



# RUNNING A MERCENARY FORCE

Creating a mercenary command takes a professional soldier only halfway to independence. Once a force has been formed and its mettle first tested on the field of battle, a long journey begins toward the twin goals of survival and profit. Honor and glory fall by the wayside on the battlefield—these are luxuries only the best forces can afford.

This section sketches out the basic considerations of running a mercenary force. *Mercenary Rating* provides guidelines for generating an official force rating, while *Contract Offers* and *Contract Negotiations* list rules for generating and negotiating contracts. *Missions* explains such considerations as contract advances, preparations and transportation rates, and *Maintenance and Logistics* provides rules for maintaining the combat readiness of the force's machines between contracts. *Battle* offers rules for generating force-wide game advantages, specializations and other developments that help a force improve over time, while *Failures and Breaches* outlines the penalties of coming up short.

## MERCENARY RATING

Most mercenary forces and MRBC-approved hiring halls use the Dragoons Rating to indicate a mercenary command's state of readiness, as well as its ability to respond to different situations. The rating system originated by Wolf's Dragoons when Outreach became known as the Mercenary's World remains the most popular system used by employers when seeking a force worthy of their needs. Though some existing forces are rated according to other systems, many systems use similar enough concepts to produce essentially the same result.

The following paragraphs explain how to determine a mercenary command's initial Dragoons Rating and update it during the force's career.

## FINDING THE RATING

Dragoons Ratings are calculated by adding up a force's numerical quality, command, combat record, transportation, technology and support ratings. The sum of all these components (recalculated every time the force returns from a mission) provides a state-of-the-command overview of all these factors.

To find the value of each of these ratings, consult the Dragoons Rating Calculation Table below and add all results that apply to the mercenary force. Any sub-forces within a command that operate independently (such as an individual regiment within a multi-regimental command) should be

### DRAGOONS RATING CALCULATION TABLE

<b>Average Experience Rating</b>	<b>Value</b>
Green	+5
Regular	+10
Veteran	+20
Elite	+40
<b>Commander Rating</b>	<b>Value</b>
Positive Trait (each)	+1
Negative Trait (each)	-1
Leadership Skill	As skill bonus
Negotiations Skill	As skill bonus
Strategy Skill	As skill bonus
Tactics Skill	As skill bonus
<b>Combat Record*</b>	<b>Value</b>
Each Successful Mission	+5
Each Partially Successful Mission	0
Each Failed Mission	-10
Each Contract Breach	-25
<b>Transportation Rating</b>	<b>Value</b>
DropShip Capacity	+5 per each 10% over 50%†
JumpShip	+10
WarShip (w/ no DropShip capacity)	+20
WarShip (w/ DropShip capacity)	+30
Vessel is Auxiliary Unit	Multiply value by 0.5
<b>Technology Rating</b>	<b>Value</b>
Level 1 Technology	—
Level 2 Technology††	+5 per each 10% over 30%†
<b>Support Rating</b>	<b>Value</b>
Technical Support	+5 per each 10% over 60%†
Medical Support	+2 per each 5% over 75%†
Administrative Support	+1 per each 10% over 60%†
<b>Financial Rating</b>	<b>Value</b>
Mercenary Command in debt	-10 per full year

\* For any covert missions, multiply the value of the mission outcome by 0.5, rounding up.

† Full percentages only; Round fractions down; Maximum 100%

††Count Clan percentages double.

calculated separately. Count any auxiliary units (DropShips and JumpShips not owned directly by the mercenary command) at half value.



# RUNNING A MERCENARY FORCE

## Average Experience Rating

Players can find a force's Average Experience Rating (AER) by using the system for computing the experience rating of its main body of troops for its War Chest multiplier (see *War Chest*, p. 151). Note, however, that *all* combat units are calculated for this rating, including any DropShips and WarShips, regardless of whether or not they are auxiliary units (not owned by the mercenary command). JumpShips, even if armed, are not counted as combat units.

The final average experience rating adds 5 points to a force's Dragoons Rating for Green, 10 for Regular, 20 for Veteran and 40 for Elite.

## Command Rating

To determine the force's Command Rating, simply add up the commander's Leadership, Tactics, Strategy and Negotiation skill levels. Then add 1 point for each positive trait featured at least once in the commander's character and subtract 1 point for each negative trait. For purposes of this calculation, positive traits are: Brave, Combat Sense, Contact, Good Reputation, Land Grant, Title, Wealth, Well-Connected or a 7+ in SOC or CHA. Negative traits are: Bad Reputation, Combat Paralysis, Madness, Timid, Unlucky, a 3 or less in SOC or CHA and Clan or Periphery origins.

If the player used the fast generation method instead of the *CBT: RPG* character rules, he may not know the actual skill levels for a commander's Leadership, Tactics, Strategy and Negotiations. The player should roll 1D6 for each skill. Subtract 4 from the roll result if the relevant skill was *not* purchased as a trait under the fast generation system, then add 1 if the commander has a Regular skill rating, 2 for a Veteran rating and 4 for Elite. The final result is the commander's skill level in that skill. Once he has determined all the skill levels, the player adds them up to find the Command Rating. Treat any final results of less than 1 as 1.

## Combat Record Rating

To calculate a force's Combat Record Rating (CRR), add 5 points for every mission the mercenary command has successfully completed. Subtract 10 points from the sum for each failed mission and 25 points for any breach of contract. If the player used the force creation system to create the force, count missions from the force's mission experience path(s) in Step 2, Stage 3 (*Creating a Mercenary Force*, pp. 142 and 144) when calculating the Combat Record Rating.

To successfully complete a mission, a mercenary force must achieve all the *primary* objectives defined in the mission contract. If the force achieves none of the primary objectives, the mission has failed. If the force achieves some—but not all—of the primary objectives, the mission is considered a partial success and does not affect the Combat Record Rating. Secondary mission objectives also do not affect the CRR.

Typically, only the Mercenary Review and Bonding Commission (in most games, the gamemaster) can determine if a force has committed a breach of contract. If playing without a gamemaster, the players involved should select a neutral judge or panel of judges to decide the matter, present their cases to the judge or panel and then abide by the judge's decision. In either case, when resolving a contract breach, consult the rules under *Mission Failures and Contract Breaches*, p. 179.

Every completed non-garrison/non-retainer contract, or every three years of uneventful garrison duty/retainer contract, counts as a single completed mission, worth 5 points in the

Dragoons Rating system regardless of how long the contract actually runs. If a contract covers several missions, treat each mission separately for purposes of determining a force's CRR. However, a breach of contract on any single mission of a multi-mission contract nullifies the entire contract, and the single contract breach penalty applies in place of any mission completion or failure modifiers.

The above rules refer only to conventional contracts. Any contracts accepted that include covert operations, because they are less well known and less overtly advertised by employers and mercenaries alike, are worth only half the standard value for success, failure or breach.

## Transportation Rating

To determine a force's Transportation Rating, allot 5 points for every 10 percent of the force's total DropShip transport capability that exceeds 50 percent. Add 10 points for any JumpShips or WarShips the force possesses.

A force's DropShip capacity is simply the percentage of component sub-forces that the command's DropShips can carry, rounded off to the nearest 10 percent. For purposes of this calculation, each BattleMech, aerospace fighter and vehicle lance counts as a full sub-force, as do infantry platoons and battle armor squads. A force cannot receive more than 25 points for its DropShip capacity even if that capacity exceeds 100 percent.

Add 10 points if the force possesses any JumpShips, 20 points for any WarShips without DropShip capacity and 30 points for any WarShips that can accommodate DropShips. These bonuses apply only once, regardless of how many vessels the merc command actually possesses.

LEVEL ONE EQUIPMENT TABLE
AC/2, AC/5, AC/10, AC/20
Armor (standard)
Cockpit (standard)
Engine (standard)
Flamer, Flamer (vehicle)
Gyro (standard)
Hatchet
Heat Sink (standard)
Internal Structure (standard)
Jump Jet (standard)
Large Laser, Medium Laser, Small Laser
LRM 5, LRM 10, LRM 15, LRM 20
Machine Gun
PPC
SRM 2, SRM 4, SRM 6



## Technology Rating

The Technology Rating (TR) is the percentage of a force's BattleMech, vehicle and fighter tonnage constructed with advanced technology (Inner Sphere or Clan Level 2 equipment). A unit is considered to be Level 2 or higher if its equipment includes anything not shown on the Level 1 Equipment Table below, or if it incorporates Clan technology.

To calculate a force's TR, determine the percentage of the force's total number of combat units (excluding conventional infantry) that use Level 2 technology or Clan-made equipment. Allot 5 points for every 10 percent above 30 that the unit possesses in Inner Sphere Level 2 technology. Units that use Clan technology are worth double their percentage, so double the percentage calculation result when resolving Clan unit percentages, and add the result to the number of Level 2+ units to find the force's overall Technology Rating. Whether units employ Clan or Inner Sphere Level 2 technology, however, the maximum technology percentage cannot exceed 100.

Though not all mercenary forces have Dragoons Ratings, they do have Equipment Ratings, which sum up the level of technology in a similar fashion to the TR formula. To find a force's Equipment Rating, simply cross-reference the total percentage of Level 2/Clan units within the force against the Equipment Rating Table below. While not critical to computing Dragoons Ratings, knowing a force's average Equipment Rating can help unrated forces obtain contracts.

*A mercenary command has four Level 1 'Mechs, six Level 2 Inner Sphere 'Mechs and two Clan 'Mechs. The percentages of these units in the force are computed as follows:*

$$\text{Level 2 units} = (6 / 12) \times 100 = 50 \text{ percent}$$

$$\text{Clan units} = (2 / 12) \times 100 = 16.67 \times 2 = 33.33 \text{ percent}$$

*Added together, the total percentage of units with Level 2/Clan technology is thus 83.33 percent (rounding down to 83 percent). This exceeds 30 percent by a 53.33 percent, or five full 10 percent increments. The unit therefore has a 25-point Technology Rating.*

## Support Rating

To determine a force's Support Rating (SR), determine its technical, medical and administrative support needs in weekly

man-hours, and then determine the amount of weekly man-hours produced for each category by its support staff. Allot 5 points for every 10 percent of required technical support the command can generate in excess of 60 percent. Add 2 points for every 5 percent of medical support that is then produced in excess of 75 percent, and 1 point for every 10 percent of administrative support provided over 60 percent.

The formulas for determining a command's support needs and the man-hours produced by its support staff are part of Step 4 in *Creating a Mercenary Force*, p. 148.

### EQUIPMENT RATING TABLE

Level 2+/Clan Percentage	Equipment Rating
15 or less	F
16 to 45	D
46 to 65	C
66 to 85	B
86 and up	A

### DRAGOONS RATING TABLE

Total Points	Rating
<0	F
0-45	D
46-85	C
86-120	B
121-150	A
151+	A* (A-star)

## Financial Rating

A force's Financial Rating (FR) indicates whether or not a mercenary command is financially solvent or operating in debt. If a mercenary command's current war chest is below 0 C-bills, the command is considered in debt and loses 10 points from its rating for every year (or fraction thereof) in which it consistently remains that way. If a mercenary command pays off all its debts at any point, this modifier automatically drops to 0.

## Finding the Dragoons Rating

The sum of the above ratings produces a final score for the mercenary command that the player may cross-reference against the Dragoons Rating Table to find his force's Dragoons Rating.

## CONTRACT OFFERS

In a given month, a mercenary command may attract numerous contract offers, depending on its location (or at least that of its hiring hall), its force type and its mercenary rating. These factors not only influence the number of contracts offered, but also by which employers and for what mission types.

On the first of each month, the mercenary command player makes a series of rolls to determine the number of contract offers received. The Contract Modifiers Table below provides a list of modifiers that may apply to this roll and however many subsequent rolls are needed to determine the employer and mission per offer. When rolling for a new contract, the player running the mercenary force must select all Hiring Hall, Main Force Type and Dragoons/Equipment Rating modifiers that apply and add them to the dice roll results for the appropriate tables.

These offers remain open only for the month in which they are received, after which they are shopped out to other mercenary forces. A merc command therefore has a narrow window of opportunity in which to discuss possible terms for a mission and draw up a contract.



# RUNNING A MERCENARY FORCE

## CONTRACT MODIFIERS TABLE

### Contract Table Modifiers

Hiring Hall	Offers	Employers	Missions
Antallos (Port Krin)	-1	-2	-2
Arc-Royal	+1	+2	+2
Astrokaszy	+1	-2	-1
Fletcher	+1	-1	-1
Galatea	+1	0	0
Heroditus	0	-1	-1
Northwind	0	0	+2
Outreach	+2	0	0
Solaris VII	+1	0	-1
Westerhand	-1	0	+1
No Hall	-2	-3	-4

Main Force Type	Offers	Employers	Missions
Aerospace fighters	0	0	+1
BattleMechs	+1	+1	0
Conventional armor	+1	0	-1
Infantry (conventional)	+1	0	-2
Infantry (battle armor)	+1	+1	-2
Infantry (Special Forces)	+2	0	-3

Dragoons/Equipment Rating	Offers	Employers	Missions
A*	+3	0	+1
A	+3	0	0
B	+2	0	0
C	+1	0	0
D	0	0	-1
F	-2	-1	-1
Unrated	-1	-1	-1

## NUMBER OF OFFERS

To determine how many contract offers a mercenary command receives in a month, roll 2D6 and consult the Contract Offers Table. Apply all appropriate modifiers to the roll result to reflect the effects of hiring hall locale, the force's primary unit type and its Dragoons/Equipment Rating.

## DETERMINING EMPLOYER

To determine a contract's employer, first roll 3D6 and consult the Contract Employer Table, applying the Employers modifier from the Contract Modifiers Table above. If the roll result indicates a Periphery Employer, roll 3D6 again (once more applying all appropriate modifiers) and consult the Periphery Employer column to determine which Periphery state is offering the contract.

If the initial result yields an independent world or Chaos March power, the gamemaster may choose any faction he or she deems appropriate. In the absence of a gamemaster, the player

may roll again to choose another employer or pick an appropriate world or Chaos March power that is geographically closest to the second resulting employer. Players can use the same technique to resolve a mercenary employer as well; consulting the *Employment Roster* (see p. 183. *Field Manual: Updates*) should help to find a regimental-sized mercenary command located geographically closest to the second resulting employer.

If the initial result indicates a corporate employer, the player may either create one or select it from any *BattleTech* product. Players may also generate a corporate employer by rolling on any random 'Mech-generation table, then looking up the manufacturer of the 'Mech design in the appropriate *Technical Readouts*.

## THE MISSION

To determine a contract mission, roll 2D6 and consult the Contract Mission Table, applying the appropriate Missions modifiers from the Contract Modifiers Table. Locate the mission type that corresponds with the contract employer and roll result. If the initial result is Special or Covert, roll again (once more applying all relevant modifiers) and refer to the appropriate column for the contract mission. Mission results separated by a slash indicate dual-purpose contracts, where the mercenary force is expected to perform both roles simultaneously.

Select mission targets within the closest Successor State, Clan Occupation Zone, Periphery realm or corporate holding that is hostile or potentially hostile toward the contract employer. Consider the mission type and political conditions when setting targets. Corporate employers are most likely to authorize missions against other corporations.

See *Contracts (Employment and Contracts, p. 23)* for descriptions of mission types.

## Responsibilities

Primary responsibilities for the various contract missions are fairly standard (see *Contracts, page 23*). Gamemasters should create more specific responsibilities based on the particular contract. For example, if a mercenary force will be serving as part of a larger planetary-assault command, the force's contract might specify particular targets.

## CONTRACT OFFERS TABLE

Modified 2D6 Roll	Offers
3 or less	0
4-5	1
6-9	2
10-12	3
13-15	4
16 or more	5