

GameMaster Notes

Auxiliary Units – Fleet Support Role

One of the most exciting, and challenging, uses for Auxiliary Units [V15.00] is the Fleet Support [V15.50] role. Auxiliary Units enable a Team to conduct extended combat operations deep in enemy territory (where ordinarily they would be cut off from their supply lines). Strategic assaults on enemy rear areas can turn the tide of a war, or spoil carefully laid plans.

In this Note, I'll examine a theoretical assault fleet, a mission, and the necessary Auxiliary Units that would support the fleet on its mission. This is simply a general example, showing how Section 15 of the Border Patrol rules might be applied. There are many more variations than I can discuss in a Note.

Before I begin, I'll draw attention to the fact that the hypothetical assault fleet is not capable of cloaking. Since Strategic Cloaked Movement is hidden, a cloaked assault force, capable of operating behind enemy lines, can unleash devastating surprise attacks. Cloaking adds considerable complexity to such an operation, and is too involved to examine in this Note, but no one should ignore the possibilities.

The first thing to consider is, of course, the mission. For this example, I'll base my premise on a Coalition plan to assault an Alliance Star System, which is at Development Level 5. The Coalition's goal is to knock it back to at least Development Level 2 by destroying the Star System's defenses, dealing a blow to the Alliance economy and forcing the Alliance to redevelop the Star System (at considerable expense). In theory, the Coalition could plan to hang around to Bombard the Star System (or deploy Blockade Mines), but in this exercise, the mission is a simple hit-and-run assault. The fleet could also conduct a Ground Assault [V5.60], but that is also too complex to address in this Note.

Since this is a theoretical example, the Star System is located one Province “inside” Alliance territory. That is, the attacking ships will have to cross one entire Province (3 Strategic Hexes wide) and then reach the center Hex of the adjoining Province to attack the Star System. Thus, the Coalition force must pass through a total of 5 Hexes, in each direction, while they are Out Of Supply (and must rely on Cargo to maintain normal operations).

Any assault fleet needs to be powerful enough to do significant damage. For this example, I'll use Klingon units, and construct a theoretical fleet consisting of five (5) Size Class 4 units (frigate and/or destroyers, such as the E6 or F5W), three (3) Size Class 3 units (light/medium/heavy cruisers, such as the D5, D6D or D7) and a single Size Class 2 unit (a dreadnought/battleship, such as the C8):

Unit Type	Size Class	Quantity In Fleet	Boxes of Cargo Used Per Movement Phase
F5K	4	1	1
F5B	4	2	2
E5	4	2	2
D5S	3	1	2
D6DB	3	1	2
D7L	3	1	2
C8B	2	1	3
Total		9	14

Helpfully, all the units in this hypothetical fleet have a Standard BOMA of 5, meaning they can cross from Coalition territory to the target Star System in one Strategic Turn. However, that also means they need Auxiliary Units that not only have sufficient Cargo capacity, but can keep pace. The obvious choice is the Large Armed Freighter (the exact armament is not important in this example), which also has a Standard BOMA of 5. These Size Class 4 units have 50 Boxes of Cargo and only consume 0.5 Cargo Boxes per Movement Phase.

The total Cargo consumption during the two full Strategic Turns necessary for the assault force to get in, and out, of enemy territory is [(14 Cargo Boxes/Movement Phase * (8 Movement Phases/Turn * 2 Turns) = 14 * 16 = 224] 224 boxes of Cargo. That takes 5 Large Armed Freighters to provide, and leaves 26 Cargo boxes unused by the warships.

However, 5 Large Freighters have a combined Cargo box consumption of 40 [(2.5 Cargo Boxes/Movement Phase * (8 Movement Phases/Turn * 2 Turns) = (2.5 * 16) = 40]. The additional Cargo needs of the Armed Freighters means that 5 Freighters are not sufficient – the fleet would be 14 boxes of Cargo short, which would leave it (or at least some of the units) running out of supplies while still in enemy territory. Not a good idea.

The shortage could be solved by simply adding another Large Armed Freighter, but that would waste more than 30 Cargo boxes that would not be needed (they could be used to store specific equipment, like particular sets of drone reloads, but in this example, the mission doesn't call for that much storage dedicated to specific equipment). Given the mission parameters, a better idea might be to add a Large Repair Freighter (specifically, the F-RLw [V20.87]) and, as an escort for the Auxiliary Units, a Special Sensor-equipped Large Exploration Freighter (specifically, the F-ELw [V20.87]). They offer a total of 32 boxes of Cargo capacity, while only needing a total of 16 boxes of Cargo themselves. The result is 2 boxes (100 spaces) of Cargo left over to any speciality items the fleet might need. It should be noted that the D6D also has 4 boxes of Cargo that would be available for similar usage.

The Repair Freighter would give the assault fleet the capacity to perform some significant repairs (beyond Campaign Damage Repairs), while the Exploration Freighter would provide valuable EW support for the Auxiliaries without committing the D5S to that task.

The hypothetical assault fleet described represents approximately 1100 BPV, including add-ons like drone upgrades and T-bombs. The Auxiliary Units represent slightly more than half that, about an additional 700 BPV. The combination is a powerful military force capable of conducting rapid-paced, hard-hitting attacks for a full two months (Strategic Turns) without support or re-supply; it even has sufficient Cargo capacity (6 Cargo boxes total) to carry three extra sets of drone reloads for all the warships, plus a supply of spare T-bombs and shuttles. It's precisely the sort of fleet that no Team wants rampaging in the rear areas.

End of GameMaster Notes: Auxiliary Units – Fleet Support Role