals may experience epileptic seizures when exposed to certain light patterns or flashing lights. Exposure to certain patterns or backgrounds on a computer screen, or while playing video games, may induce an epileptic seizure in these individuals. Certain conditions may induce previously undetected epileptic symptoms even in persons who have no history of prior seizure or epilepsy.

If you experience any of the following symptoms while playing : dizziness, altered vision, eye or muscle twitches, loss of awareness, disorientation, any involuntary movement or convulsions - immediately discontinue playing and consult your physician.

1 PROLOGUE

The Past

Several centuries have passed since the Great Galactic War that had been a devastating escalation of conflicts between the races. It all began with a misunderstanding, the so-called Damokles incident when the Mortok destroyed the Terran cruiser Damokles during a routine inspection.

War broke out between the Terran and the Mortok. Arrack and Raptor became involved siding with the Mortok, while the Oc'to supported the Terran. The Thul delivered weapons to all parties involved and then attacked the weakened opponents.

The Great War ended after forty years although none of the opponents was declared victorious. The Terran sustained the heaviest losses as all their systems were virtually destroyed; the Thul had gained the most by almost doubling their territories due to their smart warfare: They avoided most of the battles, protected the borders of their territories, and provided the opposing parties with weapons.

The Terran promoted establishing a Galactic Union in order to prevent such a devastating war from breaking out ever again. All races should participate.

The Thul, however - a people of Terran origin - showed no interest in a Galactic Union. The Great War did not affect them negatively and they regarded the desire to establish an intergalactic body as a weakness of the other races. Moreover, across all races everyone was opposed to the Thul's genetic experiments or despised them. The Thul regarded these morals also as weakness - after all, the Thul regard all other people as undisciplined semi-civilized beings driven by organic instincts.

This attitude also defined their behavior towards the other races: They ignored

the decisions of the newly founded Council and steadfastly pursued their controversial experiments way beyond the ethical limits of the other races. Finally, they were excluded from the Council. Afterwards, the Thul completely isolated themselves from the other races. They disappeared for more than three decades. They were comfortable in their chosen isolation and turned their attention to advancing their research. With each new implant and every enhanced nanobot, they still strive for perfection.

The Future

In Darkstar One, you assume the role of Kayron Jarvis, a young fighter pilot whose father was killed by the Thul recently during a secret mission. As Kayron uncovers clues that his father's ship had been sabotaged, he embarks on a journey in order to pursue the perpetrator. Soon he learns that the Thul no longer seem content with their isolation; confrontations occur frequently: Thul drone ships appear out of hyperspace and attack facilities of all races. Kayron finds himself between the lines of a dawning intergalactic war.

Yet Kayron has a secret weapon at his disposal: His father's legacy is the extraordinary long-range fighter "Darkstar One". It is part of a very old legend revolving around an ancient people. With your help, the "Darkstar One" will develop into the most powerful battle ship in the universe throughout the adventure.

Being a fighter pilot means spending most of your life in the cockpit of your ship: You fight battles in space, you fly to numerous solar systems, or you dock at trade stations where new missions and many other tasks are awaiting you.

A vast and exhilarating world is waiting for you! A world that offers you the freedom to choose your activities: Bounty hunter, mercenary, pirate, smuggler, trader or escort pilot - it is your choice how to earn the money for urgently required weapons and other equipment for your ship.

2 SYSTEM REQUIREMENTS

Minimum Requirements

- CPU Intel® / AMD® 1.6 GHz
- 512 MB RAM
- Graphics card with 128 MB RAM, DirectX®-9 compatible, supporting Pixel/Vertex Shader 1.1
(nVidia® GeForce™ 3 and ATI® Radeon® 8500 or higher)
Note: GeForce 4 MX cards are not supported due to the lack of Pixel/Vertex Shader 1.1 support on these cards)
- DirectX® compatible sound card
- DVD-ROM drive
- 6.5 GB free hard drive space
- Windows® 2000 with Service Pack 4 or Windows XP with Service Pack 2

Recommended Requirements
- CPU Intel® / AMD® 2.6 GHz
- 1024 MB RAM
- Graphics card with 256 MB RAM, DirectX®-9 compatible, supporting Pixel/Vertex Shader 3.0
(GeForce FX 6600 and Radeon X800 or higher)
- 5.1 and DirectX compatible surround sound card (with surround speakers or headphones)
- DVD-ROM drive
- 6.5 GB free hard drive space
- Mouse with mouse wheel
- Optional: 3-Way-Joystick
- Windows XP with Service Pack 2

Note:
- Please refer to the Readme file for the latest information on system requirement changes.
- High-end graphics cards are able to increase game performance considerably, especially in conjunction with slower CPUs.
- We cannot guarantee that Darkstar One will run on all laptops and notebooks due to the numerous and varied models available on the market. Moreover, mobile chipsets and graphics cards may differ from desktop standards. If your laptop/notebook meets the system requirements, Darkstar One will probably run; however, we cannot guarantee that it will due to differences in system architecture.

3 INSTALLING THE GAME

3.1 Installation

1. Insert Darkstar One into your DVD-ROM drive.
2. If the autorun option is enabled, the installer will start automatically. Simply click "Install" and Darkstar One will install on your system.
3. If the installation does not automatically begin, double click "autorun.exe".
4. Follow the instructions on your screen.

Important technical information and last-minute changes will be available in the Readme file. We recommend reading that file before starting the game. You can access it from the autostart menu.

For the latest news about Darkstar One, please refer to the official homepage www.darkstar-one.com

4 GETTING STARTED

4.1 Main Menu

You can choose between starting a new game and loading a previously saved game. Under "Options" you may configure your game options such as keyboard, mouse and joystick controls.

4.2 Controls and Difficulty Level

You can control the game with either mouse or joystick. We recommend using the keyboard in addition to both devices. It will help you to access important ship functions quickly during battles in space.

In "Options" you will find a "Gameplay" tab. Adjust your difficulty level here and do not worry, you may change the difficulty level at any time during the game.

4.3 The Adventure Begins

Once a new game has started, the adventure will begin to unfold with several video sequences. When they are finished, you will find yourself on a bustling trade station. First, you should select the training missions at the terminal. They will lead you straight into the game world and they will familiarize you with the controls of the "Darkstar One".

4.4 Savegames

As soon as you have landed on stations as well as during long-lasting missions in space, the game will save automatically. Additionally, you may save the game manually at any time. Savegames are stored in "My Documents\Ascaron Entertainment\Darkstar One".

4.5 Screenshots

Pressing the "Print" key will store a screen shot in "My Documents\Ascaron Entertainment\Darkstar One".

5 SPACE STATIONS

Tip   Landing on Stations

In order to land on a station you must establish audio contact with the station first and ask for permission to land. If your criminal record is too high (more than two points), permission will be denied.

1	**Leave.** You will leave the station. If you own any cargo drones, they will follow you automatically.
2	**Dock.** If you are searching for weapons or equipment for your ship, this is the place to look. Depending on the economic system (i.e. Agricultural) and the wealth of the system, the supplies and the quality of the items on offer will vary. This will become increasingly noticeable later in the game. Please refer to 11.7 "Technology Level of Space Stations"
3	**Trade.** The import and export business of a system is handled exclusively on its trade station. Goods that are produced in abundance within a system are classed as 'Export Goods' - all other goods are classed as 'Import Goods'. **Tip** The dynamic economy in Darkstar One's game world will calculate all prices in real time based on supply and demand. The higher the available amount of any particular class of goods, the lower the demand within a system, the lower the price will be. **Tip** Small bars in the Trade window illustrate the relation between supply and demand. **Tip** Export goods are usually low in demand and therefore cheaper than import goods. You should preferably purchase these goods.
4	**Terminal.** Read the latest news of the galaxy here, choose an assignment from the bulletin board or offer escort protection to undocking cargo ships.
5	**Panorama.** The observation window offers a stunning view into space and down to the docking bays.
6	**Contact.** You will be able to contact special people who are important for your mission. Additionally, you will be able to sign up for side missions (Special assignments). **Tip** In each cluster (amassment of several solar systems) - with the exception of the starting cluster - a special assignment will be offered. Once the assignment is completed, it will yield a substantial reward and uncover a hidden system. **Tip** Special assignments tend to be difficult; however, they will continuously be on offer for you until they have been completed successfully.

6	**Tip** Once you have accepted a special assignment, leaving the cluster will abort the mission. If you want to change to another assignment (maybe your current mission is too difficult, or you simply wish to take a new mission) then you may cancel your current assignment by leaving the cluster and returning for a new assignment. Of course, it is not possible to cancel missions for the main storyline. **Tip** If you do not complete a mission successfully, it may become available again in the future. This applies as long as none of the important NPCs involved in the assignment have died. Hyperspace jumps and time acceleration may shorten the waiting time.
7	**Smuggling.** If you have purchased goods on another station that are illegal in the current system, you will be able to sell them to a smuggler here. **Tip** Whenever you approach a police patrol ship outside of a station, your ship will be scanned for smuggled goods. If you are caught, you will immediately receive two penalty points. Afterwards, something happens that might be confusing at first glance: While the police will try their utmost to stop you from reaching the station, the station will generously grant you permission to land. The reason for this contradiction is easy: Each station is a free trading zone to ensure an efficient interstellar trade. However, if you have three penalty points or more, an agreement with the police will come into effect: The permission to land will be denied!
8	**System Information.** Brief information about your current system. Export goods and the economy system are displayed here. The number of inhabitants indicates the demand for goods; the government influences the potential presence of pirates. Please also refer to 11 "Information about the Darkstar Universe"
9	**Buttons and Info Bar.** The buttons and icons from left to right: - Logbook (Missions, Reputation, Status…) - Ship Equipment and Upgrades - Criminal Record (up to five stars: Felon) - Credit balance - Navigation Chart (navigation and information) - Options.

6 IN SPACE

1	**Ship Status.** The inner segment of the status diagram displays the Darkstar One's damage zones (fore, aft, wings). The percentage indicator in the middle refers to the hull status. The available shield energy is displayed in green on the left; the available weapon energy is displayed in blue on the right. Both bars are divided into fore and aft sections.
2	**Recharge Distribution.** Moving the lever will decrease the shields' recharge rate in favor of the weapons' recharge rate and vice versa.
3	**Signal Buttons.** These five buttons will be displayed when appropriate. Their meaning from top to bottom: Φ **Time Acceleration:** *Conveniently reduces traveling times within a system. It may only be activated when no large objects or approaching enemies are in the vicinity. Activate by pressing <V>.* Φ **Hyper Jump:** *The button will be displayed, when a hyper jump destination has been selected. Hyper jump may only be initiated when no large objects or approaching enemies are in the vicinity. Activate by pressing <H>.*

3	**Φ Drop Container:** *This button will be displayed when your ship has a drone with cargo in tow. The drone will drop the container when you click this button. You might find this useful when enemies are approaching and your ship is too sluggish to fight. Activate by pressing <B>.* **Φ Collect Container:** *This button is only displayed when a container is selected as a target and when it is directly in front of the cockpit (within line of sight). The distance must be less than 0.1u; additionally, the Darkstar One should be stationary. (Note: u is the abbreviation for "Units" - the general measurement for distances.) Activate by pressing <G>.* **Φ Upgrade Available:** *This button becomes available when enough artifacts have been collected to enable you to upgrade the Darkstar One. You can distribute the upgrade point immediately. You can access the "Upgrade" dialogue by clicking the button or via your logbook. You will be able to upgrade the plasma cannon - the Darkstar One's special weapon - in the same manner. Access Logbook by pressing <L>.*
4	**Radar.** This area is the radar around the Darkstar One. Your ship is in the center of the globe and it is always facing forwards. The spatial positions of other objects (targets) are displayed within the radar. Basic rules: i) Objects to the left or the right of your ship will be displayed to the left or right of the vertical center line ii) Objects in front of behind the Darkstar One will be displayed above or below the horizontal center line iii) Objects above or below the Darkstar One will be displayed with the help of contour lines. Examples: Three targets are visible on the radar in this image: - The green object (Friend) is to your left. - The red object (Enemy) is behind you on the right (below level). - The blue object (Neutral) is in front of you at 1 o'clock.
5	**Radar Range.** This button adjusts the radar range.
6	**Weapon Buttons.** Select the plasma cannon as well as missiles and torpedoes with these buttons. **Tip** Press and hold the <Space> key to enable you to click on interface buttons **Tip** During fast-paced battles, you might find keyboard shortcuts very useful. Refer to Chapter 15 "Controls and Keys" for more information.

7	**Target Info.** Displays important information about the selected ship / object.
8	**Scanner Info.** Press this button to scan the cargo hold of your selected target. The target must be within a certain range; advanced scanners increase this range.
9	**Video Screen.** Whenever ships or space stations contact you, an animated video image of the contacting person will appear here. Appropriate, dialogue options will also be displayed. Press keys 1, 2 or 3 to select your answer.
10	**Buttons and Info Bar.** The buttons and icons from left to right: - Logbook (Missions, Reputation, Status…) - Ship Equipment and Upgrades - Criminal Record (up to five stars: Felon) - Current Cash ('credits' are the given currency for the known universe) - Navigation Chart (navigation and information) - Options
11	**HUD.** The HUD ("Head-Up-Display") offers useful information: i) The left quarter of the circle indicates the charge status of the plasma cannon. ii) The right quarter of the circle indicates the charge status of the afterburner. iii) The four LEDs are aids for locking onto targets. When a guided missile is active and the target is in the center of the HUD, the missile will be locked onto that target. When all four LEDs are lit, the missile can be launched.
12	**Target Direction.** The arrow by the HUD indicates the direction where the currently selected target is located.
13	**Velocity / Distance to Target.** Below the HUD on the left, the percentage of your current velocity is displayed. On the right, you can read the distance to your selected target.

7 TRAVELING

7.1 Traveling within a System

Once you have left a station or hyperspace (see below), you are located within a solar system. In order to shorten your traveling time, you should always travel at maximum velocity (when using a mouse with mouse wheel, the wheel will adjust your velocity) and use your afterburner. In many cases, time acceleration can be activated (see Chapter 6 "In Space")

7.2 Traveling Through Hyperspace

The game world of Darkstar One consists of more than 300 solar systems. The distance between the systems is usually several light-years. Therefore, the default propulsion that is used to travel inside of solar systems would be far too slow. Each journey would take decades. Fortunately, field drives exist. Each ship of long-range hunter and higher classes is able to induce the folding of space in order to enter into hyperspace. The flight through hyperspace is considerably shorter. The navigation computer will calculate the exact data for the flight, as every mistake would mean substantial diversions - or even death.

Traveling through hyperspace poses one problem: How do you leave hyperspace? Creating an opening from hyperspace to normal space requires more energy than a ship smaller than a cruiser could muster. Therefore, each system has a hyper jump gate. They enable ships to leave hyperspace and return to normal space.

However, this is not quite as easy as it sounds. You require the exact position of the hyper jump gate and additionally, you need a key! The chapter 7.4 "Keys and Unlocking Systems" describes how you will be able to meet these requirements.

7.3 The Navigation Chart

The navigation chart shows all data that the navigation computer has collected and stored. In order to fly through hyperspace, you have to select a target within the range of your field drive. Once you have selected your target system, you initiate the jump from your cockpit.
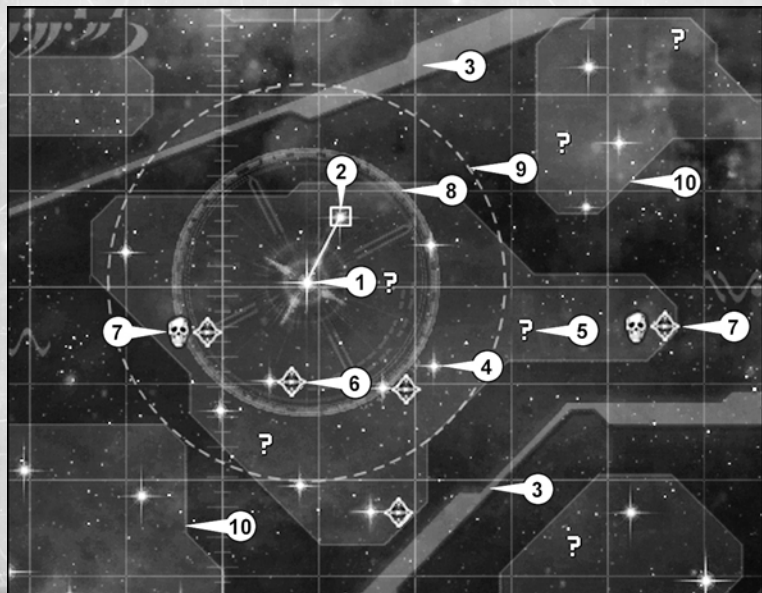
1	Current System.
2	Target system: Left click on a solar system with available key. The system must be within range (see 8 and 9)
3	Border of races' territories.
4	Known system; key for jump gate available.
5	Unknown system. You will receive the key, when you enter a neighboring system (see also 7.4 "Keys and Unlocking Systems").
6	An artifact is hidden inside an asteroid in this system. (In order to reach it, you must have a key to that particular system).
7	Pirates occupy this system. Liberate it (simply travel there and defeat the pirates) and you will receive a substantial reward and an artifact.
8	Current range: The drive will be depleted after the journey; however, it will recharge over time.
9	Maximum range: Advanced field drives increase the traveling range. They become available throughout the story.
10	Cluster border.

7.4 Keys and Unlocking Systems

You require a key to the jump gate in order to enter a solar system via hyperspace. Usually, you will receive the keys to neighboring systems when you enter a system.

Exceptions to this rule:
1. Storyline

Friends and clients will give you specific keys for certain areas and tasks.

2. Hidden Systems

In each cluster (with the exception of the starting cluster) is a hidden system. You will only be able to obtain its key by completing a side mission. These special assignments will be offered via a special button on certain stations within the cluster.

8 STORY AND FREE GAME

Story and free game coexist equally in Darkstar One. The story will lead you to unknown areas, new adventures and more artifacts. It enables you to enhance the "Darkstar One" and to upgrade your ship's technology.

However, in order to use the new opportunities that the story offers you, you will also need the free game. Each new weapon, each additional piece of equipment will cost credits. Fortunately, there are many ways to earn these.

8.1 Assignments

A bulletin board is available at terminals on trade stations. Various assignments will usually be on offer there.

8.2 Bounty Hunting

You can accept assignments in order to earn bounties. Whenever you encounter pirates and eliminate them, you will automatically receive a bounty from the Galactic Union. Some say that rebels also pay bounties - however, they will demand the destruction of GU cruisers.

8.3 Trade

Have you ever seen a battle ship that is able to load large amounts of goods? You're right - there aren't any. However, due to the cargo grabber technology that is not necessary. Whenever you purchase goods, you will receive an appropriate container as well. A cargo drone in the Darkstar One's back beam will tow this container. Unfortunately, this will render the ship sluggish. If a fight is imminent, you can simply drop the container and pick it up again once the fight is over.

Tip See 'Tips' in Chapter 5 "Space Stations".

When a police scan is imminent and you have both illegal goods on board as well as a container in tow, you will not be able to prevent a positive scan by simply dropping the container. This is because the ship carries some of the goods in its cargo hold and the police will still be able to detect the illegal wares.

8.4 Smuggling

Smuggling is similar to trading. You purchase goods for favorable prices in one place and sell them for higher prices elsewhere. Depending on the system governments, certain luxurious goods are illegal. If you manage to get past the police and reach the trade station with illegal goods, you can sell them to a smuggler on the station.

See 'Tips' in Chapter 5 "Space Stations".

8.5 Piracy

Whoever steals a container from someone else in order to sell it qualifies as a pirate. If you intend to steal a container, shoot at a cargo vessel and hope that it will drop its containers. Collect these containers with your cargo grabber and disappear into the next system.

9 SPACE COMBAT

Fights will usually ensue when you

- attack a hostile target
- run into trouble with the police
- become the target of pirate attacks.

Here are a few useful hints how to survive these fights:

- Make good use of afterburners and reverse thrust. Activate the afterburner when enemies attempt to flee and use reverse thrust when you are unable to keep your enemies within your line of sight. When you slow down, your turning radius will decrease.

- Your opponents will attempt to predict your movements during battle (just as you attempt to predict theirs) in order to score better hits. Therefore, it is important not to fly in a straight line when engaged in combat. Use the ability to move sideways or roll the ship as that will mislead your enemies

- Use the plasma cannon! Discover how to apply the various effects efficiently.

- In difficult battles use missiles as often as possible in order to eliminate your enemies quickly.

- The further you advance into space, the more difficult your opponents will become. Remember to upgrade your ship and to maintain the latest available technology level.

- Special missions that are offered on various stations are usually very difficult. If you fail, you should perhaps apply another strategy.

- Some special opponents are capable of unusual tricks, which they will apply when they cannot get rid of you.

Tip Don't be afraid to try out weapons other than the laser! Advanced weapon systems, such as those incorporating missile and plasma technologies, often have distinct advantages over the standard laser.

Tip Evade shots from your enemies by frequently "Rolling" your ship and using "Strafe". Just as you use a 'point of impact' when targeting your enemies, so do your opponents. As such, your enemies will attempt to predict your flight path! Even if you were flying in circles, they would monitor this and still be able to score perfect hits. If you maneuver your ship sideways or perform a sudden 'roll', they will find it much more difficult to lock onto their target.

Tip The target radar at the bottom left of your screen features a display, indicating the difficulty level of your opponents in five levels. Knowing the strength of your enemy might be useful when you have to decide whom to attack first: When all five levels of the bar are filled, you are facing a most difficult enemy.

10   ARTIFACTS AND SHIP UPGRADES

10.1 Collecting Artifacts

The Darkstar One is an extraordinary ship. Kayron's father constructed it with the utmost secrecy from artifacts of an ancient people. These artifacts are of organic origin and they are able to merge with various parts of the ship in order to improve their attributes considerably.

Many of these artifacts can still be found all over the universe. In order to facilitate the search for these artifacts, the Darkstar One features a special scanner. As soon as you enter a new cluster, all artifacts, which are located in this cluster, will be marked on your navigation chart. These artifacts are usually hidden inside asteroids. The Darkstar One has to fly into the inner areas of the asteroid and approach the location of the artifact. The artifact will be absorbed as soon as the Darkstar One is sufficiently close.

Liberating occupied systems (pirate symbol on the navigation chart) will also yield an artifact as a reward.

10.2 Upgrade Points

Not every artifact will enable you to upgrade the "Darkstar One". The number of artifacts needed for the next upgrade is noted in your logbook.

10.3 Upgrade Areas

You can upgrade the hull, wings and engines of the "Darkstar One". A combination of upgrades in all of these areas is also possible. Therefore, you have the choice to select the advantages that suit your style of gameplay.

Hull
Φ Increases the resilience of the "Darkstar One" (hull armor and shield bonus).
Φ Increases the number of turret mountings

Wings
Φ Increases the number of mountings for fore weapons.
Φ Increases the ship's agility.

Engines
Φ Improves the general energy supply.
Φ Afterburners, weapon systems and shields will recharge faster.
Φ Increases maneuverability towing containers.

10.4 Equipment Class

Whenever you upgrade one area of the "Darkstar One", the maximum class of the other areas will also increase.

Example: Upgrading the engines of the "Darkstar One" will also increase the maximum weapon class for fore weapons, turrets and missiles. The same applies for the energy class etc.

Tip **Upgrading vs. Equipment.** Upgrading the "Darkstar One" with artifacts permanently increases the ship's attributes. However, this does not mean that new equipment is not required. On the contrary: When a new mounting for weapons becomes available after an upgrade, you have to purchase a new weapon that you can fit to it!

10.5 The Plasma Cannon

The plasma cannon is a weapon unique to the "Darkstar One". You will be able to upgrade the plasma cannon with each ship's upgrade. The corresponding technology tree is available from the logbook.

11 INFORMATION ABOUT THE DARKSTAR UNIVERSE

11.1 The Galaxy

Darkstar One actually contains a part of the Milky Way itself from where the Terrans originate and where the solar system with a planet called "Earth" is located. Yet, there are more than three hundred solar systems available for exploration. Each system has a political orientation, an economy system, a ruling government and a financial status. The characteristics of these basic conditions vary from system to system thus affecting the activity of traders, pirates, police and the availability of goods and ship equipment.

Each system features several planets as well as space stations and asteroids, but only one trade station. The entire exchange between systems takes place on these trade stations.

A cluster consists of several solar systems. Clusters come in various sizes and the distance between them is usually longer than the distance between systems within same cluster. Therefore, many traders will only do business within their home clusters.

Each of the six races that inhabit this part of the galaxy owns several clusters.

11.2 Political Disputes

Galactic Union (GU)
After the Great War, the interracial Galactic Union formed to prevent large-scale wars from ever breaking out again. Initially, the GU was founded as an alliance between the races; however, a race cannot speak for all the people within a solar system as each system is independent and has a different government. Most of the solar systems (more than 50 %) joined the Galactic Union though and envoys represent them in the Galactic Council.

As each member of the GU is autonomous, the Council will only pass resolutions that do not interfere with government issues inside each of the various systems. Therefore, the Galactic Council will only come to decisions in each of the following 5 areas:

Exchange of goods and technologies
Economic agreements between the systems
Police and military treaties (shared database for criminal offenses)
Taxes and subsidies
Military alliances

The GU's predominant objective is to have a platform where all people may exchange their views and settle conflicts peacefully. Above all there is the intention to settle conflicts that have been smoldering since the Great War - such as borderline conflicts.

Another objective is the consistent economic growth of the entire galaxy. Wealth is generally regarded as the best preventive measure against war.

Therefore, wide-ranging economic agreements were signed and a political environment was created that allowed the foundation of extremely large, inter-racial trade empires. These empires act far beyond the borders of clusters or races.

Independent Systems
Approximately 25 % of all systems are owned outside of the GU and they have reserved the right whether to follow GU resolutions or not. These systems have a fragile bond of arrangements and agreements.

Independent systems also maintain a shared database for criminal offenses. However, in order to stress their independency, they do not share a database with the GU.

Rebel Systems
The remaining systems are rebel systems. Initially, these systems were opposed to the economic policies of the GU, realizing that such politics paved the way for the empires to become increasingly more powerful and influential.

They denied the empires access to certain resources and prevented them from mining in some of their systems, which inevitably led to conflicts between the empires and the renegade systems. The empires gained economic and military influence and used these powers to put pressure on the opposing systems. Some empires were even successful in taking over the governments of certain systems and they proceeded to install empire governments.

Faced with this enormous pressure, the renegade systems formed an alliance of their own. Due to the long-lasting conflict and the terror-like acts of this alliance, the members became known as "The Rebels".

Eventually, the GU realized that it had to act and it cut down the rights of the empires. Finally, the conflicts between the empires and the rebels died down. Empires would deliver goods to the rebel systems and the rebels guaranteed the safety of all cargo vessels from the empires.

11.3 Types of Government

A system's government type is just as important as its political alignment when it comes to the safety from pirate attacks. Some types of government will turn a blind eye to criminal offenses in space and therefore, they do not have a large police force on patrol.

The classification, whether goods are illegal also depends on the type of government.

Stable types of government such as democracies or empire leaderships usually rule GU systems whereas anarchy and federation can be found predominantly in rebel systems.

Government	Description	Notes
Democracy	A superior government led by an elected president represents the entire system. The citizens of a democracy are content and concentrate on the preservation and prolongation of life. The society is opposed to androids and drugs.	**Illegal Goods:** Androids Drugs **Security:** High
Empire Leadership	After the Great War had ended and the empires had been established, conflicts broke out between rebels and empires. The empires have established governments in several rebel systems with rich resources after years of disputes about the mining rights. Systems under empire leaderships are totalitarian and authoritative. They are similar to dictatorships; however, they have strict laws, which they enforce meticulously. Pirates avoid these systems due to the high police presence. Arriving ships are always scrutinized. Traditionally, empires were founded from mining companies; therefore, they are usually found in former mining colonies. Another important branch of economic activity is the production of industrial goods.	**Illegal Goods:** Video games Drugs **Security:** High

Government	Description	Notes
Dictatorship	This is a non-democratic, authoritative type of government. An elite leadership or a single dictator rules the solar system. Several systems are under the rule of the military powers. Their constitutions are rudimentary at best and the lack of governmental control bodies is an ideal prerequisite for corruption, which - in turn - leads to unlawful citizens. Dictatorships focus on the preservation of military strength. Therefore, the economic branches of industrial goods and research are predominant.	**Illegal Goods:** Video games Luxury goods **Security:** Medium
Monarchy	The system's government consists of elected representatives (similar to democratic systems). However, a monarch controls or leads the government. Therefore, the citizen's have not as much right to a say, which leads to a lack of motivation to abide by the laws. Monarchies usually have simple economic systems, relying on agriculture and industry.	**Illegal Goods:** Luxury goods Androids **Security:** Medium
Federation	This is a federalist system leadership, where several planets or states are centralized under one government. The states keep their autonomy for the most part. Mining and pharmacology are the main economic branches of federation systems. Due to the vastly different forms of societies within a federation there are no illegal goods and there is little police presence. All goods may be traded legally.	**Illegal Goods:** - **Security:** Low

Government	Description	Notes
Anarchy	There are no superior governments, no constitutions and no laws in these solar systems. However, there might still be states with a different type of government, for example democracy, in these systems. Due to the lack of a superior government these systems are the most dangerous systems. There are no illegal goods; everything can be produced and traded. Anarchies usually do not have a specialization within their economy; although they have a tendency to produce androids and drugs for smuggling.	**Illegal Goods:** - **Security:** Low

11.4 Criminal Records

All systems residing within one of the three large political factions - Galactic Union, Neutral systems and Rebels - share an internal criminal records database. For example, if you accumulate three penalty points in a GU system, you will carry these penalty points in all other GU systems as well.

Due to the extensive personal insurance schemes on offer throughout the system, victims of crime are often over-compensated and seldom harbor grudges. As a result, your criminal record will decrease over time. If you do not wish to wait, there are ways to purchase a cleaner record through contacts at space stations.

Your GU criminal record will be deleted when you liberate occupied systems.

Tip If you have accumulated a criminal record of three or more points you will be able to have your record hacked and wiped clean for a fee.

11.5 Economic Systems

Each solar system maintains its own economy. The economic system determines which goods are classed as export goods and how technologically advanced a solar system is. These economic systems are known throughout the universe:

Agricultural colony   Mining colony
Industrial colony   Pharmaceutical colony
Research colony   Service colony.

11.6 Economic Situation

A system's economic situation (poor, prosperous, wealthy) influences the activity of pirates. Wealthy systems attract more cargo vessels, thus more pirate activity is likely.

The latest GU Security Board Survey revealed that pirate attacks occur twice as often in wealthy systems than in poor systems.

11.7 Technology Level of Space Stations

The technology level of space stations determines the quality of the equipment that will be available for purchase. Open the 'Dock' menu in order to find out your current space station's technological level.

General rule: Technologically orientated economy systems (i.e. industrial colonies) and rich systems feature higher technology levels.

11.8 Who Owns Space Stations?

Generally, the system's government owns trade stations and research stations. However, the empires are leading several governments - and some empires invested in certain space stations. Therefore, the empires will have an influence on these space stations.

11.9 What is the Legal Status of Space Stations?

Trade stations are free trade zones. Some systems have adopted this legality only recently. It was commonly agreed that a neutral ground is essential for interstellar trade. Today, these free trade zones exist in all systems regardless of their governments or political orientations.

However, each trade station has an agreement with the local police: Known felons will be denied permission to land. Petty criminals will still be granted landing permission even if the police have already taken action against them (i.e. smugglers).

11.10 What are Empires?

Empires are extraordinarily large companies of all trades: production of energy, manufacturing, researching, mining, etc. Most of these empires are not confined to just one solar system but have expanded their business to several systems.

The empires are rivals; however, they usually come to arrangements and they focus their hostility on the rebels who are a thorn in the side of the empires.

It is quite feasible to find three or four empires operating within a cluster due to the agreements that the empires have negotiated. Several empires even act beyond the boundaries of clusters and races. Currently, there are approximately 60 empires registered in the GU territories.

Many public institutions fell into the hands of the empires when bankrupt governments were privatized throughout history. In extreme cases, one or more empires took over the government, and so created 'Empire Governments'.

Rebel systems are opposed to the empires. Additionally, companies are not allowed to exceed a certain size limit. Due to these restrictions, there are no empires in rebel systems and empires are denied mining rights within these systems. Small mining companies govern over the asteroids in Rebel systems.

11.11 Currency

The currency that is shared throughout the known universe, enabling interstellar trade, is measured in 'credits'. Traders will always display their prices in this currency, even if some races may have a currency of their own.

11.12 Language

Terra is the adopted, common language of the races.

It is not unheard of for races to use one or more of their own hereditary languages in private environments. However, the centuries of negotiation and inter-racial relations have elevated the language of *Terra* to an officially accepted and wholly acknowledged universal status (albeit spoken with varying pronunciation and a host of regional and racial dialects, not to mention a range of eccentric, eclectic and exotic accents).

12   THE CHARACTERS

You will meet many characters throughout your adventure. They originate from different races and will assist you with solving your missions in many ways.

Kayron

Kayron is the hero of the adventure. Initially, he embarks on a hunt for his father's murderer, but soon he is drawn into the turmoil of a dawning, galactic war. Kayron is still young - even for a Terran - but he is a natural talent when it comes to flying in space and he has had the opportunity to gain a lot of experience in a cockpit already. Kayron has the ability to bring people from various races together and he has a winning personality that everyone finds hard to resist.

Robert

Robert is a Terran in his early fifties. He is an excellent engineer and he is famous for his development in modern shield technologies. He and Kayron's late father built an important security company and he is an advisor for security to the Galactic Union. Robert is very ambitious and he is intelligent enough to recognize the strategic advantages of a new technology. Maybe that is the reason why Simon did not confide in him about constructing the Darkstar One.

Jack

Jack is a daredevil par excellence and an ace of a pilot. He used to work in Robert's security firm as an escort pilot. When the sabotage to the ship of Kayron's father was linked to him he disappeared and now he is hiding from Robert and his men. This is not difficult for him as he comes from a smuggling family and knows the tricks of the trade…

Eona

Eona's sweet and innocent demeanor is deceiving: She has something stubborn in her eyes that betrays her willpower and the ability to assert herself. She is a contradictive character. On the one hand, she has a decent personality and she would do everything for her friends. Sometimes, she even comes across as naïve or scatterbrained. On the other hand, she led the unsettled life of a smuggler and that requires craftiness and toughness. These sides of her personality form a contrast to each other and they are the basis of her dry and sometimes sarcastic sense of humor.

Ramirez

A pirate with lots of honor and even more courage. These are characteristics of the Mortok who are always prepared for battle. Just like most of his fellow Mortok, he is straightforward and courageous. When he speaks, his voice is booming and his jokes are crude. His father was a warrior, so was his mother. Still, Ramirez was not comfortable with the strict hierarchy of the army and he chose the free life of a pirate. He has been in this trade for many years now and he will only accept assignments that he deems 'honorable'.

Zarkov

Doctor Zarkov is an extremely intelligent, obsessively working Raptor scientist who begins to investigate the recent Thul attacks on his own account, as he is becoming increasingly frustrated with the lackluster attitude of the Galactic Union. He completely ignores the fact that he might endanger his own life because he feels compelled to find out the truth. This attitude is not typical for the average Raptor, whose life is affected by morals, traditions and religion, but - as he frequently states: One must not be pedantic.

Nicolai

Just like Zarkov, Nicolai is a Raptor. He is the chief
security officer of a research station. Due to his strong
faith and his ideals, he has a distinct sense of justice
and righteousness. He is an excellent pilot and he is
always aware of his duties but he can be careless - or
so it seems to outsiders. At times, he is scatterbrained
and he attracts bad luck like a magnet.

Jow'son

Jow'son is an Oc'to diplomat and son of Jow'hal, one of
the outstanding geologists of his time. Jow'son is an
extremely logical and rational individual just like all Oc'to
are. Jow'son usually appears to be disinterested and
bored; however, behind that façade he is hiding a keen
intelligence that enables him to analyze his conversation
partners quickly. That is the secret of his diplomatic
success. Like most Oc'to, Jow'son despises violence in
any way, shape or form. However, he would never
hesitate to defend his friends - if need be with the force
of weapons.

Jiju

Jiju is an Arrack soldier and like all Arrack he is
timorous, hesitant and jumpy. These characteristics
manifest in the jerky movements of his head and
antennae. He would never willingly disobey a law and
he craves rules and hierarchy. However, once he has
committed himself to fight he gives one hundred percent
for his comrades-in-arms. Jiju prefers to be a strategist
who plans and organizes matters.

Naara

Naara is a Thul - that says it all: Imagine a Terran,
double his striving for perfection, take away emotions
and ethical beliefs, add a great amount of logic, and
increase his feeling of superiority. However, this does
not do Naara justice. She is an outstanding scientist and
an exceptional fighter pilot. Contrary to most Thul, she
has realized that arrogance does not constitute
diplomatic adroitness.

13 Service & Support

Due to the large number of hardware and software components as well as system configurations available on the market, it is not possible to entirely eliminate the possibility of program installation and operation problems.

Although we endeavour to prevent such problems through extensive testing and numerous beta tests, issues may occur. These issues can often be quickly resolved.

Should you experience technical problems with the installation or operation of Darkstar One, a variety of information sources are available:

13.1 Tips and Additional Information

The Readme file in the game's installation folder contains tips, additional information and technical information which may not have been available at the time of printing the manual.

Default installation path: C:\Program Files\Ascaron Entertainment\Darkstar One\

13.2 Websites

Ascaron Entertainment	**www.ascaron.com**
Darkstar One Official Homepage	**www.darkstar-one.com**
Darkstar Forums (fan site)	**www.darkstarforum.com**

13.3 Forum

You may use the forum to discuss or exchange your ideas and experiences with other Darkstar One fans. The developers of the game are also often available in these forums.

Visit: **www.darkstar-one.com** and click on "Forum"

13.4 Patches / Downloads

A patch is a program that optimizes the performance of an installed program. You can check on the Darkstar One website (as well as the Ascaron home page www.ascaron.com) whether any updates are available for Darkstar One.

13.5 Contact Us

In the unlikely event that you encounter a technical problem with Darkstar One you can use our internet service at:

http://www.ascaron.com/gb/gb_service/gb_service_kontakt.asp.

- Please fill in the form for further information.

If you contact us via the online form or via email, please remember to provide your computer's basic hardware details. In addition, please also attach the file "DxDiag.txt"

To create your DxDiag.txt file, proceed as follows:

- Click on the Windows "Start" button
- Open the command line by clicking on "Run"
- Type "dxdiag" and click on "OK"
- The DirectX diagnosis program should now start up. Please be patient as this may take a little while
- Click on "Save all information". A file named "DxDiag.txt" will be created in your chosen location.

You can reach our Service Department by using the following telephone number:

  + 49 (0) 5241 / 96 69 0

(Monday through Friday, 2 - 5 p.m. CET)

Note: The service number is hosted in Germany and will be charged at a rate according to the terms and conditions of your telephone provider.

Please be at the computer when you call and have your computer hardware information ready.

We are also available for contact via mail and fax:

  Ascaron Entertainment (UK) Ltd
  19-21 High Street
  Coleshill B46 1AY
  UK

  Fax: + 44 (0) 1675 465570

13.6 Exchange of Defective Data Media

Please read this section (13.6 'Exchange of Defective Data Media') in its entirety for details on faulty returns, associated requirements, costs and warranty information.

We will exchange defective or faulty DVDs. This warranty does not extend to damage caused by improper handling. However, if your DVD does suffer scratches or other damage from mishaps we do offer an exchange for a handling fee of 10 € (GBP £7). Please enclose your name, postal address and a cheque for 10 € (GBP £7), made payable to "Ascaron Entertainment (UK) Limited", when you return your DVD to us.

This warranty expires 1 year after your first purchase of the title. For older titles, we are unable to provide any warranties. The exchange service is a voluntary service of Ascaron Entertainment and does not constitute a legal claim.

Whilst Ascaron Entertainment (UK) Limited is happy to assist with English enquiries originating from within Europe, we regret that we are unable to offer assistance with non-English enquiries, or enquiries from outside of Europe - in such cases, please contact your local distributor directly.

Defective DVDs and all necessary items required to facilitate the exchange, including postal information and payments, should be sent to:

  Ascaron Entertainment (UK) Ltd
  19-21 High Street
  Coleshill B46 1AY
  UK

14   Credits

Concept and Lead Design
Daniel Dumont

Project Lead
Kay Struve

Programming Lead
Bernd Ludewig

Logic
Peter Grimsehl

Interface
Andreas Müller

Graphics
Boris Fornefeld
Stephan Hodes

Engine
Bastian Clarenbach
Michael Kopietz

Sound
Tobias Berghoff

Script Lead
Andreas Schmieschek

Scripting
Jan Langermann
Michel Dumont
Christian Altrogge

Tools Lead
Ulf Winkelmann

Team
Daniel Balster
Maik Delitsch
Bastian Rolf
Thorsten Bentrup
Matthias Süß

Story and Game Design Story, Dialogues and Screenplay
Claudia Kern

Story Production
Sebastian Neuhaus

Mission and System Design
Peter Hann
Armin Böttcher

Tunnel Design
Mirko Worsley

Additional Design
Mario Endlich

Graphics Lead Artist
Alex Conde

Research and Shader Design
Mark Külker

Character Animation and Object Adaptation
Guido Neumann

Models, Interiors, Cutscenes
- The Lightworks -
Tobias Richter
Arne Langenbach
Oliver Nikelowski
Iring Freytag
Peter Hecker
Oliver Stark
Kian Saemian

Cutscenes and Characters
- Virgin Lands Animated Pictures GmbH -
Volker Jäcklein
Vito Lamanna
Ralf Hüttinger
Stefan Spatz
Frank Hessefort
Christian Hotze
Björn Harhausen
Oliver Weirich
Marc von der Brüggen
Alexey Danilkin

Planet Textures, Tunnel 1+2
- Twisted Pair -
Michael Reuter
Thorsten Wallner
Hans-Jörg Keim
Manuel Simon
Marc Reuter

Modeling Equipment
MBA Studios GmbH & Co. KG - Markus Baader
Pixelstorm - Bleick Bleicken

Modeling Interiors
- Animation Arts -
Marco Zeugner
Christian Fischer

Sound and Music Sound Supervision
Dag Winderlich

Sound Design and Effects
Stefan Ruthenberg

Music
- Dynamedion -
Pierre Langer
Tilman Sillescu
Alex Pfeffer
Alexander Röder
Markus Schmidt
Christian Hartung
Michael Schwendler

Additional Music
- Nugel Bros Music -
Ingo Nugel
Henning Nugel
Andreas Adler

Voice Recordings
- M+S Music -
Ulrike Stürzbecher
Sven Hasper
Stefan Lupp
Corinna Viel
Michael Torunsky
Benjamin Hessler

Voice Talents (German)
Renier Baaken
Achim Barrenstein
Gisa Bermann
Rolf Birkholz
Stéphane Bittoun
Steffen Börmel
Erik Borner
Michael Deckner
Sonngard Dressler
Roy Fromlovitz
Dieter Gring
Andreas Gröber
Mario Hassert
Peter Heusch

DARK STAR ONE

Helge Heynold
Rolf Idler
Wolff von Lindenau
Martin Schäfer
Jochen Nötzelmann
Abak Safad-Rei
Marko Schmidt
Karl-Jürgen Sihler
Johannes Steck
Aart Vedder
Gero Wachholz
Peter Wenke
Steffen Willhelm
Susan Zeller

Voice Talents (English)
Donald Arthur
Stewart Booth
Dave Bowman
Tony Clark
Andrea Dewell
James Fisk
Phil Lewis
Mike McAlpine
Clayton Nemrow
Joseph Rippier
Alison Rippier
Mike Shiels
Susan Tackenberg
Chris Tucker
Geoffrey Steinherz
Carl Andernson
Tracy Grey

Quality Assurance Lead
Lars Berenbrinker

QA-Team
Sebastian Walter
Denis Rehbock
Piotr Kostrz
Philip Gamerschlag
Sebastian Henke
Martin Lukaszek
Felix Schuller
Kevin Brepohl

Beta Test Lead, Proof-reading
Torsten Allard
Alan Wild
Helga Parmiter

Hardware Testing
Mark Kieschke
Jan Walczak

Quality Four GmbH, Potsdam, Germany
QA Director
Bernhard Ewers

QA Team Leader
Michael Höhndorf
Sebastian Nachtigall

QA-Team Potsdam
Matthias Lorenz
Enrico Ausborn
Jörg Theirich
Oliver Sturm
Mirko Schmidt
Steven Meinhardt
Hans Joachim von Feilitzsch
Michael Andraschek
Christoph Rothenberg
Robert Gondro
Andre Blunert
Christopher Grothe
Sven Rosenkranz
Florian Reisert
Henrik Schnittger
Matthias Schulz
Thomas Schwan

Production and Publishing Localization Manager
Tim Plöger

Translation / Localization
Helga Parmiter

Web Design and Layouts
Jürgen Venjakob

Community Management
Christiane Clarenbach

Creative Director
Hans-Arno Wegner

Development Supervision
Eric Labelle

Marketing Manager
Christian Franke

Publishing Director
Heiko tom Felde

Managing Director
Holger Flöttmann

Marketing and International Distribution Managing Director
Roger Swindells

International Product Manager
Alan Wild

Business Development Manager
Glenn Davies

SPECIAL THANKS
Our special thanks go to:
- More than 200 avid beta testers

- The Darkstar One Community

- The partners and families of our team members and their infinite patience and devotion throughout the entire project.

Additional thanks go to:

- PestControl for his unerring support, testing, terminology and ideas

- Stillz for his dressing up skills

- Blackstaff for his hosting and distribution ideas

- Wickesy for his inimitable and infectious humor

- The members of **Lancersreactor.com**, especially Wouter Schippers (alias *Eraser*) and Keith Palmer (alias *bakedpotato*) for their contributions and support of the Darkstar One team

15 Controls & Keyboard Shortcuts

Mouse Controls

Ship	Mouse
Velocity +/-	Mouse wheel up/down

Joystick Controls

Ship	Joystick Axis 0+1
Velocity +/-	Joystick Axis 2
Roll	Joystick Axis 3
Round View	Hat switch

Weapons

Fore Weapons	Mouse Button 0 / Joystick Button 0
Plasma Cannon	Mouse Button 1 / Joystick Button 1
Missile Launcher	Mouse Button 2 / Joystick Button 2
Select Missiles	Shift + 1 Shift + 2 Shift + 3

Primary Controls

Afterburner	W
Reverse Thrust	S
Strafe left	A
Strafe right	D
360-degree View	Q
Align Ship	X
Roll left	Z
Roll right	C
Access Cursor Control Menu	Space
Use Item	F

Targeting Computer

Select Target	E
Select Closest Enemy	R
Open Target List	T
Assist Target (Select your target's target)	Y
Toggle Targets of Same Alignment	TAB
Select Missiles	1 to 3
Select Plasma Cannon	4 to 9

Advanced Control

Accelerate	Num+
Brake	Num-
Adjust Speed	M
Navigation Chart	N
Communicate with target	K
Hyper Jump	H
Pick up Container	G
Drop Container	B
Time Acceleration	V
Logbook	L
Transfer Energy to Weapons	Num 4 / Left Cursor
Transfer Energy to Shields	Num 6 / Right cursor
Transfer Shields to Fore	Num 8 / Up cursor
Transfer Shields to Aft	Num 2 / Down cursor

View

Help	F1
Cockpit off / large / small	F3
View inside / outside close / outside far	F4
Turret View (on / off)	F5
Target View (on / off)	F6
Radar (on / off)	F7
Status (on / off)	F8