The Complete Elite Dangerous Background Simulation Guide

2024 EDITION V1.5.2

Cmdr Purrfect | Andrew van der Stock

SIRIUS INC CEO

Table of Contents

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Thank you!

A huge thank you to the following Commanders for reviewing, editing, or commenting on this document:

- Commander Jeremaya NONA
- Commander Ian Doncaster
- Commander TobyToolbag
- Commander tez
- Commander Pro Cambarus
- Commanders u/Screemonster, u/Fedifensor, and u/ElectricCat7079
- Commanders Cluster Fox and Smoke
- A huge thank you to Commander Alanzo Firenze for their extensive comments.
- Commander Taipandot
- Commander Gen. Zoff
- Commander demon5760

If there are mistakes, they are mine, and mine alone. If you spot a mistake or an improvement, please email me (vanderaj@gmail.com) or come to the SINC Discord (https://discord.gg/XgQNYjUyTN) and discuss it with us.
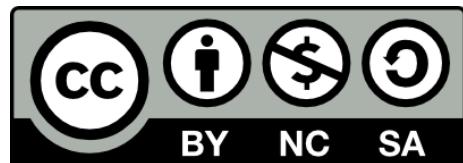
Always check for an updated version of this BGS Guide when revising your BGS Plan or at least monthly, as new, and improved versions could happen at any time. Get the latest version from SINC Science: https://sinc.science/guides/sinc/The%20Complete%20BGS%20Guide%202024.pdf

License

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the first all-new background simulation (BGS) guide in quite some time, one that covers modern crime and punishment, fleet carriers, and, of course, Odyssey. This guide will be updated once PowerPlay 2.0 comes out. This guide is for all skill levels – from folks wanting to get into BGS, to BGS Coordinators running huge factions.

You can get going with the background simulation in the loaner Sidewinder or default flight suit. All you need to do is complete some missions, do a bit of pew pew, fit a fuel scoop, and go exploring, or add some cargo racks and do some trade. There are other actions that you can take as well, but these are the primary four game loops that anyone can do. You do not need to be Elite ranked. You do not need fancy ships or suits. Anyone can get into BGS, including you!

Who is this guide for?

This guide is primarily for those who are just starting to get into BGS and those who are experienced BGS coordinators - to help them understand BGS better and be more efficient. This guide is designed to allow you to be highly effective at manipulating the BGS for fun and profit.

Much of the guidance in the first part will not be new or surprising to experienced BGS Coordinators, but I hope the reference section can help them produce better BGS requests that use their team's time more effectively.

Thank you to Jane Turner

A massive shout out to Jane Turner, the OG BGS Guide. Jane Turner is a volunteer moderator on the [Frontier Forums in the BGS section](). Most BGS Commanders owe her all they know, because her posts are often the first contact many of us had when trying to understand BGS more deeply.

Without her forum BGS posts and informative comments, this Guide and the older BGS Guides would not exist, and our collective knowledge of a very opaque simulation that underpins our game would be so much poorer.

I've included an extensive list of her posts in the Bibliography on page 82. Although much of the detailed information is now out of date, especially after the Odyssey launch and recent updates, her insights and main concepts are still correct after all these years. Many of the posts have updated information in the last few pages.

Jane's approach to sharing information should be emulated by all BGS Coordinators and operatives. Please be like Jane, please share your knowledge freely to all who ask.

What's New in V1.5.1?

With much thanks to Cmdrs Smoke (Jal'Bur) and Cluster Fox for sharing their knowledge and hard data, this is a major revision of the previous versions of the BGS Guide. Some of the major revisions include:

- Revisions to the combat and election sections based upon hard data (Updated in v1.5.1)
- Links to all of Jane Turner's BGS forum posts (Updated in v1.5.1)

- Playing as a team with a plan: the BGS force multiplier on page 60
- Constructing a BGS Plan on page 60
- Improvements to diplomacy recommendations
- New Mining ship builds on page 25
- A new method for loading your carrier twice as fast on page 34 thanks to Ghost Giraffe
- A new method for influence peddling and smuggling bulk stolen goods on page 41
- A new method to murder clean ships and avoid ATR on page 39
- Improvements to positive and negative levers throughout the document
- Improvements to descriptions about the way demand and profit drives trade
- Improvements to the diminishing returns model
- Incorporating details about effort on population size and max influence that can be gained.
- Improvements on the reducing influence, particularly murder, and bringing them together.
- Revisions to the retreat model to explain the important day more clearly.
- And much more.

Version 2.0 will be a placeholder version for when I revise this document for PowerPlay 2.0.

BGS is not a second job.

BGS can be all-consuming. BGS is not a second job; do not let it get in the way of your family, life, or real job. If you feel obligated to do BGS every day or start to feel burned out, pull back and do something else in the game. Or take a break from the game. If you want to talk about it, come to SINC's Discord and chat about it. We have all been there.

Science First - Data and Experiment Driven

Where data exists or we have evaluated a recommended approach, we use that data or experiments to support our recommendations. Much of the best missions, state effects, and actions come from the excellent Colonia Census (https://cdb.sotl.org.uk/) by Commander Ian Doncaster.

This guide relies on almost everything other than the older BGS Guides. Even a broken clock is right twice a day. BGS has changed a great deal since the old BGS Guides were written. This guide builds upon the Colonia Census, the game, testing, and the ED BGS hive mind.

We will let you know where we have not evaluated a recommendation. If you produce a better experiment or results, please let me know. There is nothing worse than promulgating out-of-date information or sub-optimal tactics or strategies.

Opinionated

This guide has Opinions™ and does not shy away from controversial topics, such as negative actions like murder and smuggling. Some factions do not do negative actions, but BGS allows for positive and negative actions, so this guide documents them without judgment.

Everything in BGS can be done in multiple ways, some more effective than others. This guide is not just a reference; it also suggests various tactics and strategies. I hope this guide inspires folks to

research and develop new BGS tactics and strategies, especially as PowerPlay 2.0 comes into life and disrupts the moribund state of BGS.

Not every BGS Coordinator will agree with this guide's opinions, which is perfectly fine. If you think you know better than what you read here or have a better tactic or strategy, please let me know, and I will evaluate it out and update this guide.

The intersection between BGS and PowerPlay

Often, BGS coordinators consider PowerPlay 1.0 to be irrelevant to BGS. This is not the case. By not participating in PowerPlay, you are eliminating your squadron's role-play opportunities, getting a chance to meet and kill new Commanders, or obtaining various bonuses for your exploited and controlled systems.

PowerPlay 1.0 has triggers that rely upon favorable BGS government types, so the most active BGS squadrons in the game are the Powers. They often flip systems to create a majority favorable government type in a control sphere and manage systems with or without the controlling faction's consent. The best way to avoid acrimonious relations is to reach out with diplomacy to the various Powers.

Additionally, there are bonuses from PowerPlay exploitation and control. These change how systems work, such as closing (or opening!) black markets, changing what is illegal at markets, increasing production and prices of high market value goods, changing the system's security level, and more. These directly impact BGS.

With PowerPlay 2.0 coming, this guide strongly recommends that squadrons reach out to their nearest Powers – and vice versa - and see how they can cooperate.

Essential Internet Resources

- Inara   https://inara.cz
- EliteBGS   https://elitebgs.app
- Jegin Information Network   https://jegin.net/
- ED BGS Discord   https://discord.gg/PZwERyb
- Squadron Recruitment Center https://discord.gg/squadronrecruitmentcenter
- Colonia Census   https://cdb.sotl.org.uk/

Colonia Census is a fantastic resource for the Colonia region, but as they tend to have smaller systems, there is a chance that some of their results are not necessarily applicable to much larger population systems of the bubble. However, the Census is one of the most comprehensive evidence-based BGS sites available today.

Essential Tools

BGS is data-driven under the hood. To help surface this data, please help collect and deliver data to the Elite Dangerous Data Network (EDDN), which all tools used in this guide subscribe to, such as Inara, EliteBGS, EDSM, Jegin, and others. This lets you keep a history (EliteBGS) or view the current situation immediately (EliteBGS, Jegin, and Inara) in one spot.

To collect BGS data for Elite tools, you should install:

- ED Market Connector - Releases · EDCD/EDMarketConnector (github.com)

Configuring an Inara API key is highly recommended to provide greater detail than the journal alone provides. Details are in the Installation and Setup section of the EDMC documentation.

To help understand what your faction's players have been doing, ask them to record their actions in a paper notebook or text file, or even better, install Aussi's BGS Tally plugin for ED MC and let them set up "Post to Discord."

- Aussi BGS Tally Plugin - Releases · aussig/BGS-Tally (github.com)

The details on how to do this are included in the plugin documentation. The Discord admin for your server will need to let players set up an integration to make this work.

Some terms used throughout the document.

- **Superpower** - there are three superpowers – the Empire, the Federation, and the Alliance. And Independents, but they are not an acknowledged superpower.
- **Power** – there are eleven powers, aligned with the Empire, Federation, Alliance, or Independent
- **Squadron** – a collection of Commanders supporting one or more factions in-game. This guide uses "player group" to mean a faction presence outside the game. Player groups usually support one player minor faction, but some, including Powers, support many factions.
- **Player Minor Faction** (PMF or faction) – in-game representation of a squadron. The game confusingly uses squadrons (as in Squadron Hub) and factions to mean the same thing. This guide uses "faction" to mean the in-game faction, whether a PMF or NPC faction.
- **System.** A populated system that participates in BGS
- **Asset.** A spaceport, planetary port, Odyssey settlement, and more. See below.

WHAT IS BGS?

In Elite Dangerous, populated systems are governed and brought to life by the Background Simulation (BGS). The BGS controls everything from security levels, system states, market prices and supply and demand, shipyard and outfitting availability, faction influence, NPC behavior (particularly terrorist and pirate states), and more. Everything you and all the other Commanders do in Elite Dangerous in populated systems affects the BGS.

So why do BGS? Why do Lego? Because it is there, and it has been designed to get you involved in all facets of the game. It can be fun to manipulate the background simulation, whether to promote beneficial states for high grade emission farming, flip systems on behalf of your preferred Power or to bring the local sphere of influence to be majority favorable, conquer your local part of the galaxy, run a diplomatic mission, fight with your fellow players, or win a gold medal on the game's political leaderboard – it's entirely up to you. BGS is player driven, and without players, the BGS is just a small set of random movements every day.

BGS is at its heart, a 100% sum game. A system will contain several *factions*. Each faction has an *influence* level, and when all factions' influence is totaled, it will total 100%. Doing positive actions for your faction will necessarily reduce other factions. Hostile Commanders doing work for other factions will reduce your faction. Depending on the actions they take, it will affect your faction's *state*. Some states are good, some do not hurt, and others are bad and are best avoided.

BGS encourages Commanders to play all the primary gameplay loops – trade, missions, exploration, and combat, both at a surface level – just by doing the positive version but also in a deeper, more negative way.

BGS is a yin-yang model; the most successful BGS Commanders know when to push up or pull down one or more factions and how to do it the most efficiently. Whilst you are getting into BGS, you should concentrate on positive actions primarily, or do the actions requested of you by your faction's BGS coordinator but know that there are highly effective negative actions that will open the world of BGS manipulation.

BGS manipulation is the art of promoting and maintaining beneficial states and happiness in your own systems and, when necessary, performing positive or negative actions and states for other factions and systems. In contested areas of the galaxy, it is essential to create negative states in your enemy's systems to make them work harder so they cannot attack you so often or to reduce (squelch) or misdirect their expansions away from your systems. A busy enemy is distracted and less effective at resisting your plans and expansions. You can do this with stealth or entirely in the open. It is up to you.

Learning to use your time wisely is the key to successful BGS manipulation, especially if you are in a highly contested part of the galaxy.

Systems

Populated systems (systems from now on) are the fundamental unit for which BGS operates.

Systems have at least one station or planetary port, with more populous systems having larger stations or ports, and more of them. Optionally, systems can have Odyssey settlements, installations, and megaships.

Systems can have up to eight factions in normal circumstances, each with an influence level. Influence adds up to 100%. We will talk about influence shortly.

Systems have an overall state, usually the controlling faction's state or expansion, if the controlling faction is in expansion. Secondary factions can affect the global system state, but this is the exception, not the rule. Expansion is a global state, which we will talk about later.

Unpopulated and detention center systems, like HR 1172, do not take part in the BGS.

Factions

There are two types of factions – player minor factions (PMFs, or "factions" from now on) and non-player characters (NPC factions), and an increasingly common "player adopted factions," where players are looking after defunct PMFs or NPC factions in their area. Mechanically, there is no difference between these, though the greater likelihood of a PMF being player-supported can make them appear different in practice.

Every faction has a home system, and they are considered "native" to the system and cannot be retreated. Many NPC factions include the name of their home system in their name, but not all of them. PMFs have a home system – this is where they were initially seeded into the game by Frontier Developments or selected by the Commander starting the faction. They, too, cannot be retreated from that system. If you see a PMF not in control of its home system, the faction is defunct or under the control or aegis of another PMF.

Commanders can adopt, boost, or reduce any faction within the game, including NPC factions. However, this guide recommends that Commanders join a squadron and support known PMFs within the game.

You want to be a part of an active community, but sadly, there are many defunct player groups and, therefore, many defunct factions. Contact a player group before joining the game squadron so you can ask questions and find out if they are active. Or you can browse squadrons within the game and join them. Depending on the squadron settings in the game, the faction owner might need to approve you to join the squadron. Once a member, the main difference is that you can now see in-game squadron news (if any) and access squadron chat. The original Commander who started the faction and their delegated Commanders (if any) have privileged in game faction roles, such as who can admit or kick a member, set squadron news, and so on.

Reputation

Faction reputation is a measure of your trustworthiness to the faction. Factions will offer you more types of missions and higher rewards as you progress from neutral to allied. Being allied is different

from being pledged to a faction. Typically, you will be allied with your supported faction, but sometimes, you must take adverse actions against your faction to manage the BGS properly, which will temporarily harm your reputation.

There's also superpower reputation, which you can earn by completing missions and activities for factions of that superpower. When you unlock the Federal Corvette or the Imperial Cutter, you will be increasing your reputation with the Federation or Empire, respectively. You can also increase your reputation with the Alliance, but as there are no ships behind an Alliance rank wall, this is mostly the preserve of Alliance PowerPlay Commanders. You can see your reputation with the superpowers on the right-hand panel on the second tab down under Status.

You can also lose your reputation and end up unfriendly or hostile. Being hostile to a faction prevents you from getting missions from the faction and stops you (easily) landing at a faction's stations, settlements, and ports. If you are in hostile status, you will recover a little bit of reputation daily until you are unfriendly.

Influence

Influence is how influential a faction is within a system. Everything you do in a system will affect all the factions' influence levels. The most common objective of manipulating BGS is to get your faction on top of all the other factions, keep them there, and then repeat that in as many systems as you can control.

Influence under 2.5% will cause a non-native faction to enter the retreat state, potentially leaving a system if no action is taken. Influence above 75% will cause a faction to enter the expansion state and potentially expand to a nearby system.

You can roleplay the spoiler, reducing the influence of opposing factions and "helping" them not to expand in your direction. This means keeping visibility on their systems' influence and guessing what they are up to. Similarly, they might be in your systems, "helping" manage your systems to suit themselves.

A faction will bump into other factions with similar influence levels. If one or both factions have assets, a conflict will result, and the game will lock the two factions together. Conflicts are either wars or elections, depending on their government type. A faction without any assets can move around other factions that do not have assets without causing an influence lock or conflict. However, the controlling faction will always own at least the controlling asset. Thus, a convergence in influence between the controlling faction and another faction always results in a conflict for control of the system. This is best avoided by boosting the controlling faction and reducing the predatory faction. We will talk about conflict tactics in more detail later – both from a controlling faction's point of view and from a predatory faction's point of view, which wants to take over a system.

The controlling faction usually has the most influence, but there are circumstances where this is not the case, such as during a coup or a conflict for control.

Assets – Stations and more

Asset ownership. Factions can own large orbital space stations, medium outposts, Odyssey settlements, planetary ports (collectively "stations" or "assets"), installations, and mega-ships. Not every asset in a system will be owned by the controlling faction, and in fact, this is rare outside of single-asset systems. Not every faction will own an asset.

Controlling asset. The controlling faction – usually the faction with the highest system influence - will own the controlling asset. The controlling asset is usually – but not always - the closest and largest spaceport to the main A star. Without spaceports, the first planetary port will be the controlling asset. In some systems, notably Delphi, the controlling asset is NOT the first large spaceport. Until you initiate a conflict to control a system, there is no way of telling which asset is the controlling asset.

Controlling faction. A station's controlling (owning) faction gets influence from trade, universal cartographics (if available), combat bonds, and missions. Non-controlling factions can only offer missions and combat bounties as influence levers.

Installations can either be in space or on the ground. They are owned by a faction. You can tell who owns an installation by determining which faction provides the system authority ships. This is the installation's owner, and doing positive or negative actions at the installation, such as completing a scenario or attacking skimmers, will affect the installation's owner.

Non-Dockable Megaships move systems and are owned by the system controllers. These megaships provide scenarios – immediate missions – which you can complete to boost the controlling faction, or deliberately fail to reduce the controlling faction. You can also attack the megaship by hacking the comms array or stealing the cargo with hatch breaker limpets. Often, there is loose cargo around the megaship. If it says, "Legal salvage," you can collect it without hurting the controlling faction, or if it says, "Illegal salvage," collecting it will incur a small fine and reduce the controlling faction's security slider. Illegal salvage is considered stolen, and you can sell it to black markets.

Dockable megaships. Some player-owned megaships exist, such as SINC's Dionysus in HIP 17044 – which does not move and acts like a regular system station, or Cannon's The Gnosis – which does move but does not act like a regular system station – it does not introduce Cannon's faction to an unpopulated system. Whichever faction provides the system authority ships protecting the megaship is the owner for BGS purposes. Dockable megaships never have scenarios.

System states

System states, such as boom, bust, expansion, lockdown, or civil liberty, govern how BGS reacts to various inputs and provides bonuses, modifiers, or penalties. One of the significant outcomes of many states is modifiers for trade. Some positive states double prices, demand, and supply, and negative states reduce prices and demand. For example, trade missions are more effective in a boom and allow Commanders to make a decent profit.

All factions can generate unidentified signal sources (USS's), which inherit the state of the faction. If you are hunting high-grade emissions for factions in a boom state, you should pay attention to the faction and the state of the USS before dropping in.

There are three main types of system state:

- Local state, the controlling faction's state is the system state, but it can be a secondary faction's state in some circumstances.
- Global state, an older state type, of which expansion is the last remaining global state.
- AX states, a newer system state type, of alert, Alert, Invasion, Control, and Recovery

There are many states – please review the reference section on their effects, how long they last, how to get into them, and how to get out of them.

Sliders

The faction sliders are the two major visible aspects of a faction's state in Elite Dangerous. These can be viewed on the right-hand panel under status. The position of the sliders determines the faction state. You can do positive actions to improve the sliders and the states, which come with various bonuses and modifiers. You can do negative actions to bring down the sliders and get a faction into a negative state, which can harm the faction... or help it. Like in the later stages of playing Monopoly, being sent to jail, and staying there - helps win the game because you do not land on other players' properties. Similarly, factions may voluntarily wish to enter or not fix a difficult state like lockdown, because it slows down or even stops attacks against the controlling faction.

In the absence of any action, both economy and security sliders will gradually move back towards the center point.

Economy

The economy slider is a measure of the economic health of the faction. The higher the slider, the more beneficial trade and exploration are, and the lower it is, the faction might enter bust, which can create related event states such as famine, blight, and drought.

Some of these "bad" event states can sometimes be beneficial, such as famine, which generates distribution centers which are great for wake scanning, and easy mission influence in the form of source and return missions, trade for food, mass donations, and more. You can easily increase your system influence if you are in famine.

Security

The security slider represents a faction's ability to maintain law and order in a system. The levers for the security slider are violence, more violence, and ultra violence. Dropping combat bounties and doing combat-related missions increases the security slider; murders and illegal missions that target the security slider (such as kill skimmers) will lower the security slider.

Anarchy factions always have their security slider locked to the center and, therefore, cannot experience Civil Liberty, Civil Unrest, or Lockdown states. Except for the Race Marshalls who are a

special type of anarchy.

System security levels

Each system has a security level, which is the number of system authority ships within a system.

Low. Low security systems have the fewest system authority ships, you are unlikely to be interdicted by the system authority ships, system authority ships take additional time and respond very half-heartedly to crimes, there is a chance there will be a compromised navigation beacon, and often you'll find interstellar factors at stations, which is a great place to get rid of unwanted bounties and fines. There are more NPC pirates in low security systems.

Medium. There are increasing numbers of system authority ships present around the system and within ports, settlements, and installations. Interdictions may happen. There is a moderate amount of NPC pirates, but if you have "report crimes" enabled, the response by system authorities should be enough to see them off.

High. In High security systems, you will often be interdicted by the system authority ships for scans for illegal goods (you'll get a fine if you stick around for the scan to finish), the system authority ships will respond with more and better equipped ships to crimes, and there's more chances you'll be scanned when smuggling in illegal goods at stations. Many high security systems are heavily involved in trade, so strangely enough, there will be more pirates in high security systems as a result, but if you have "Report crimes against me" turned on, response will be swift and useful if you are in a defenseless trade ship.

Daily tick

Every day, there is a "tick." This tick spreads throughout the galaxy at various times and has multiple phases, so it is possible to see the tick changing the state of a system a little at a time. The three known phases are:

- **Conflict resolution** – conflict efforts are tallied, and winning days are awarded to factions who have won the most conflict zones and handed in the most combat bonds or handed in the most election missions and economic influence. If a conflict is concluded, the spoils are distributed to the winning faction and subtracted from the losing faction.
- **State resolution** – certain states are introduced or concluded, sometimes with "taxes" applied to the applicable faction, such as the expansion tax of around 15% being subtracted at the expansion conclusion. This phase is when retreats are processed; there is no point in distributing influence on a faction that is being removed, and their influence must be distributed to all the other factions.
- **Effort distribution** – Commander activity is applied and distributed amongst the remaining factions.

There is no single tick time, and the tick time for System A *will* be different from System B. If you wait for the tick to come through, you might be waiting for a while. If you are worried about handing in a mission or bonds in time to have influence on this tick, hand it in now.

Station News is the first location with the most accurate information about the tick's results. You must be docked in a station in the system to find out early. The remaining locations, such as the journal, galactic map, squadron hub, and right-hand panel, will have the results within one to 12 hours of the tick time. There is no rhyme or reason as to why this is. It just is.

The best advice is to play when you can and let the dominos fall where they will. You may occasionally waste effort, such as handing in or abandoning completed missions for a retreated faction or holding onto bonds for a war that has finished, but having too much done is better than not enough.

Weekly server maintenance tick

Once a week, at 0700 UTC every Thursday, the game servers are brought offline, and server-side maintenance updates take place. This is when PowerPlay 1.0's weekly tick is processed. Odyssey stations are restocked with fresh suits and weapons. The weekly server tick has no effect on the BGS daily tick and the system influence, the two ticks are two separate things.

JOINING A SQUADRON AND GETTING INTO BGS

Getting started with BGS is easy. There is a low barrier to entry. You can do BGS on foot or on any ship. You can do BGS with just the game, no tools, and without joining a player group, but you will get a lot more out of the BGS if you join a player group, get into the ED BGS community, find mentors, start asking questions, and use tools to maximize your effectiveness.

You have certainly been doing BGS but did not realize it – completing missions, handing in combat bounties, dropping exploration data, fighting wars, and making trade (such as mining or deliberate trade loops) all affect the BGS. This guide is to help you be highly effective at boosting (or reducing) a faction without overworking yourself.

The following steps document the verification steps that most factions will want you to do to join their faction. However, you can skip ahead to Step 4 and just start doing BGS. The best bet is to find a squadron first and find out what they want you to do to join their faction.

Earning money fast

BGS can make you money if you're doing it right. But like with all unhealthy habits, BGS has some activities that cost money such as murders (see page 37) and buying ever more ships. The Number One Rule of Elite Dangerous: **Never Fly without a Rebuy**! If you find yourself a bit short of credits, let's fix that.

Credits are easy to come by if you want to get some fast. In 2024, the main methods of making money fast in order of profit per hour:

AX Combat, preferably in a team. This can earn ridiculous amounts of money but does require at least one of the team to be half decent at AX activities as well as a half decent AX build. [Anti-Xeno Academy: Learn how to fight Thargoids (youtube.com)](youtube.com)

Exobiology. Go 1000 ly above or below the galactic plane from the bubble. There are heaps of first footfalls, and thus first discoveries to be made. Use the Elite Observatory or Exploration Buddy tools to help identify high value scans. Go scan them. You'll need an exploration ship with a fuel scoop, an Artemis suit, and you'll want a SCO drive to get around quicker. https://youtu.be/XlojxpWja_c?si=75t3ZBDPfXUP9c4X&t=315

- Elite Observatory Core [Releases · Xjph/ObservatoryCore (github.com)](github.com)
- Elite Observatory BioInsights plugin - [EDJP :: Observatory Plugins (colacube.net)](colacube.net)
- EDEB Exploration Buddy [Elite Dangerous Exploration Buddy (panostrede.de)](panostrede.de)

Stackable 50 mCr Team "Mining" missions, preferably in a team of four. This is the main method that SINC uses. We call it the Berty Train. You can easily earn a billion a day stacking mining missions for {gallite, bertrandite, indite, rutile, coltan, silver}, and a team of four, you can earn up to four billion credits a day if everyone shares their team missions with each other.

You will want a large cargo ship, like a Type 9, Anaconda, or Cutter to do this efficiently. You will need to be allied with the owning faction to get the 50 mCr missions. There will be lower value missions of the same type if you are not allied, which you can take for the reputation increase until
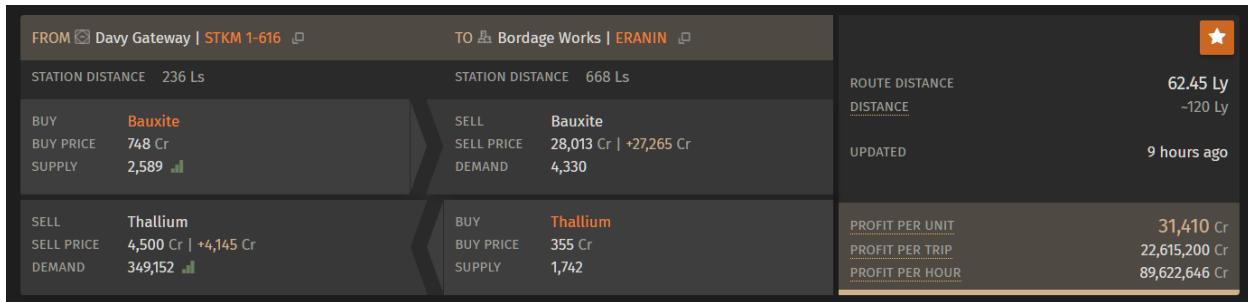
you are allied. In Inara.cz, search for your nearest suitable system. You will want to have a faction that is in expansion, a large population, with a large industrial and agricultural large pad station. A good pair of stations for this is Gurabru – Kratman Hub to get the missions, and Yukpenon – Stokes Enterprise to buy the goods.

Top Tip: If you have a carrier and two cargo ships, you can use the fast cargo loading method (see page 34) to earn even more credits per hour as you'll be able to complete more missions. https://youtu.be/XlojxpWja_c?si=CZWNDRcjOG731S4A&t=2064

Bonus Top Tip: As a side hustle, if you have a shield and some half decent weapons on an Imperial Cutter, you can earn bounties and combat rank by killing the NPC pirates that will inevitably come after you, which can help you get allied.

Profitable Trade loops. You can make a lot of money with a large cargo ship and a suitable trading loop. Use Inara.cz > Data > Trade Routes. Search for routes that are within the fully laden range of your ship (or have the Fuel Rats on speed dial), less than two days old, min supply and demand of at least 5000 (or else you'll be changing routes often) and use a large landing pad.

FROM ⊟ Davy Gateway | STKM 1-616 ⊡	TO ⬢ Bordage Works | ERANIN ⊡	★
STATION DISTANCE 236 Ls	STATION DISTANCE 668 Ls	ROUTE DISTANCE — 62.45 Ly
		DISTANCE — ~120 Ly
BUY **Bauxite**	SELL Bauxite	
BUY PRICE 748 Cr	SELL PRICE 28,013 Cr | +27,265 Cr	UPDATED — 9 hours ago
SUPPLY 2,589	DEMAND 4,330	
SELL Thallium	BUY **Thallium**	PROFIT PER UNIT — 31,410 Cr
SELL PRICE 4,500 Cr | +4,145 Cr	BUY PRICE 355 Cr	PROFIT PER TRIP — 22,615,200 Cr
DEMAND 349,152	SUPPLY 1,742	PROFIT PER HOUR — 89,622,646 Cr

Find a trade route near you that makes more than 30,000 credits profit per unit. You can make 80-100 million credits per hour doing these trade loops. If you have weapons and a shield, you can also farm NPC pirates for a bit of additional cash.

Platinum Laser Mining. Most of the mining commodity prices have been nerfed, especially compared to the old days of million+ credit per void opal or LTD, but you can still make decent money by laser mining platinum. You don't need much to get into laser mining. Take an hour or so in a laser mining Python for a quick 50 mCr or so. You'll earn a lot more using a larger mining ship. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pmdmMvdSXDM

There are other methods, but these produce the most credits per hour.

Step 1 – Join a Squadron

If you're just getting started with BGS, it cannot be stressed highly enough to join an active player group, whether a squadron in the area you're interested in, the New Pilots Initiative if you're a newbie, or a Power, who are some of the largest and busiest BGS operations in the game. Most player groups will have a squadron page on Inara that covers at least one faction in-game. There are hundreds of active player groups, all looking for BGS operatives, who are happy to train and mentor you in the ways of BGS in return for influence.

Either:

- **For newbies - join the New Pilots Initiative.** The NEWP folks will show you the ropes and have an active BGS. NEWP is an excellent choice for new Commanders learning the game and BGS. https://discord.com/invite/newp
- **For intermediate Commanders - find a squadron at the Squadron Recruitment Center**. So many factions are desperate for BGS operatives – you can rise rapidly in many squadrons. https://discord.gg/squadronrecruitmentcenter
- **For advanced Commanders - join a Power and help them with their BGS efforts**. Powers are the most active BGS player groups, typically with more than five hundred systems and heavy diplomacy requirements. Most Powers have a BGS faction of their own or have allies you can join. See the table in the references section on page 81 to find your nearest Power Discord.
- **Start a new squadron (might not be possible).** See Starting a squadron on page 22 for all the details of how to create your own squadron.

Step 2 – Secure Your Inara Profile

Nearly all player groups will require a verified Inara profile to join their squadron on Inara or in-game to avoid "fifth column" (enemy infiltration). If you already have an Inara profile, that is great; let us configure it correctly.

- **Join Inara**. Go to https://inara.cz click "Sign In," and then "Create your account!"
- **Sign in**.
- **Set account privacy**. Go to Commander > Commander Settings > Privacy Settings and change, at the very least, "Commander's Flight Log," "Commander's missions log," "Commander's combat log," and "Commander's location" to "Squadron members." If you are not yet a squadron member, you might need to do this after you join the squadron. Nearly all squadrons require Inara privacy.
- **Link to your Frontier account**. Go to Commander > Commander Settings and link your Frontier account. Once done, it will say, "Your game account is linked and verified."
- **Import your Frontier data**. Go to Commander > Overview > Import game data.

Step 3 – Get Tooled Up

BGS is driven by Commander activity, with a small dose of BGS randomness (RNG) to keep things interesting. Although you can play without any tools, you are hobbling your ability to compete. You will work harder than Commanders using tools and data to direct their activity and be less effective.

- **Publish your activity**. Install a tool like ED Market Connector to report your activity to all the tools like Inara, EliteBGS, and Jegin.
- **Generate an API key for ED Market Connector**. Go to Commander > Commander Settings > API Settings. Generate a new API key. Copy the key to your clipboard.
- **Configure ED Market Connector Inara API Key.** Paste the API key into ED Market Connector in File > Settings > Inara > API key. Click the Inara credentials link to log in to Inara, and then click OK. Click Update, and your location should be updated in Inara.
- **Track your activity**. Use a paper notebook, text file, or a tracking tool like Aussi's BGS Tally to help you track your activity. Nearly all player groups require participating Commanders to report their activity.

Some player groups are anti-tool or are trying to do something hush-hush and require you not to use tools while completing specific goals. Collaborate with your player group to help you (and them) be more effective by using tools most of the time while living within no-tool restrictions during certain operations. If your player group is completely anti-tool, it might be best to find another player group.

Step 4 – Get into BGS

Most squadrons have a regularly published BGS request. Review the request, ask a few questions on your squadron's Discord on how best to do it, and then start doing it. At the end of your play session, let them know what you have done. Most squadrons will have a private channel for this to obscure the activity from prying eyes.

If there is no recent BGS request, have a look at the squadron's Inara system overview page, and find the lowest controlled system. With a few exceptions, it is almost impossible to go wrong by boosting the lowest influence system. Have a look at the system state(s) and compare that to the states in the reference section so you know what sort of actions you can do that make the most sense and the best use of your time. For example, in lockdown, you can only drop combat bounties, or in boom, trade and exploration data are the most effective. Look at the population size of the system. If it is small (less than about a million population), a little activity will go a long way, so do not overdo it. Do the actions you want to do, wait for the daily tick to pass, and then look at the results.

Either way, congrats, you have just done your first BGS boost! Well done. There is a heap more to BGS than this, but, working on systems in trouble and boosting the lowest influence systems is the bread and butter of most squadrons' BGS efforts.

Some squadrons require their BGS operatives to do a minimum amount of weekly work to stay within their BGS group. Playing a game or doing BGS should never be a second job. You should learn what you can and move on if the requirements are too onerous. If you are a squadron leader, this guide recommends not mandating minimum activity levels, but it is up to you.

Open, Private Group, or Solo?

Most player groups require their BGS operatives to work in open mode, and this guide recommends that you do, too. Playing in open provides opportunities for Commander interaction, including PvP, and opportunities to counter or assist BGS activities organically.

However, play the game the way you want, but know that many in the BGS community consider playing in PG or solo against the ethos of fair play, which may affect diplomatic relations.

Starting a squadron

Frontier Developments has not been processing in-game squadron requests for a while now. They might resume processing squadron requests after the Thargoid war is over, but we simply do not know when it will resume.

If you want to create a new squadron, go to the right-hand panel in the game, Squadrons (this is the Squadron Hub), Squadron Management, and Create a Squadron. It will cost you ten million credits.

Please take the time to choose your government type, superpower, and power alignment carefully.

If you are going to be creating a squadron in 2024, you will want to align yourself with a Power, because you will be placed within a Power's sphere of influence. If you remain entirely independent, you miss a great deal of prebuilt active community.

PowerPlay Control 1.0 Table

Most Powers strongly prefer to have favorable government types, so if you can, choose one of the "strong" government types if you plan on pledging to a specific Power and your planned systems are within their sphere of influence. If your preferred government type is neither weak nor strong, it is neutral, and although you will not be helping your preferred Power, you will not necessarily harm them if they remain with a majority favorable government type within the controlling sphere of influence. If your preferred government type is "weak" or unfavorable, you will actively harm your Power – pledged or not, and things will not go well for you.

Power	Weak (or unfavorable)	Strong (or preferred)	Neutral
Aisling Duval	Feudal Prison Colony Theocracy	Communist Cooperative Confederacy	Corporate Democracy Patronage Dictatorship
Archon Delaine	Feudal Prison Colony Theocracy	Confederacy Cooperative Communist	Corporate Democracy Patronage Dictatorship
Arissa Lavigny-Duval	Dictatorship	Feudal Patronage	Corporate Cooperative Confederacy Democracy
Denton Patreus	Dictatorship	Feudal Patronage	Corporate Democracy Communism Anarchy

Power	Weak (or unfavorable)	Strong (or preferred)	Neutral
Edmond Mahon	Communist Cooperative Feudal Patronage	Corporate	Democracy Confederacy Dictatorship
Felicia Winters	Communist Cooperative Feudal Patronage	Corporate	Democracy Theocracy Confederacy Dictatorship
Li Yong-Rui	Communist Cooperative Feudal Patronage	Corporate	Democracy Anarchy Dictatorship
Pranav Antal	Democracy	Feudal Dictatorship Communist Cooperative	Corporate Confederacy Patronage
Yuri Grom	Democracy	Feudal Dictatorship Communist Cooperative	Corporate Confederacy Anarchy Patronage
Zachary Hudson	Dictatorship	Feudal Patronage	Democracy Corporate Confederacy Cooperative Communism Theocracy
Zemina Torval	Democracy	Feudal Dictatorship Communist Cooperative	Corporate Cooperative Confederacy Feudal Anarchy Patronage

Table 1 - PowerPlay 1.0 Control Fortification Bonus Considerations

Powers must have mostly favorable government types within a sphere of influence from their control systems to earn a fortification bonus. They will flip exploited systems to a different controlling faction that best suits their needs, so if you decide to pledge your faction to a Power and you are an unfavorable government type, you will end up being a drag on their sphere of influence around their control systems. This will either mean you never end up controlling many systems, or you will be at war with your pledged power.

If in doubt, work with your preferred Power before selecting your in-game faction, particularly the start location, superpower alignment, government type, and expansion plans. This will get you off to a great start with your preferred Power. A list of Power Discords is in the Reference section.

Build a BGS ship (or two)

You do not need a highly engineered ship to participate, nor many ships. It is possible to do BGS by using the starter Sidewinder or taking Apex taxis for on-foot missions. However, eventually, you will want at least one decent ship for each of the major activities, and you'll probably end up with more.

All these ships use the new SCO drives, because there is no downside to them. There is an unengineered build, which has a lower range and less capability, and a fully engineered build for those with the patience and materials to make an end game build.

Mission and Generalist BGS Ship

When doing BGS or missions, you often need a "bubble taxi" – a ship that can get around and dock anywhere. The following suggested ships are good at getting around but not as an offensive ship that can take on any pirate.

Role	Unengineered	Engineered
Cobra Mk 3	Cobra Mk 3 (33.5 ly)	Cobra Mk 3 (47.3 ly)
Dolphin	Dolphin (25.7 ly)	Dolphin (53.2 ly)
Asp X Explorer	Asp X (30.2 ly)	Asp X (54.4 ly)
Python (for local cargo runs)	Python (22 ly, 280 cargo)	Python (42.5 ly, 272 cargo)

Trade Ship

Trade is an essential element in boosting factions – or reducing them. The following builds are useful for smuggling (because the Dolphin is a very cold running ship), a Python that can do the long-haul medium pad trade missions, and finally a Type 9 and offensive Cutter for local trade loops.

Role	Unengineered	Engineered
Smuggling Dolphin	Dolphin (80 cargo, 19% heat)	Dolphin (80 cargo, 16% heat)
Long Range Python	Python (252 cargo, 19 ly)	Python (236 cargo, 41 ly)
Defenseless Type 9	Type 9 (756 cargo, 13.4 ly)	Type 9 (740 cargo, 31.4 ly)
Offensive Cutter	Cutter (728 cargo, 15.48 ly)	Cutter (712 cargo, 34.3 ly)

Exploration Ship

Exploration is one of the only buckets that cannot be countered by negative actions, so in highly contested systems, make sure you are doing some roads to riches or otherwise dropping exploration data if you control a station. Please note that the 80 ly Anaconda is the worst exploration ship in the game, but it can get you places fast. It is difficult to land, slow to turn in normal space and super cruise. The other choices are simply better, especially for near-bubble or near-Colonia explorers doing roads to riches.

Role	Unengineered	Engineered
Dolphin	Dolphin (33.3 ly)	Dolphin (63.2 ly)
Asp X	Asp X (36.9 ly)	Asp X (70.5 ly)
Krait Phantom	Krait Phantom (33.5 ly)	Krait Phantom (70.7 ly)
Anaconda	Anaconda (40 ly)	Anaconda (80.6 ly)

Combat Ship

Combat is an essential element to managing the security slider. Not shown here, but immensely popular in the PvE and PvP community are the Fer-De-Lance, Krait Mk 2, and to a lesser extent, the Krait Phantom. There are great builds available on Reddit r/EliteDangerous and similar sub-Reddits. These ships use frag cannons, which can be a little difficult to land shots.

Note: As of writing (June 2024), the Python MK II is only available for purchase via the Arx Store but will be available for credits within the game after August 7, 2024.

Role	Unengineered	Engineered
Vulture	Vulture (235.7 DPS)	Vulture (341.8 DPS)
Chieftain	Chieftain (337.82 DPS) w/KWS	Chieftain (550.98 DPS) w/KWS
Python MK II	Python Mk II (554 DPS)	Python Mk II (829 DPS)
Corvette	Corvette (678 DPS) w/KWS	Corvette (1036 DPS) w/KWS

Mining Ship

Mining is a chill activity if you need a break from the usual BGS rigmarole, but you don't need to do mining for BGS. There are some great mining builds from r/EliteMiners:

Role	Unengineered	Engineered
Starter Laser Miner *	https://edsy.org/s/vKJbIhB	https://edsy.org/s/v1sa7jL
All Round Miner – Python *	https://edsy.org/s/vfDtSLB	https://edsy.org/s/vCrYowX
Haz Res Laser Miner – Conda	https://edsy.org/s/vxRfgJ1	https://edsy.org/s/vHBC1og
Laser Miner – Cutter	https://edsy.org/s/vKlki2h	https://edsy.org/s/vGRYH6C
Haz Res Miner – Type 10 *	https://edsy.org/s/vxQjF0X	https://edsy.org/s/vWcCfGs

*Table 2 - Suggested Mining Builds. * Indicates r/EliteMiners suggested build*

The Starter Laser Miner is a bootstrapping mining vessel, designed to mine until you can afford a build like the All-Round Miner.

Haz Res Mining is an effective way to get mission commodities such as osmium, bromellite, samarium, and more quickly, whilst spicing up mining and earning combat bounties on the side.

Core mining using the Python based All Round Miner is recommended as getting around inside disintegrated core rocks requires a smaller and more nimble ship.

Build your own ship.

These are just some possibilities. If you are interested in ship building and theory crafting, head on over to r/EliteOutfitters and search for your ship name or ask questions about your build.

EliteOutfitters (reddit.com)

MANIPULATING THE BACKGROUND SIMULATION

BGS mastery is about knowledge, which is why this guide exists. Frontier Developments designed BGS such that a new Commander in a loaner Sidewinder or basic flight suit can affect BGS if they know what they are doing. You do not need (although it is helpful) end-game engineered ships. You do not need to be Elite ranked. You need knowledge.

Sadly, FDev deliberately does not document the inner workings of BGS, so much of the knowledge about BGS is through observations, trial, and error, testing hypotheses, and pure guesswork.

Work smarter, not harder.

For example, it might sound simple to drop one hundred mCr of combat bounties on a system, sell 100 mCr of gold in trade profits, or do 100 missions influence points in a day. It will work. However, there are buckets and levers with ever diminishing returns on efforts to allow smaller efforts by individual Commanders to be as valuable as tremendous contributions. This is a deliberate BGS design choice.

Maintenance

A small number of players, even as few as one, can keep a faction's BGS stable, such as avoiding retreats of uncontrolled systems, topping off low influence systems to avoid conflicts for control, and if necessary, reducing high influence systems to avoid unnecessary expansion.

Daily scan

The daily scan is a combination of using Inara.cz's squadron pages, and the in-game squadron hub, because Inara may not necessarily be up to date on influence levels.

Inara – go to Squadron > Overview > click on your minor faction. It will show a summary page like this:

Check out any bad states and decide if you are going to do something about them.

Followed by a list of current conflicts.

And then followed by a helpful list of "fast movers," a list of systems that have the largest swings. A swing of 1%-3% per day is normal background activity, and can be ignored, but the graph will show if it has been consistent over a few days, and thus worth doing something about.

It is worth sorting the trend column to show the biggest changes, and checking to see if there is a conflict brewing, or some form of adversarial action occurring in the system, such as a new faction trying to take over the system. This can help you decide on what to work on during this tick.

STAR SYSTEM	INF	TREND	UPDATED
San	61.1%	-17.2%	3 days ago
Ngalia	61.2%	-6.5%	4 days ago
HIP 16813	64.8%	-6.0%	2 days ago
BD+48 738	23.6%	-5.9%	2 hours ago
Ch'ortamaye	45.5%	-4.3%	11 hours ago
Matuveltan	6.5%	-4.3%	22 hours ago
42 n Persei	66.6%	-3.3%	1 day ago
Hyades Sector AB-W b2-2	88.6%	-3.1%	2 days ago
Hyades Sector DR-V c2-23	16.6%	-3.0%	15 minutes ago
Pleiades Sector KC-V c2-4	13.9%	-2.6%	23 hours ago
Pyemma	57.2%	-2.4%	14 hours ago
Chaimal	15.0%	-2.3%	15 hours ago
HIP 17044	83.4%	-2.1%	6 hours ago
Pangkomo	58.3%	-1.2%	1 day ago
Cail	6.6%	-0.6%	13 hours ago
HIP 14182	49.4%	+1.2%	13 hours ago
Pleiades Sector JC-V d2-62	84.5%	+1.4%	52 minutes ago
Vertam	71.7%	+2.0%	20 hours ago
Irandan	68.5%	+4.1%	52 minutes ago
Liu Beni	56.8%	+4.2%	6 hours ago
HIP 17706	59.0%	+5.5%	11 hours ago
HIP 18218	80.3%	+5.8%	11 hours ago
Teppanik	68.0%	+6.0%	12 hours ago
Hyades Sector DR-V c2-13	65.9%	+10.8%	11 hours ago
Chias Vega	51.0%	+13.7%	2 days ago

The biggest negative trends in this list are due to a failed expansion (San), and then there's normal BGS movements.

The biggest positive trends can indicate to others where you have been working, so try not to overdo your efforts unless you are avoiding retreat or similar, where the outcome is more important than the operational secrecy.

The amount of a change indicates to a seasoned BGS operative the size of the effort involved, and size of your BGS team, and thus help determine how much effort to put into counter your efforts, so always try to leave some level of reserve rather than go all in on a single system.

Maintaining influence

Every faction should have a BGS plan (see page 60) to determine the minimum influence and margin of control before corrective action is taken. Once a system has been selected for boosting, work out how best to boost that system based upon its states (see Active States on page 74), and based upon its population size and likely contested nature, work out how much effort is required to boost the system.

When boosting your faction, you want to do a variety of tasks – some trade, some bounty hunting, some exploration data drops, and of course, some missions. It is best to understand the states and which actions have the most effect during the state. These are detailed in the reference section of this guide. For example, during boom, trade and exploration data count more than bounties and combat missions. Each state has its own modifiers, so it is best to learn the most common ones or follow the advice of your BGS coordinator.

For example, this system is owned by Nagii Union. It has a margin of control of 4.5%, which is close to being in conflict for control of the system.

SYSTEM MINOR FACTIONS					
FACTION ⇕	GOVERNMENT ⇕	ALLEGIANCE ⇕	PENDING ⇕	ACTIVE ⇕	INF ▾
Nagii Union Player	Communism	Independent			● 42.3%
Sirius Inc Player	Democracy	Independent		Expansion	● 37.8%
Mooramba Aristocrats N	Feudal	Independent			8.5%

Figure 1 - The controlling faction should boost a system with a narrow margin of control.

Normally, it is the responsibility of the controlling faction of a system to boost themselves to manage their own systems as they see fit, but both factions might have a system agreement, non-aggression pact, or a coalition agreement that means Sirius Inc should reduce themselves out of an abundance of caution. Or that Sirius Inc simply does not want war with Nagii Union at all. If SINC chooses to reduce this system, the best bet is diplomacy: let Nagii Union know what is happening, then go ahead and do it.

Maintaining reputation

Sometimes, it is important to squelch (reduce) an expansion or prevent a conflict. This means you will take a hit with your reputation. Getting your reputation back to allied status does not need to take a long time. Being allied helps with getting all the missions on offer and the highest rewards, so as you want to do a bit of everything, you'll want to be allied most of the time.

Try these methods to regain your reputation:

- Exobiology data – fastest way, reputation only with the owning faction
- Combat bounties – fast, boosts faction influence, but will affect other factions.
- Universal cartographics – can be fast, boost controlling faction influence and reduces other factions.

Boosting influence

Missions

Missions, including passenger missions, can provide either economic or security influence. Donations and group passenger missions are usually the best way of earning positive influence without any negative influence given to another faction.

Some missions, particularly illegal missions, will hurt a target faction, so choose them carefully – either you wish to hurt that faction, or you do not mind if you do.

In-ship 'Horizons'	Try to stack high influence (5 influence is the max) missions of a similar type so that you do not need to change ships.
On-foot 'Odyssey'	Lower influence per mission (max of 4) than Horizons and takes longer to complete (but more fun). Always go to the mission providers first to see if they have a four-influence mission available. Three influence missions are available from the terminals.

Combat

Earning combat bounties is a fast way to boost influence in a system for your faction. The great news is that it is also portable, so you can earn bounties in a system you control and drop the bounties at a system you do not control for another method of boosting your faction.

You can earn bounties at a variety of locations:

- Resource sites (normal, low, medium, high, and hazardous)
- Compromised navigation beacons (a bit tougher than hazardous resource sites)
- Weapon fire and pirate signal sources.
- Mission targets
- Installations

Always fit a kill warrant scanner if you can afford the power requirements, so you can earn even more bounties. A KWS will scan the target ship for all bounties, including those from other factions and other systems. Upon killing the target, you will earn all the bounties from all the factions that have active bounties out for that ship. This is a wonderful way of earning a good reputation with other factions and boosting your combat income, which helps you get Elite in Combat rank.

Combat bounties provide security influence on the faction that issued the combat bounty. You can submit a combat bounty for any faction present at a station, and it will increase their influence.

If a faction is absent in a system and you can redeem the bounty, no influence is distributed, but your reputation with that faction will improve. This can be useful to hand in bounties collected in another system for factions you do not wish to support. If a faction is present in the system, and you submit the bounty, it will boost that faction, undoing all your hard work, so use an interstellar factor in another system that does not have that faction present.

Exploration

Exploration provides economic influence. Exploration is the only bucket that has no natural enemy – you cannot counter a commander who delivers exploration data. You can collect data on expedition, or if you need a bit of quick exploration data, you can use Roads to Riches.

- Fast! Roads to riches https://www.spansh.co.uk/riches
- Chill! Go on expedition https://edsm.net

Earning the daily cap for a single system should only take 30-40 minutes or so in an exploration ship.

Top Tip: Exobiology restores reputation fast

Exobiology has no effect on BGS. However, it has an impressive superpower – it is portable reputation. If you go out into the black even a little way (say one thousand ly above or below the bubble), you can find plenty of planets with no first footfalls. Sampling plants from these planets and keeping them for a rainy day is the best way to restore your reputation with a faction. There is no faster way than using exobiology.

The best way to maintain your reputation is not to let yourself get hostile. Once in the lower reaches of unfriendly, go to one of the controlling faction's large space stations or planetary ports and drop 60-90 mCr of exobiology data. This gives you immediate allied status. Exobiology does not affect the faction's influence, so you can do this as often as needed.

You can earn exobiology data from Billionaire's Boulevard (https://Commanders-toolbox.com/billionaires-boulevard) or, better yet, go on a mini-expedition and get the first discovery of plants. It is fun and relaxing.

Sometimes, you have been at war with a faction for so long that you are hostile. This means you cannot land at any of their ports or settlements without being shot at. Sometimes, you just want to shoot at them some more (say for example, if the faction controls the only station in a system you are trying to take over).

If you are hostile, to get allied with a faction in as short a time as possible:

- Go to a hazardous resource site in a system they control. Earn 5-10 mCr of combat bounties.
- Go to a system they are present in, but do not control. Hand the bounties in at a non-controlled station. This will get you out of hostile.
- Go to a system they control and find one of their stations with Vista Genomics. Hand in 60-90 mCr of exobiology data. You will be immediately allied with them.

Worst case scenario, you can do it the old fashioned, slow way. If you do not mind boosting the faction's influence, you can drop a 30+ mCr combat bounty in a small system and become allied. This has the unfortunate side effect of boosting the faction within the system, which is usually a terrible idea, and you will have to return later to fix your mistake.

Use exobiology by preference. It is faster than combat bounties and better for BGS.

Trade

Since a recent trade update, trade is now bi-directional – you can buy and sell to boost influence. Trade must be in high supply or demand, and to make a positive influence change, trade must be profitable.

Demand is indicated by a "three bar" signal.

- If there are three green bars, it indicates high supply or demand, which when coupled with high profit, is the best result for boosting economic influence.
- If there are no bars, that's medium demand or supply, which means moderate influence change.
- If there are three red hollow bars, that provides the least influence outcome.
- A zero demand means the station will accept an infinite amount of that good, but it will negatively impact the controlling faction.

MINERALS	
BAUXITE	.ıl 4,380
BERTRANDITE	.ıl 117,246
COLTAN	.ıl 30,996
GALLITE	.ıl 125,395
INDITE	.ıl 21,563
LEPIDOLITE	.ıl 63,677
RUTILE	13,711
URANINITE	.ıl 44,473

Figure 2 Trade example with three green bars.

In general, you will want to find trade loops of high supply or high demand, with a decent price that will deliver profits on both sides of the equation. You can earn a lot of money doing a profitable trade loop, and this will positively impact BGS as long as demand remains high. In busy systems where demand can vary from trip to trip, it is best to buy a few high demand commodities rather than focus on a single commodity.

However, over supplying demand (where the good stops being "green," and demand drops to 0) can lead to negative BGS consequences, so only fulfil the station's needs, and no further. For example, a small station might have three green bars, but only wants 250 t of goods. Supplying 750 t will eliminate demand and turn the three green bars into red empty bars and hurt BGS.

Profitable trade in legal goods provides positive economic influence on the controlling faction of the station, especially when trading in goods with three green bars. High demand is now more

important than profit alone. You can still trade in medium (no bars) or low-demand (red bar) goods, but they do not have the same impact as high-demand goods.

Top Tip: The old days of trading in 1.5 million credit chunks of any profitable good, such as gold or silver, are gone. It is now the demand or supply and positive profit that counts. Sell it all at once and do more loads to boost more influence.

Fleet carriers have some influence effect on BGS trade.

Selling goods to a carrier market has no BGS effect. Trade **from the carrier market** has a diminished influence effect on BGS but can be particularly good at helping with reputation and economy sliders. Trade profit with demand will raise influence.

Since the trade update, using your fleet carrier to re-price goods, such as selling gold or silver at 5% of galactic average, to sell at a nearby station for incredible on paper profits, no longer works. This was done to avoid people getting Elite V in trade as well as boosting influence via fake.

Profitable, high demand trade through **transfers to and from your carrier hold works**. For example, if a Commander finds a low buy price for metals from a system in an infrastructure failure state, say coltan for 480 credits per unit, and then transfers several loads to the carrier's hold, moves the carrier to the destination system, transfers the coltan back to the ship, and then sells the goods to a station, it will retain its original buy price of 480 cr/unit, and boost the influence of the destination station's owner and economy sliders. If the goods are sold to the market or bought from the market, this does not work.

Smuggling through transfers also works in the same way – steal or buy illegal goods, transfer the stolen or prohibited goods into the carrier's hold, move the carrier to the destination system, transfer the goods back out to the ship, and sell them to a black market. The station owner's influence will decrease. Depending on the goods, security will decrease, such as with battle weapons, and potentially if trading at a loss, the economic slider will also decrease. Black markets are beneficial for anarchies, so anarchies can use fleet carriers to boost their faction's economy slider if they find a large quantity of stolen goods.

Another use for fleet carriers for BGS is when you are doing missions, such as the 50 mCr source and return {gallite, indite, rutile, coltan, gold, silver} missions. Using your carrier to supply these "source and return" or mining missions is perfectly acceptable, because the influence comes from the completion of the mission, and not from the trade itself. You can also store mined commodities, such as osmium, bromellite, and samarium, on your carrier for later mission use.

However, if in doubt, use a station to fill your trade needs.

Bulk Sales Tax (aka the Cutter Tax)

If demand is less than four times the size of a cargo hold's capacity, a "tax" will be used to reduce the sell price, thus reducing the overall BGS benefit, which is based upon profitable, high value trades. It is better to have many smaller trades of "green" goods than one big trade that might exceed the demand.

If you are doing trade loops, fill your hold with several or many types of high profit goods, not just the best ones. You will get better results from BGS as a result because the Cutter tax will not apply.

Examples:

- If there's a demand for 4,425 units, the Cutter tax will never apply, and you'll get full price for your load.

Platinum	285,798 Cr	4,425

- If you are in a Python, and have 192 t of platinum, and the station has a demand of 400 units, the Cutter tax will apply.

Platinum	236,481 Cr	401

- If you have 790 t of LTDs, but demand is only 1181, then the Cutter tax will apply, reducing the sell price by about 25%.

Low Temperature Diamonds	345,704 Cr		1,181

- Avoid selling massive quantities when demand is zero, has red bars, or less than the size of a Cutter or Type 9 as this will actively harm the station owner's influence.

Painite	265,387 Cr		0

Top Tip: Loading your carrier fast

Want to load your carrier twice as fast? You will need to own Odyssey and have sufficient credits to buy two cargo ships. One run of this process takes the same amount of time as a one-way ship transfer, so you will double your cargo loads per hour. This works for both large planetary and space ports. Thanks to Ghost Giraffe for this top tip.

https://youtu.be/JuhrQLEaUK0?si=M2afYB5O0EQCJorX&t=123

Ingredients

- The buy station **must** be a large station, have a shipyard and Inter Astra
- If you're doing this on someone else's carrier, they **must** have a shipyard, too.
- Two cargo ships. I have two Imperial Cutters with 792 cargo and a docking computer (because of no shields), but you can use whatever you own, such as two Pythons, or two Type 9s, or any mixture of two cargo ships.
- *Optional but handy*. Wear a suit that has increased sprint duration. You're going to be doing a lot of running.

Setup

- On your first trip to the station, transfer your other cargo ship to the station's shipyard.
- If you have any exobiology data, sell it at Vista Genomics before starting or you'll lose it.

Process

- Buy the commodities you want from the station and head back to your carrier on the ship.
- Transfer your cargo to your carrier or sell it if it's someone else's carrier.
- Disembark and take an escape pod back to the station. They're near the command deck.

- You will re-appear on foot in the social space. Go to Inter Astra.
  - **Use** your stored ship so it will be ready by the time you run downstairs.
  - **Transfer** your other cargo ship back to the station.
- Board your now retrieved cargo ship and repeat this process until you're done.
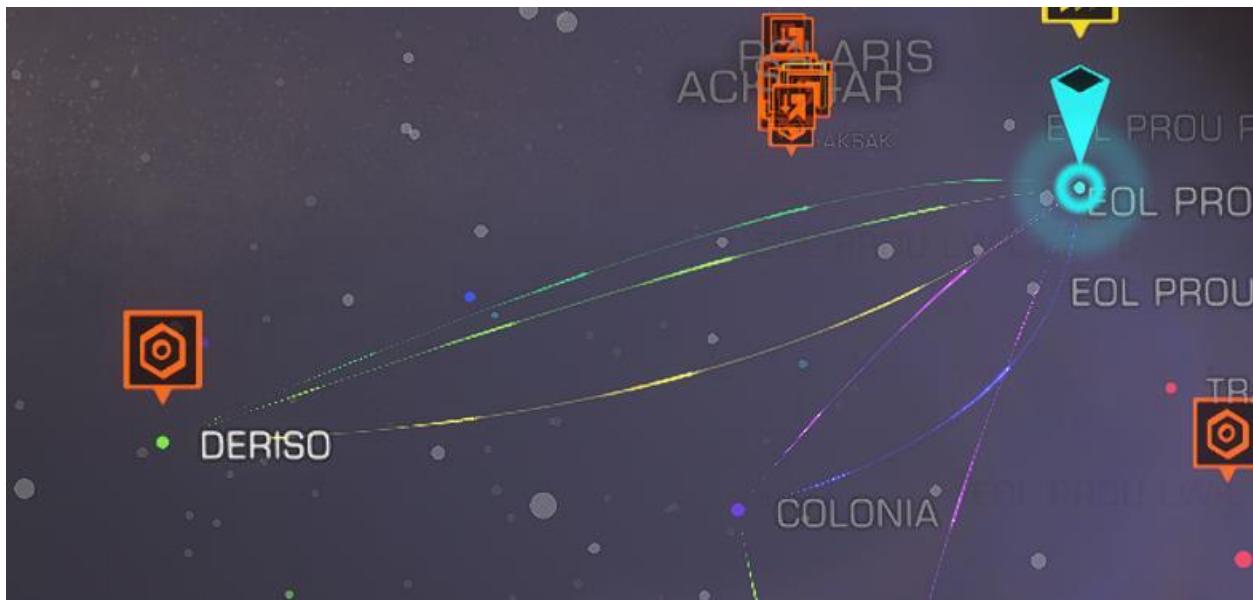
Finishing up

When you get back on your carrier, don't forget to retrieve your other cargo ship, or it will cost more later. Use the carrier's shipyard from your ship to save time – you don't need to get out.

High Demand Trade Loops

The game now only accepts trade loops with high demand, and for a positive influence result, the trade must result in a profit. You will need to use Inara > Data > Trade Routes to find a good route involving the system you are trying to boost. Best of all are intra-system trade loops. These give more influence, especially if you control both stations, than system-to-system trade loops.

If you do not want to use an external tool, the game itself indicates high trade routes between systems using color coded lines in the galaxy map to indicate what is selling well in either direction of nearby systems. If you learn the colors, you can figure out what will trade well between two systems.

To get this view, click the Economy view, and then go down a bit and click "All" in the trade route's view (it is a bit underneath the PowerPlay and Thargoid views). You will see the direction of the trade flow and the color will indicate the type of goods being traded. Busier systems will have a lot of these lines.

Shortening event states with relevant trade commodities

Each event state has its own list of tradeable commodities that shorten or fix the states. Recent tests of supplying these goods via carrier transfer or trade loops are inconclusive that trade resolves the state any earlier than just letting it run its course. Some states have a minimum duration, so it's

unclear if the issue is that the testing was done during minimum duration period, or that the effect is real, and no amount of trade will shorten the state's duration.

Being unable to shorten a state via trade is problematic because negative event states, such as infrastructure failure, blight, drought, outbreak, and so on can lead to worse states if left unchecked. If an event state is stubborn despite a lot of trade, try doing the relevant missions, such as power on / restore missions for infrastructure failure, outbreak data courier missions, and so on.

BGS seems to have nerfed trade from carrier markets to shorten these states, but you can do transfers via your carrier or a trade loop from a supplying station in a ship to help shorten them. Use Inara's Data > Commodities search function to find the closest system with what you need. Fit a fuel scoop or have the Fuel Rats (https://fuelrats.com/) on speed dial.

Mining

You can earn trade profits through mining. This is a very chill activity and used to be the best way to earn money in the game. Mining is still highly profitable, especially laser platinum mining.

How to Laser Mine (2022)

A mining loop you may wish to consider is mining osmium, bromellite, or one of the other non-buyable commodities, and store them on your carrier. Later, you can use your fleet carrier's supplies to fulfil high influence missions asking for these goods. To do this, you will want a highly defensive mining Python, Anaconda, or Type 10 Defender, and mine 15-20 km outside of a hazardous resource site in a pristine ring. Mining 15-20 km out from the hazardous resource site will minimize (but not eliminate) pirates looking for your mined goods and allow you to mine these difficult to obtain materials and simultaneously farm combat bounties. I recommend mostly offensive weapons and a few mining lasers, and an extraordinarily strong hull.

How to mine in a hazardous resource site (2023)

The best way to affect BGS with mining is to find a station owned by your faction that has high demand for high priced mined commodities, such as platinum, bromellite, osmium, or similar, mine the goods, and sell the goods directly to the station without passing through a fleet carrier.

NB: Do not over-supply the station – if it has no or zero demand, then you'll harm the faction by selling. Be mindful of this if you're selling just for profit in a distant faction's system.

It's best to mine a bit of this and that, such as bromellite, osmium, and platinum, especially if you're going to be selling at a medium-sized outpost, as demand for any one mineral will be smaller than four times the size of your cargo hold.

if you have more goods to sell than a quarter of the station's demand.

If you just want to earn money as you're low on credits, you can store your mined goods on your carrier and sell them later to any high sell station for profit. Your faction will not usually be offering the best galactic buy price for a mined commodity, but it is not impossible. If your faction is in a combination of at least two states of boom, civil liberty, public holiday, and expansion, the prices for mined goods are much higher than normal.

Reducing influence

Reducing influence is one of the essential tools in the more advanced BGS Commanders toolbox – by reducing a faction, you might be able to force a faction into a conflict, stop expansion, or even retreat the faction. You can do a range of activities to reduce faction influence.

Murder (aka clean killing)

Murder (also known as clean kills by many factions) is one of the most consequential negative actions you can take, and the game makes it hard to keep on murdering as a result. You will gain huge bounties, gain notoriety, and eventually get to meet the toughest opponents in the game – Advanced Tactical Response (ATR).

Murdering is just that – find a clean (unwanted) ship, Commander, or NPC at an Odyssey settlement from the faction you would like to reduce and murder it. Repeat as much as needed. Murdering ships or NPCs takes a little time because you need to find them. Reliable sources of murders are nav beacons, famine distribution centers, stations and installations owned by the faction, and Odyssey settlements. Resource sites can be a bit slower, but you can kill the local system authorities assuming they are the target faction to be reduced.

If you're looking for a lot of clean ships to murder, Odyssey settlements are a good source. Always check who owns the settlement, because all the ships in the instance will belong to that faction. Additionally, ATR does not appear in Odyssey settlements, so you can rack up murders with impunity. The number of ships is random, and so if you get a low number, just jump back into supercruise and drop back in immediately to see if you get more the next time.

Tourist settlements	1-2 (if you're lucky)
Mining settlements	1-2 (if you're lucky)
Industrial settlements	3-4 but up to 8 if you're lucky
Military settlements	3-4 military ships, so a bit more of a challenge

Once you've murdered all the ships, simply jump back to super cruise, immediately disengage and go for another round. Because murder is so consequential, don't overdo the murders, because your bounty will easily exceed 100-200 mCr in less than an hour, and it will take time to clear that bounty and notoriety.

Eventually, after murdering for a bit, you will get to notoriety 10 and finally get to meet Advanced Tactical Response (ATR) ships or Omnipol agents. Worse, your bounties get exponentially worse with each kill, so you can rack up huge unpayable bounties, which means you're now in Hard Mode, where dying or handing yourself in can mean a major reset to your Commander's wealth and ships. If your bounties exceed your wealth, you need to earn sufficient funds to pay off your bounties before dying or handing yourself in.

System security strength	Murders required for ATR	Minutes before they arrive
Low Security	16	As soon as you hit threshold
Medium Security	8	As soon as you hit threshold
High Security	4	As soon as you hit threshold

ATR can easily kill a fully end game engineered Corvette in a few seconds. When ATR arrives, regardless of how great a Commander you are and how awesomely engineered your ship is, you need to high wake to another system immediately. If you low wake, ATR will follow you out, interdict you, and then kill you. You can reset ATR arrivals by high waking to another system. ATR will not reappear until you've murdered another round of clean victims. Take the time to repair any damage, recharge your shields, and restock your ammo before returning.

Once you've finished murdering and want to clean up your act, you will need to clear your bounties. Murder bounties can be eye wateringly large, so even if you're an experienced Commander, pay attention to the number 1 rule of Elite Dangerous: **Never fly without rebuy**. For a list of the current best income makers in the game, please review Earning money fast on page 18.

If you have sufficient funds to cover your bounty, hand yourself in using the ship you did the murders. You'll end up in space jail, clean, and much poorer. You'll still have notoriety. You can sleep this off at the rate of two hours per notoriety point, so if you're notoriety 10, you'll need to find somewhere safe like a star port where you're not wanted, and just leave the game running for 20 hours. Alternatively, spend the time doing exobiology so you can pay off future murder sprees.

If you don't have sufficient funds to cover your bounty, jump in your exploration ship and go do exobiology for 20 hours to clear your notoriety. Find as many first discovery high value plants as you can. You're going to need the credits soon. Once you're at notoriety zero, head to the nearest large port, hand in your plant discoveries to Vista Genomics. You'll be immediately allied with this faction, which can be handy if you want to be allied with that faction. Then jump back in your ship that you did all the murdering in, go find an interstellar factor, and pay off your bounties. You'll need to be in a location where the issuing faction is not. You'll be clean with zero notoriety at this point.

In either case, you'll need a fuel scoop or to take an Apex taxi, because space jails are usually some distance away from where you handed yourself in.

Unprofitable Trade Loops

You can trade at a loss and reduce the controlling faction's influence. Again, trading in high-demand goods at a loss is better than medium (no bars) or low (red bars) demand goods.

You can use state modifiers to buy goods at an inflated price, and then sell it to stations that have galactic average or lowered pricing. For example, during boom or civil liberty, agronomic treatment has a much higher buy price from high tech systems. Selling it to a system that is in infrastructure failure will induce a massive loss, which can then be used to reduce the economy slider even further.

Smuggling

You can trade in illegal goods if there is demand, such as battle weapons or illicit drugs, or through the black market if one exists. Negative trade induces a loss in economic (most illegal goods, like imperial slaves) or security (e.g., prohibited weapons) sliders and reduces influence.

You can smuggle illegal or stolen goods if there is a black market. This affects the controlling faction's economy (most goods) or security (illegal weapons) and reduces their influence. Smuggling can be fun for role players and reduces a controlling faction's influence, unless the station controller is an anarchy, when it boosts the anarchy faction. For more tips on boosting anarchies, please see Maintaining anarchy systems on page 71.

Sourcing prohibited goods is as simple as visiting the system map, click on the station to ensure that it has a black market, find out what's prohibited, then go to Inara.cz > Data > Commodities search for the prohibited commodity. Most prohibited goods have no demand, but occasionally, you will see a prohibited commodity in the market. Try to sell it there, or on the black market if that does not work.

Sourcing stolen goods can be as simple as taking a "deliver a large number of goods to station X," picking up a load of the goods, and abandoning the mission. You will take a reputation hit, but you will also have a hold full of stolen goods. Another way to get them is to visit local megaships and steal cargo from them using hatch breaker limpets. Yet another way is to interdict NPC ships in an anarchy system, particularly cargo ships, disable their drives, and siphon their cargo.

Top Tip: As a bonus fun part of smuggling, don't get scanned for the role play element. A cold running ship with less than 20% heat like a Dolphin is the ideal smuggling ship, but any ship will do. Use silent running near the station to go dark and avoid scans. If you are scanned with illegal goods, you will get a fine and you might get shot at. Get into the station, pay off the fine, and then sell the illegal goods.

You go, pirate Commander!

Wiping out Odyssey settlements

A common mission type given by all factions is to wipe out a settlement's inhabitants. As a result, Frontier deliberately made killing ground personnel give far less notoriety than ship murders.

You need to do a lot of killing to get even 1 or 2 notoriety, but it's possible. If you're trying to reduce a faction's influence, ship murders are faster and far more influential. However, there's something quite fun in wiping out a settlement.

However, you can exploit settlements to reduce influence in multiple ways:

- If you let an alarm sound whilst killing the inhabitants, additional high level factional soldiers will appear. Eventually, once you have sufficient notoriety, Omnipol agents will appear. These are the toughest ground combatants in the game, but any suitably equipped Commander can kill them, just don't let them gang up on you.
- You can use missiles and flak weapons to kill ground NPCs from your ship
- Some settlements have up to 8 ships from the faction flying around, making it some of the best places to do ship murders
- There's no ATR at settlements, so you can kill all the ships without having to leave
- Killing skimmers, and particularly Goliaths, has a negative influence effect on the owning faction.
- You can respawn the instance fast by leaving and immediately coming back.

Killing scavengers helps the owning faction, so don't do that unless you mean to boost the faction.

Failing missions

A straightforward way of reducing a faction's influence is to fail missions. Failing missions hurts your reputation and the faction's influence.

- Failing donations and all other missions is simple – just wait until they expire.
- Failing delivery missions of a controlling faction where a black market exists allows you to collect the goods, wait for the mission to fail (to get the influence drop), and then sell the stolen goods to the black market for even more influence decrease. You can abandon the mission and still do the black market transaction, but there will not be an associated influence drop from the mission failing. Try to pick missions that have high value cargo for maximal black market influence drops.
- Failing passenger missions can be fast and simple if you can afford rebuys. Fill a shieldless D-rated Type 6 or 7 with cabins, take passengers, and then blow it up by hitting the sides of the station until dead or using the self-destruct feature. You can fail 12-15 missions at once using this method.
- If you can't afford ship rebuys, you can fail passenger missions by doing things the passengers hate, such as getting illegal passengers scanned by the system authorities, or with hull damage for passengers that don't like that, but this takes longer than simply blowing up the ship.

When failing a mission, the influence impact on the victim faction is thought to be the first reward choice, which is usually one or two influence points. However, we have no proof of that, so assume that you will only be getting a single negative influence point. You will lose a bit of reputation, so eventually, you will want to get re-allied with the faction. The best way to do this is through exobiology as explained in "Top Tip: Exobiology restores reputation " on page 31, as dropping exobiology only improves your reputation, and doesn't change the faction's influence. It's always a great idea to have some exobiology stored away for rainy days when you need it.

Negative actions

Review the negative destination actions at https://cdb.sotl.org.uk/missions to identify actions you might be able to take to reduce the faction's influence. For example:

- Murder (see page 37) reduces a faction's influence most of all.
- Crimes, such as interdicting NPCs and doing piracy, affects the controlling faction's influence and reduces the security slider.
- Taking immediate scenarios at installations against a faction hurts the faction, usually affecting the security slider if the scenario is combat related.
- Smuggling reduces a faction's influence and reduces the economy slider.
- Negative trade, such as delivering illegal drugs or prohibited weapons, reduces a faction's influence, and reduces the economy slider and with weapons, the security slider.
- Taking missions against a faction reduces the destination faction's influence, with varying results to the sliders depending on the nature of the mission.

There are hundreds of these actions available, so this is necessarily not a complete list.

Inducing negative states

Pushing hard enough on murder, crimes, smuggling, and negative actions can reduce the sliders to the point that an undesirable state will be triggered upon the next tick, such as civil unrest or bust. This can be beneficial, as some states also have a daily influence drop associated with them. However, it's now likely you have the attention of the faction's BGS coordinator, and they may well work against your efforts by asking their team to fix the state.

If you want to reduce a faction's influence but push too hard, the system will enter lockdown if the security slider gets too low. This is counterproductive because lockdown slows down negative actions. Ease up on the negative security actions, and concentrate instead on the economic negative actions, such as failing donations and passenger missions, negative or illegal trade of anything other than weapons, smuggling of stolen goods, and economic missions targeting the faction.

Top Tip: Reducing influence using bulk stolen goods.

You can obtain a large amount of stolen goods for zero funds up front by stealing from team delivery missions, and you will not get a fine or any notoriety. You're not specifically committing a crime, so it shouldn't affect the source station's controlling faction's influence. This is the fastest and least notorious way to obtain a massive amount of high value goods.

Setup

- Install Secure Warehouse on your carrier if you don't already have it installed.

Process

- Find a team mission for delivering a large quantity of a commodity, preferably high value like palladium, gold, or silver. You can buy high value goods at extraction economy stations. If it's a solo mission, you will get a fine that exceeds the value of the goods to be stolen.
- Set up a buy price for the goods in your secure warehouse.
- Haul all the goods to your carrier, **sell** the goods into the secure warehouse (it won't transfer or sell to the clean market).
- Abandon the mission. You'll get a reputation decrease with the issuing faction, but no fine as it's a team mission. The goods are now stolen.
- Set up a sell price in the secure warehouse for the stolen goods.

How to abuse it

- To reduce a non-anarchy faction, buy the stolen goods through the secure warehouse and smuggle them through a black market of your victim faction. Their influence and economy sliders will decrease.
- To boost an anarchy, buy the stolen goods through the secure warehouse and then smuggle the goods to the anarchy's black market. This will boost the anarchy's influence and your reputation.

As you now have a large quantity of reputation reducing goods, you'll likely wish to make your carrier "Squadron and Friends only" to avoid the goods being used against your faction if you have black markets.

CONFLICTS

When a faction is above 7%, it is above the conflict threshold. This means you can be at war or in an election, depending on the two faction's government ethos.

Government Ethos

Criminals	Autocrats	Corporations	Social
Anarchists	Dictatorship	Corporation	Communism
	Feudal		Confederacy
	Patronage		Cooperative
	Prison Colony		Democracy
	Theocracy*		Theocracy*

Source: Novaforce BGS Guide

Theocracy – it depends if an NPC or PMF

Occasionally, factions – especially those placed directly by Frontier – will have an ethos that does not match the usual one for their government type. This is not a bug; it is just an extra surprise. You can assess ethos outside conflicts to some extent: Criminal factions offer far more illegal missions. Social and Criminal factions tend to open black markets, while Autocrats and Corporations tend to close them. Sirius Inc's in-game faction is a Corporate Democracy, so we close black markets. Race Marshalls, although an anarchy, is one of the very few anarchies that will offer donation missions. These factions were created by Frontier at a time before you had to choose a single ethos.

Conflict table

	Criminals	Autocrats	Corporations	Social
Criminals	War	War	War	War
Autocrats	War	Elections	War	War
Corporations	War	War	Elections	War
Social	War	War	War	Elections

Source: Novaforce BGS Guide

Wars (and Civil Wars)

Wars are held between anarchies or factions that have a different ethos. Civil wars occur between factions that share the same home system that would ordinarily go to war with each other. Civil wars are identical to wars.

Wars last from four to seven days, finishing as soon as one side has won four days. If no side wins four days, the winner is declared after day seven based upon who won the most days. Wars can be inconclusive if both sides win the same number of days.

Each day is won by the side that won the key lever of most CZs and objectives completed. If there is a tie breaker – i.e., both sides have won the same number of CZs, then all combat related activities that have been handed in are tallied up, and a winner for the day is declared. This is why it is important to hand in all bounties, bonds, and missions before each tick.

If there is a tie, then there are various tie breakers that count:

- Completing "Kill X enemy ships" missions.
- Handing in combat bonds and bounties.
- Any combat related mission, such as assassination missions.
- Installation immediate scenarios with a combat focus.

If you take war-time missions and you do not do some form of combat, it is unlikely to count towards the win state for a day. This applies to war time salvage and strategic courier jobs.

After the war is completed, the game decides on a winner and distributes the spoils of war, including some post conflict influence:

- If there is a winner, the defeated faction's asset at risk is assigned to the winning faction. The winning faction will go up by about 1.5% and the losing faction will go down by 1.5%. However, submitting tie breaker bonds, combat missions, and bounties will help push the faction up more than the 1.5%.
- If there is no winner, each asset at risk remains with each faction. There is minimal movement in influence between the two factions.
- On the last day of the war, tie breaker bonds, combat missions, and bounties that would ordinarily count towards the security slider are distributed as post-war security influence. You can lose the war and still go up above the winning faction if you do more tie breaker work than the winning faction.
- Regardless of who wins the war, the faction that won the most times at each Odyssey settlement (other than any staked in the conflict itself) is assigned as the new owner of the settlement.

There's a one day cool down period, so if you didn't get the result, you were looking for, you can use the cool down day to boost your faction by all the usual means to cause another conflict quickly – or boost away from the other faction to avoid another war.

If you end up with combat bonds after a conflict has finished because you forgot to hand in before the tick or were fighting to the very last minute, keep the bonds for the next war. Submit it in the next war for your faction as a bonus tie breaker contribution. You can hand in combat missions and bounties after the war has ended for a quick security slider boost.

Wars allow you to transfer Odyssey settlements, even if you do not win the war.
Wars are a great method to move the ownership of Odyssey settlements to a particular faction. The faction that fought the most in an Odyssey settlement – regardless of who won the war – will end up owning the Odyssey settlement at the end of the war.

For example, in an uncontested system, if you want the native anarchy faction to own all the Odyssey assets to create a suit farming paradise. The way to do this is to boost the anarchy to second place, and then fight for control of the system with the anarchy. The controlling faction should fight only space CZs – particularly concentrating on winning sufficient space CZs to counteract the number of wins the anarchy must make to win the Odyssey settlements. Do not fight in any ground CZs. Make sure that the anarchy fights at least once in each Odyssey settlement, but no space CZs. If the anarchy wins a day, the number of space CZs must increase.

At the end of the war, the anarchy will own all the controlling faction's Odyssey settlements, despite the controlling faction winning the war and retaining control of the system. Now, repeat the process for each faction in the system until the anarchy is on the bottom of the faction influence list again. Once they lose the last war, they will own all the Odyssey settlements, which is fantastic for suit grind, and should reduce the number of conflicts in the system. Every faction should create at least one system like this, particularly if the system is an industrial or extraction system with many Odyssey settlements. Tourism settlements are fantastic for Odyssey data farming.

Low, Medium, or High CZ's? You decide.

The key winning lever condition for each day in a war is to win the greatest number of CZs. Wars have no upper limits on the number of CZs required to win each day, so the side that wins the most CZs, wins each day. As much as this section has a very clear recommendation to spam low space CZ's, you need to be having fun, too. We strongly recommend that you play as a team and play the type of CZ's you like and top it off with some low space CZs to seal the win on each day of the war.

It has been measured in clean uncontested war conditions that:

- 2 low space CZs beats a single high space CZ
- 5 low space CZs beats three high space CZs
- Side objectives such as kill spec ops help to reduce the duration of a medium or high space CZ, but do not contribute much to the win condition ratio

Based upon these findings, a high CZ is worth 1.6 times that of a low space CZ, and side objectives don't matter.

In other testing, which has yet to be completely verified, it has been shown:

- Space CZs are four times as effective as ground CZs of the same difficulty level.

CZ Type	Low	Medium	High
Ground CZ	0.25	0.325	0.4
Space CZ	1	1.3	1.6

Table 3 Relative worth of each type of combat zone win condition.

CZ Type	Low solo time	Medium solo time	High solo time
Ground CZ	10 minutes	15 minutes	20 minutes
Space CZ	8 minutes	15 minutes	25 minutes

Table 4 - Time taken to solo a CZ

CZ Type	Low CZs per hour	Medium CZs per hour	High CZs per hour
Ground CZ	6	4	3
Space CZ	7.5	4	2.4

Table 5 - Number of CZs that can be completed in an hour

CZ Type	Low CZs per hour	Medium	High
Ground CZ	2.4 Low space CZs/hr	1.3 Low space CZs/hr	1.2 Low space CZs/hr
Space CZ	7.5 Low space CZs/hr	5.2 Low space CZs/hr	3.8 Low space CZs/hr

Table 6 - Solo Low CZs equivalent per hour

This means:

- Low space CZs are the only effective choice to win wars

- Completing side objectives allows you to solo more Medium or High CZs per hour, but the reduction in duration is unlikely to make up the difference compared with spamming out Low CZ wins.
- Teams clear CZs far quicker than solo players. Regardless of space or ground, play as a team to force multiply your efforts – four players will have more than four times as many CZ wins as each player playing separately, because they can clear the CZs faster.
- If you are looking to have fun, do the type of CZ that you can solo quickly and that makes you happy.

If you find spamming Low CZs boring, do medium or high CZs, knowing that you could do more Low CZs, but you are having a fun time. If you find doing High CZs difficult or impossible, especially solo, do Low CZs. Do what you enjoy! It is entirely up to you.

Top Tip: If the war is being contested (i.e., you lose the first day despite putting in a decent effort), you must switch to spamming out Low CZs. Get together as many friends as possible to play as a team, pick up as many "Kill X enemy ships" missions as you can complete for the combat influence and extra cash, and spam low space CZ wins for as long as you possibly can. Do it on every day of the war, and share in the fun, bonds, mission rewards, and win conditions. There is no limit to the number of CZs, so the faction that wins the most CZs each day will win the war.

Ground or Space? You decide.

As shown above in Table 3, through clean room testing in uncontested wars that space CZs are about four times as impactful as ground wars. This is likely because High space CZs have a win condition and up to two or three side objectives, such as kill spec ops, whereas High ground CZs only have the win condition. Ground CZs earn more bonds, but as already stated, bonds are the tie breaker if there is an equal number of CZs won on both sides.

This guide recommends:

- If uncontested, winning even a single low ground CZ will win a day, and if after seven days, if no one else has fought in the war, you may win the war due to that single win. This is rare, so don't count on it.
- If you intend to transfer Odyssey assets, fight for the faction you want to win once or twice each day in each Odyssey settlement. If this is the other side, you will need to do more space CZs for your own side to counteract your opposing efforts.

However, if you hate fighting space CZs and love fighting ground CZs, do the ground CZs because the overall number of wins count, and high ground CZs earn the most combat bonds, which may help to tie break a conflict day.

Conflict is an avenue of further research, and in the absence of hard data, do the CZs you love to fight.

Top tip: If contested, you need to switch to low space CZs to avoid losing the war. Do some ground CZs for fun or to transfer assets, but you will win the war by spamming low space CZs. There is no limit to the number of CZs, so the faction that wins the most CZs each day will win the war.

Strategy question: to keep or not to keep Odyssey settlements.

Some BGS coordinators have dismissed the importance of Odyssey settlements, but this is mistake. They are assets every bit as much as a space station or ground port. The good news is that with a little work, it's easy to change faction ownership of settlements for protection, or fun and profit.

If your faction is an anarchy faction, there is only one viable strategy: get rid of all your Odyssey settlements immediately. If you have even one Odyssey settlement, force a war for control of the system, in each of your systems, and force other factions to own all the settlements. It's the only viable method of preventing losing control of your systems. Preferably find a suitable faction to be your protector and give at least one settlement to them, but it's worth spreading ownership of settlements to all factions to force the maximum number of conflicts. You should only own the controlling space port or planetary port, so you can use trade, exploration, the black market for smuggling, and missions.

If you're not an anarchy, there are pros and cons to keeping settlements or giving them to other factions. There is a danger that in systems where secondary factions have no assets, it's trivial to boost assetless factions to contest for control of the system without warning. This is Not Good™. So, give at least some – or all – of them away.

If you live in a contested part of the galaxy, a good strategy is a protective faction. Boost a friendly PMF or native faction to second place, give them at least one asset (space or Odyssey). No matter what you decide for assets for the rest of the factions, it means that a hostile Commander will need to fight the protective faction first before they can fight for control of the system. You can fight them in an inconsequential war, and re-boost the protective faction after each attempt.

Another strategy is to give at least one large pad Odyssey settlement to each faction: you can trade with the faction – either positive or negative. You can use the techniques outlined in Wiping out Odyssey settlements on page 39 to reduce faction influence, such as by murdering factional ships and ground NPCs. Some settlements have universal cartographics to boost a faction. Some settlements even have a black market, which will help make illegal trade at that settlement. If every faction has an asset, you can create conflicts easily and lock up influence, which is essential if prepping for retreat or fixing controlling faction influence.

If you live in an uncontested part of the galaxy, a strategy is to give all settlements to a native anarchy faction, as this will be a source of Odyssey suit missions. This also denies all the other factions' opportunities for trade, black markets, and universal cartographics, so in theory, the system should be more stable.

Use your best judgment and use conflicts to transfer the assets as you see fit.

Coups

When a non-controlling faction gets above 60%, it automatically triggers a coup conflict, resulting in a war or election with the controlling faction. A faction's ability to rise above 60% happens if the coup faction has no assets or could rise above the other factions in some other way, such as being in retreat.

Elections

Elections are held between factions that have a similar ethos.

Elections last from four to seven days, finishing as soon as one side has won four days. If no side wins four days, the winner is declared after day seven based upon who won the most days. Elections can be inconclusive if both sides win the same number of days.

Each day is won by the side that won the key lever of most non-combat election missions completed. If there is a tie breaker – i.e., both sides have completed the same number of eligible missions, then all election and economy-related activities that have been handed in are tallied up, and a winner for the day is declared. This is why it is important to hand in all trade, exploration data, and economic missions before each tick. Do not do any combat related missions, hand in bounties or bonds, or any combat activities as they do not count during an election.

The following election related missions should be avoided because they have a chance of not counting:

- Liberate diplomatic bag missions – DO NOT FIRE YOUR WEAPONS
- Liberate political prisoners – DO NOT FIRE YOUR WEAPONS
- Poll data retrieval – DO NOT FIRE YOUR WEAPONS

If you take election related missions and you end up in combat or earning a bounty or fine, it is unlikely to count towards the win state for a day.

If there is a tie, then there are various tie breakers that count:

- High Demand / High Profit Trade – if you own a station.
- Exploration Data – if you own a station that has universal cartographics.
- Any economic mission, such as donations, source and return, passenger, and trade delivery
- Smuggling (yes, smuggling!) – if you own a station that has a black market.

There is no known upper limit on election missions. If you are in a contested election, you must complete more election missions each day than the opposing side. If you're struggling, remember to do some trade, economic missions and universal cartographics to win a contested election than the opposing faction. You can use smuggling to reduce a controlling faction's economy slider.

Once the election is finished, the game will determine the winner and distribute the spoils:

- If there is a winner, the winner gets the asset at risk, and about a 1.5% boost to influence. The loser loses their asset at risk and about 1.5% in influence.
- If there is no winner, each faction gets to keep their asset at risk. There is a minimal change in influence. A new election can be likely unless you boost yourself in the cool down period.
- Any trade, exploration, or economic missions on the last day is tallied up and the resulting influence is distributed to the relevant faction, which means you can lose, but end up on top of the winner.

There is a single cool down day to prevent immediate re-entry into another election. If you want to have another election, boost your faction into the other faction again by all means necessary. If you

want to consolidate your win, boost your faction away from the other faction, and do some negative actions to the other faction to reduce their influence.

EXPANSIONS

Expansions start from a system that goes above 75% influence. Station news will announce which system this is. Under normal circumstances, expansion is locked in but could still misfire or be misdirected elsewhere.

The first goal of every new faction is to manipulate the BGS to boost your faction to have the most influence of all the factions, triggering several conflicts along the way to control the system eventually.

After that, you will want to push your faction to over 75% to expand your faction into a nearby system. Once you have a few systems, the job becomes maintaining your influence levels to protect your systems from being overrun by NPCs and other players.

Expansion diplomacy

The best way to ensure a smooth expansion experience is to expand to a system where no other players exist today. However, you will expand into someone else's systems within most of the bubble.

If you think you are expanding into an active PMF's system, contact them first and try to honor the "first there owns the system" golden rule. You will be a guest in their system. They will be happy to have you because a full system makes it difficult for hostile factions.

Detecting inactive PMFs
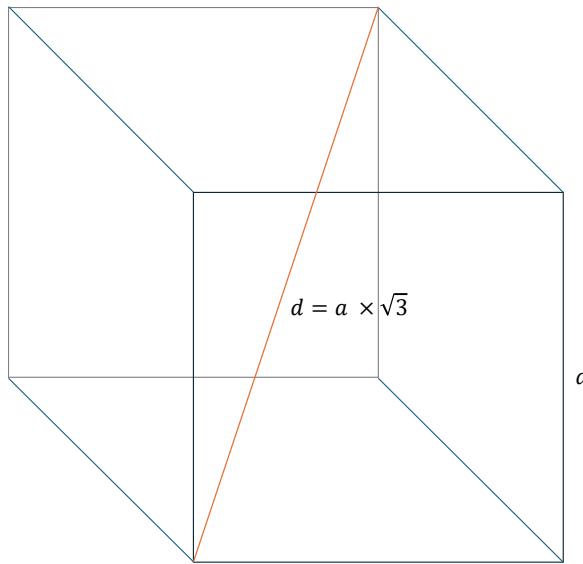
Sadly, there are many defunct PMFs. It is important to determine if you are expanding into an active or defunct PMF. The best way to find out if they are defunct is to:

- In the game, go to the Squadron hub, search for the squadron, and find the lead Commander's name. It will be in the quote. Search for the Commander in the Main menu > Social > Search Commander. Find out when they last logged on. If it is recent, they are active. Add them as a friend and communicate through the game.
- Search Inara for the faction and see if you can contact their leadership. Often, there will be a Discord link.
- Search ED BGS for the faction's and commander's names. You might find someone representing the faction or knowing who to contact.
- Ask ED BGS #bgs-disputes if anyone knows of the leadership Commanders or representing that faction.

If you cannot reach squadron leadership by using the game, Inara, ED BGS, or the Commander has not played in more than six months to a year, you can consider the faction to be defunct. Consider all their systems up for grabs. You will find out soon enough when you try to take one of their systems.

Where will I expand? The expansion cube

Expansions happen based upon a cube surrounding the expansion system. The maximum theoretical distance you can expand is the equation to find the distance between diagonal vertices that connect via the body diagonal of a cube, d, as the center of d is the expansion system.

$$d = a \times \sqrt{3}$$

$$a$$

$$body\ diagonal\ distance = expansion\ distance \times \sqrt{3}$$

- Normal expansion cube: $20 \times \sqrt{3} = 34$ ly max cube distance
- Extended range expansion: $30 \times \sqrt{3} = 52$ ly max cube distance
- Third and failed expansions – no more expansions from that system are ever allowed.

Using this formula, it is theoretically possible to expand to a system up to 34 ly away from your expansion system, or even up to 52 ly away with an extended range expansion. However, it is much more likely to find systems that expand within 20 ly of your expansion system.

You can easily find all the expansion targets within 20 ly by searching Inara for your expansion system and going to the Expansion targets tab. Apply the rules of expansion to find the most likely system. If you want to go to a particular system, make the system more appealing to the algorithm by preparing the system before you get there.

Which system will be the expansion system?

What happens if there are two or more systems above 75%? For example, some nefarious foe detects your expansion state and raises another system above 75% to try and deflect you from their systems. The game will choose one of these two expansion systems on the last day of expansion.

According to the game, expansions happen from systems that are happiest. If true, this is one of the few remaining places in the game where happiness is considered. So, if you want to expand from a particular system, make them happy by doing what they want – delivering high-demand trade, doing influential expansion missions, and dropping exploration data.

However, in practice, the choice of which system to expand seems to be random. If you want to control the system from which you expand, only allow a single system to be in expansion. This means you must reduce all other high influence systems and keep on top of their influence levels throughout the expansion attempt.

Rules of Expansion

The algorithm will pick a system within the current expansion range:

1. That the expanding faction has never been to before and has less than 7 factions.
2. Exactly seven factions with a suitable non-native target faction – this starts an invasion war. If multiple systems are possible, the system with the lowest influence target will be picked.
3. Been retreated from before, and less than 7 factions.
4. Expansion will fail. If this expansion occurs within the normal range, the next expansion will have an extended range, even if it occurs from a different system.
5. If an extended range expansion also fails, then that system will be permanently blocked from future expansion – by **any** faction. Take care to avoid this effect unless you want it!

You are unlikely to be able to expand into a permit-locked system. Some systems are impossible to expand to, such as Sol, Shinrarta Dezhra, and a few others.

There are systems in the game with eight factions – these are in invasion, but not always. The expansion algorithm does not consider these systems, so if you want to go there, you must retreat at least one non-native faction from the system to allow you a shot at the system.

On completion of an expansion, you will instantly lose 15% influence in the system you are expanding from. This is called the "expansion tax."

Rules of Invasion

When invading a system, you will fight either the lowest faction in retreat, or the lowest non-native faction that is not in a conflict or a conflict cool-down period. If you want to fight a specific non-native faction, get all the others tied up in conflicts before the expansion ends. Even if the controlling faction is non-native, it is not possible to directly attack them with an invasion.

If you notice that a hostile faction might be about to invade one of your systems in a few days from now, lock up all non-native factions in conflict, and the invasion algorithm will skip your system.

Invasion fights are always Wars even if the two factions would normally have an Election. The winning faction stays in the system, while the loser will instantly retreat at the end of the war cooldown.

Preparing a system for expansion

If you wish a system to be a more workable target for expansion, there are things you can do before you arrive to maximize your chances of entering a system:

- If there are seven factions, you can retreat a non-native faction before expansion starts. Retreat is no small feat, so it is best to get this done before expanding – though not too far in advance, or some other faction might take advantage of your work!

- If there are multiple non-native factions, you might want to fight a particular non-native faction in the Invasion. Create conflicts for all the others, though remember that you cannot invade a non-native faction this way.

Taking over a system, slowly

If you have just entered a system that you want to take over, you have two paths:

- Fight necessary conflicts between you and the controlling faction.
- Go into retreat as quickly as possible, and then use retreat to boost past all other factions and cause a coup.

Let us take the first path. The first thing you will want to do is lock up most of the influence of the secondary factions in wars so you can jump over them. To do this, boost the bottom of each pair of factions and reduce the top faction so that they will collide influence into a conflict. You will not necessarily fight these wars; you want the influence locked up, so you can jump past them.

Once most or all secondary factions conflict, you can boost your faction. This will take influence from the controlling faction. The goal is to jump over all the secondary factions before the conflicts end, without being blocked from docking at the controlling faction's stations. If a secondary faction owns a station, you may want to base your operations out of there so you can do murders and other negative actions while boosting your faction.

Once you meet the controlling faction in influence, you are set for a conflict to control the system. Win that conflict, and the system is yours. Boost yourself away from the other factions to maintain a healthy 15-20% margin of control, and it will be difficult for the other factions to force you back into another fight for control of the system.

Taking over a system, quickly

The other take over pathway is substantial risk, but it is fast. Go into retreat by reducing your faction to less than 2.5%. Now, assuming you have sufficient BGS resources whilst in retreat, boost your faction with trade (if you own a station), exploration (if you own a station), mission and combat bounties. When you are the lowest faction, taking influence from other factions is easy, but once you get above around 20%, it becomes harder. Keep pushing until you get to 60%. This will force a coup (a mandatory war) with the controlling faction. Win the war, and the system is yours. This is risky because during retreat, you are at risk of being retreated if you do not have sufficient BGS resources to fight to stay in the system, so only take this path if you are certain you have the resources to boost your faction every single day for the duration of the retreat.

Backfilling systems

Work with nearby friendly PMFs to expand into each other's systems. This keeps hostile factions at bay (or at least makes it harder for them) and gives you a friend to help combat invasions if they happen.

Expansions: Get rich quick

The expansion state can be useful on its own – industrial and refinery systems in expansion offer allied Commanders missions worth up to 50 million credits for delivering buyable minerals, such as bertrandite, indite, and gallite. Many factions try to continue expanding for this reason.

RETREAT

Retreat is where a non-native faction falls below 2.5% influence. If the faction stays below 2.5% on the last day of retreat, it will leave the system. Once retreat is pending or active, a faction can boost the faction above 2.5% and avoid being retreated – if the faction is above 2.5% on the last day of retreat.

The Important Day

Once retreat goes pending, mark the Important Day in your calendar and be ready to do what you must to boost or retreat the faction.

- Day 1. Pending
- Day 2. Active Day 1
- Day 3. Active Day 2
- Day 4. Active Day 3
- Day 5. Active Day 4.
- Day 6. Active Day 5. THIS IS THE IMPORTANT DAY TO DO STUFF. Give it everything you have got.
- Day 7. Active Day 6. THIS IS THE IMPORTANT DAY TO BE ABOVE (OR BELOW) 2.5%
- Day 8. Active Day 7. The faction will stay or withdraw from the system.

If you know which day is pending, take two days off that, and that is your important day. For example, if you went pending on a Monday, take two days off results in a Saturday, so you need to be doing a lot on the next Saturday. The result occurs on the following Monday.

If you do not know when retreat was pending, you can't work out when the Important Day will be, so you'll need to work hard on all remaining days. Worst case scenario, play the BGS long game, use the expansion rules to come back and try again – or if you want someone gone, simply try again but harder next time.

If you are trying to stay in the system, do missions that have multiple days to hand them in on Days 1-4, collect exploration data using roads to riches if you have a station or settlement with universal cartographics, farm combat bounties each day, and get ready to do large trade via carrier transfers if you own a station. Hand it all in on Active Day 5. If the system is uncontested or mostly uncontested, you could also go all out and boost your faction hard from Active Day 1 through Active Day 5 and attempt a coup (see page 47). It's a lot easier to boost a low influence faction than a high influence faction, so you might end up running the system after retreat finishes.

If you are trying to retreat a faction, keep them under 2.5% on Active Days 1-4, but on Active Day 5, really go to town with murder (clean kills), mass smuggling, negative trade, and of course mission fails. You'll want to collect missions so that they fail on Active Day 5. Passenger failures on Active Day 5 are an effective way of getting mission failures.

Retreating a faction

If you want to retreat a faction, lock up most of the influence within a system by getting most of the middling factions into conflicts, and then push the controlling faction up hard. Finally, reduce the target faction influence by:

- Murders
- Killing Odyssey settlements
- Failing missions
- Negative missions (avoids notoriety)
- Attacking installations and megaships
- Smuggling and black markets

Once retreat goes pending, work out when the fourth active day will be, and make sure you are doing sufficient activities to keep them under 2.5% on the fifth day. Keep pushing until they are gone.

CRIME AND PUNISHMENT

Crime and punishment are how the game will punish you for committing crimes. If you manage your crimes properly, you do not have to spend much time (or at all) in space jail, so let us talk about managing your fines, bounties, and notoriety.

Fines

Fines are issued by factions for small infractions like bumping into other ships when departing a station or firing a weapon (but not killing) an NPC or Commander. If you are running regularly with non-zero notoriety, fines can become more annoying to deal with than bounties, because you cannot use interstellar factors to clear the fine.

Fines can be paid off in any system with the local faction by going to Administration > Fines. You can also clear fines at any interstellar factor where the faction involved is not present if you have zero notoriety.

Bounties

Bounties are issued to the Commander **and** the ship or suit you did it in when you kill an NPC or Commander. Killing sufficient NPCs or Commanders will incur notoriety. Bounties can be more difficult to pay off, and you will appear on the naughty list in station news until you clear your bounty.

If you store a ship module while the ship has a bounty, the module is marked as having a small bounty. Transferring or refitting the module is only possible if you can pay the bounty, so it is best to keep ships together until you have cleared the ship's bounty. You can only clear the bounty if your notoriety is zero, so this can be a hassle if you need to share modules amongst your fleet.

Local bounties

Local bounties are bounties issued by a faction after killing one of their ships, a Commander at one of their settlements, or one of their NPCs. If you have a bounty with a faction, your Commander name will be on the station news local bounty list wherever that faction exists. It is not "local" but locked to the faction that issued the fine. If you have a local bounty with a faction that owns 100 systems, you will be listed in 100 systems. This is not ideal if you are trying to be stealthy.

Local bounties can be cleared at interstellar factors when you have a notoriety of zero, the issuing faction is absent, or you can hand yourself in. In both cases, it is preferable to clear the bounty in the ship or suit you did the crimes in, so the ship or suit is also cleared of the bounty.

Global bounties

Global bounties are mostly issued by the superpowers for killing their ships. This happens mostly if you are in an exploited or controlled PowerPlay system, but it can happen in systems aligned with a superpower.

Global bounties are difficult to clear. You need to find out who issued the bounty and go somewhere like the space jail in HR 1172 in the Pleiades, where there are no factions and no powers, or find an

interstellar factor without the Superpower, Power, or faction that issued the global bounty. For example, if you have picked up a Federation global bounty, you need to find an interstellar factor that does not have a single Federation faction, which is difficult.

Notoriety

If you are on a murder spree, you will rack up some exceptionally large bounties, but you will also rack up notoriety. Notoriety ranges from 1 (you have killed a few people ... let us call it by accident) to 10 (you have been on a killing spree).

As you increase notoriety, an increasing array of local system authority ships will show up ever sooner to try to kill you. This is not a problem... until ATR arrives. These ships are super-engineered and have station lasers for guns. You will die if you stick around, so get ready to leave.

If you need to keep on murdering, simply jump to a nearby system and go back. The cycle will start again, with ATR eventually arriving and you leaving.

Other than handing yourself in, you cannot use the local administration panel or interstellar factors to hand in bounties, pay fines, or do something similar when you have notoriety. If you want to keep on killing, this is not a problem, but eventually, you will want to take care of your fines and bounties. If you hand yourself in and you can afford to pay your bounties and fines, you will still be notorious, but you will be clean and located in the nearest space jail.

To clear notoriety is extremely simple but time-consuming. Land somewhere safe and leave the game running. Each point of notoriety takes up to two hours of game time to clear. At notoriety 10, some 20 hours later, you will have a notoriety of zero, and you can take care of your fines and bounties at an interstellar factor. You need to re-log to the main menu and log back into the game to use the facilities, such as station administration to pay fines or interstellar factors to clear bounties, as it will not see your fines and bounties until you re-log.

Station News - Naughty list

At the bottom of Station News is the list of the five Commanders with the most bounties. If you are trying to be stealthy, appearing in this list is bad, so you need to take care of your fines and bounties regularly.

Top Tip: Once you clear your bounties, station news will still have your old bounty amount listed for a while. You can fix that by going to a nav beacon or station and shoot a clean NPC once and leave. Now, you will be listed with a far lower amount than before. This might be enough to remove you from the list altogether if there's a lot of crime going on. You can re-clear your bounties and you'll eventually come off the station news bounty list.

Interstellar factors

If your notoriety is zero, you can fly to a low security system with a station with an interstellar factor. You can search for these in-game, or via Inara.

Space Jail aka Prison or Detention Centers

Sometimes, it is just faster to hand yourself in, pay the bounties, and fly back to where you were. You will need sufficient credits to pay off the bounties. If you have been on a lengthy and successful murder spree, your bounties might be extremely large, so remember that you do not want to end up penniless and unable to afford rebuys. Once clean, you'll be legal, poorer, and still have notoriety if you racked up some kills.

Top Tip: If you have notoriety 10, you can sleep it off at a friendly space port by leaving the game running for 20 hours or consider going on a short 20-hour exobiology data gathering mini-expedition so you can afford to pay off the next bounty.

Top Tip: Remember to hand yourself in in the ship you did the crimes to clear the ship's bounties and fines at the same time as you hand yourself in. Ensure it has a fuel scoop or you'll be calling the Fuel Rats. You can also take Apex taxis back to where you need to go.

Top Tip: If you are a frequent space jail visitor, keep a spare bubble taxi or exploration ship stationed at your nearest space jail for a fast return. Start the transfer of another bubble taxi to the space jail and jump into the one you had stationed there previously. You'll want to transfer your murder ship back when you get back, especially if it has an awful jump range.

REFERENCE

Playing as a team with a plan: the BGS force multiplier

BGS can be done by a single knowledgeable individual with a fair amount of time on their hands. However, the most amount of fun can be had by manipulating BGS as a team. Some of the largest factions in the game are a small handful of BGS operatives and one or two BGS "generals" or coordinators. Knowing what to do each day, advancing your goals via an agreed and well-documented BGS plan, and then executing the daily request with a minimum of effort allows you to appear to be a much larger force than you are.

If you are currently playing BGS alone, consider coalition agreements with nearby friendly factions and share the BGS load across the coalition. Another alternative is to recruit to your faction via the Squadron Recruitment Center, and once a recruit is trusted, bring them into the BGS team.

Strategize and document a BGS plan, learn how to do your objectives with the least effort possible – so you can do more objectives every day than your neighbors, and last of all, make sure that the daily BGS request is acting as your force multiplier by advancing that plan a bit every day.

Constructing a BGS Plan

Every faction should have a BGS Plan. This plan should detail:

- Diplomacy - List of nearby factional leaders and how to reach them.
- Diplomacy - List and text of all active system agreements, peace treaties, non-aggression pacts, and coalition agreements
- Diplomacy – who is currently representing the faction, and where.
- Short term goals – those that can be done within the next two-three months.
- Medium goals – those that can be done within the next three-twelve months.
- Long term goals - those that will take time.
- Maintenance triggers for boosting low systems or minimum margins of control to avoid unwanted.
- Maintenance triggers for high systems to reduce influence to avoid unwanted expansion.
- Systems to prepare and backfill.
- Systems to expand from and their preferred and destinations.
- Factions to monitor, and potentially retreat.

You can do this in a shared document, folder, or using a system such as the forthcoming ComGuard.

Diplomacy

Diplomacy is easily the most important BGS skill. It is a force multiplier. BGS coordinators can do the work of hundreds of BGS operatives and save months of work with a single successful negotiation. You can kill your faction with a failed negotiation or refusing to negotiate. BGS operatives are likely to come across other Commanders, and they need to be diplomatic and not just open fire immediately.

Diplomacy is not optional. There has been extremely expansionist but isolationist powerhouse factions that have been reduced to backwater status by their neighbors agreeing to attack the powerhouse faction because the faction refused to negotiate or do diplomacy in any way. Never ending warfare and conflict has burned out many a BGS team. Burnout effectively destroys these factions, a situation that could have easily been avoided with a bit of diplomacy, negotiation, and compromise.

BGS Coordinators should use diplomacy to negotiate with nearby player factions with system swaps, non-aggression pacts, and coalition agreements to backfill each other's systems, defend each other, and plan system ownership together. These alliances can build up powerful regional blocks, avoid a great deal of unnecessary war that burns out BGS teams, and protect smaller factions from expansionist BGS factions.

Diplomacy usually happens on Discord, and the primary location for many BGS disputes is the ED BGS Discord server. Other diplomatic outposts include:

- Southern Edge Diplomacy https://discord.gg/KPEx5FE98y
- Utopia (Pranav Antal has hundreds of factions present) https://discord.me/antal
- More – please send in your suggestions.

Diplomacy is a force multiplier. The best war is a war you never need to fight. Having diplomatic agreements to hand avoids misunderstandings and unnecessary wars. Knowing who is authorized to speak for the faction, and where they are doing it is essential to avoid multiple voices from confusing other factions.

Inter faction agreements

There are several common agreement types within the game. You can do anything you like, including just screenshotting a conversation, but it's best if you want a formal end to hostilities, system swaps, or coalition agreements, that they be done properly.

- **System agreements.** Two factions agree on the management of a particular system
- **System swaps**. Two factions agree to swap ownership of two systems between each other
- **PowerPlay system swaps**. A Power might want to flip a system for a favorable government type, and they will offer a system in return. Or vice versa.
- **Non-aggression pacts (NAPs)**. Two factions agreeing to not fight each other for control of systems, sets boundaries on PvP engagements, such as encouraging consensual fights
- **Coalition, Partnership, or Alliance Agreements**. Two factions become more closely aligned, usually obligates each faction to fight and help each other in times of conflict. These are often listed on Inara as "Supporting factions."
- **Merger Agreements**. Two factions wish to merge and become one. Consolidation is ever more likely as many factions lose players but have great neighbors who share the same objectives and expansion ethos. Often all players from one faction will transition to the other, join the other's Discord, and a BGS plan worked out for control over all the merged systems.
- **Peace treaties**. All wars need to end, and diplomacy will settle them if both sides want to keep on playing the game. Set out the peace treaty terms and conditions, such as ceded

systems, right of free passage, and so on. SINC has a peace treaty with AXI for example, after we lost a war with them. The best end to a war I have ever seen is the Diamond Frogs asking for a hand drawing of a frog as restitution and an end to hostilities. Humor goes a long way to heal wounds. GG Diamond Frogs. 😊

Being a good guest

Being a good guest can set you up to become an ally or coalition partner of other factions. When you expand into their systems, it is best if you talk with them before you arrive, and make sure that they know that you are only there to back fill the system, and not to take the system. Let them know your intentions – will you be boosting yourself to second spot? Will you be taking any settlements or ports? If so, negotiate with them before it happens to avoid any issues.

Once you are solidly within the system, either do no work there, or signal to your hosts that you are about to fight a conflict or boost yourself, so they are not surprised by your fleet carriers or increased traffic or pressure on their controlling influence.

Maintaining other faction's system

Sometimes, you need to prepare a system to expand into it, or that you want to get rid of a problematic faction. Work with the system owner to agree on any changes, and then preferably work together to make it happen. Whatever happens, do not exceed your authority in the system, otherwise you might turn an ally into a foe, and set off forever war, which helps no one.

If the system is player faction free, of course, just go ahead and do what you need. First come, first served.

Goals

Every daily BGS request should advance at least one of the short-, medium-, or long-term goals.

Maintenance

Use tooling to help identify threats such as nearby hostile factions who are readying systems to expand into your space, boost low margin of control systems, reduce high influence systems, and to fix bad states, such as retreat.

Once you have a task list, write up a daily BGS request. If no one is around to help, guess what? You're doing it. Add to the list that you should recruit on the Squadron Recruitment Center Discord.

System preparation and backfilling

BGS is the art of the long game. You must have patience as you can only do one expansion every two weeks, so make every expansion count by ensuring that you're expanding according to your plan, and nowhere else.

Decide on how expansionist your faction will be, and that will guide you in your quest to dominate nearby space.

There are so many defunct PMFs that you should consider adopting nearby dormant PMFs and backfilling into their systems.

Another easy boost to your standing on the political leaderboard is to ensure you control all systems you are currently present in that are entirely NPC factions.

Lastly, if you are leaning towards being ultra-expansionist, be prepared to do a fair amount of diplomacy as you'll come up against neighbors who do not want to cede their systems to you. There are 20,000+ populated systems and thousands of PMFs. The likelihood of being present in more than a couple of hundred systems and controlling most of them is not high, so be realistic and don't burn out your BGS team by fighting endless war. The game is supposed to be fun, not a second job.

The Bucket Model

BGS is designed to involve you in as many game loops as possible. Seasoned BGS Commanders know this and will do a variety of tasks, not just one. However, if you do not find a game loop fun, like mining or ground missions, it is best to skip it because BGS should not be a second job. This is why successful BGS teams should have more than one BGS operative – to avoid burnout and ensure that as many buckets can be filled daily.

Internally, the game has many buckets, levers, triggers, transaction values, traffic levels, whatever you choose to call them:
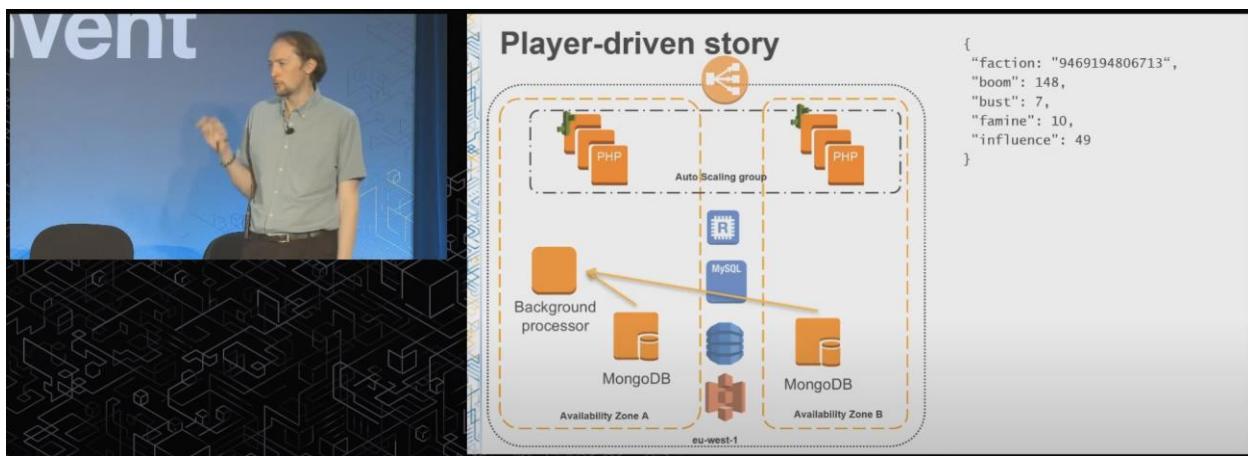
Figure 3: FDev documenting some of the internal buckets.
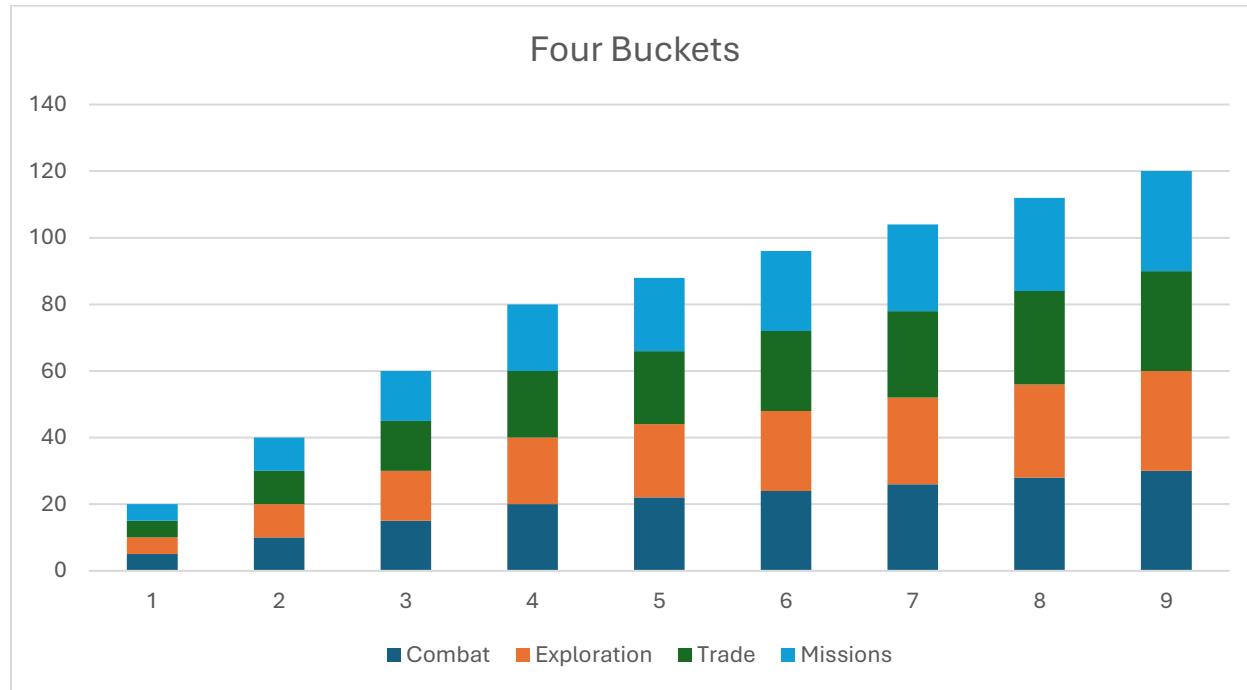
Several types of actions fill or empty these internal buckets. Some of this can be surfaced using the table as seen on page 63. For example, bringing medicines empties the outbreak bucket, eventually clearing that state.

Various factions have evaluated a four-bucket model, consisting of trade, exploration, combat, and missions, which simplifies but reasonably and successfully represents the game's behavior as how these levers, triggers, are applied to each tick.

Due to the design of these buckets – real or the four bucket model, filling one bucket is not as effective as filling all buckets – you will get more return on time invested by doing multiple relevant actions to the active states affecting a faction.
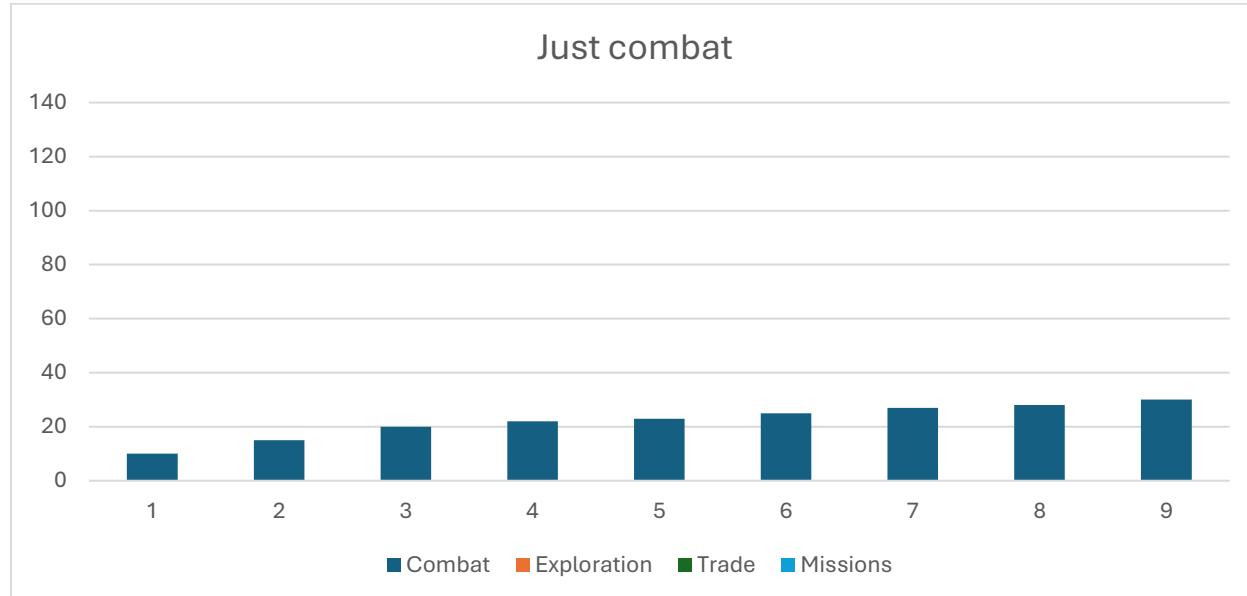
Some Commanders will do combat bounties because it is the most time-efficient method of boosting influence, but they will be working harder than they need because they only fill one

bucket. Just doing combat alone is less effective than doing a bit of profitable trade, dropping some exploration data, dropping a smaller amount of combat bounties, and doing a few missions.

For the same amount of play time, four buckets achieve a great deal more influence and positive state change than just doing one activity alone. It is possible to more easily achieve a "perfect day" – there are tables that describe the most amount of influence possible on a "perfect day."

However, if you are really stuck, and just want to move the security slider and gain a little influence, or just love combat, there is nothing wrong with doing a bit of combat. Everything helps.

Although just doing combat is worth doing if you only have 15-20 minutes to play a day, because you will not be soft capped. If you have a couple of hours, the soft caps mean just doing one bucket alone is not as efficient as doing a bit of effort into all four buckets.

Initially, filling the bucket goes fast, but as it fills, it is thought that the bucket gets wider, so it needs increased effort. Once the bucket is full, a trigger is reached, and something happens, like the next economic state is reached. The bucket is emptied, and the process starts over.

Some states limit the buckets that are in play. For example, during a war, only the combat bucket works. Doing non-combat-related missions, dropping exploration data, or doing trade does not help the war.

The Ten Levers

Internally, there are ten key levers that you can use for positive and negative BGS effects:

	Positive Lever	Negative Lever
Trade	Trade profit (within demand)	Trade loss Trade exceeding demand
Exploration / Black Markets	Exploration	Black Markets Smuggling
Combat	Bounty vouchers Winning wars for your faction	Murder Winning wars for opposing faction
Missions	Mission completion	Mission fails. Taking missions against a faction
Scenarios	Scenario completion	Scenario fails. Scenario completion for the opposing faction

Diminishing returns

In 2016, FDev said outright in a live stream that the game has soft caps. In the post 4.0 Elite Dangerous galaxy, instead of soft caps, there are ever diminishing returns. Some factions have modelled this on a logarithmic scale:
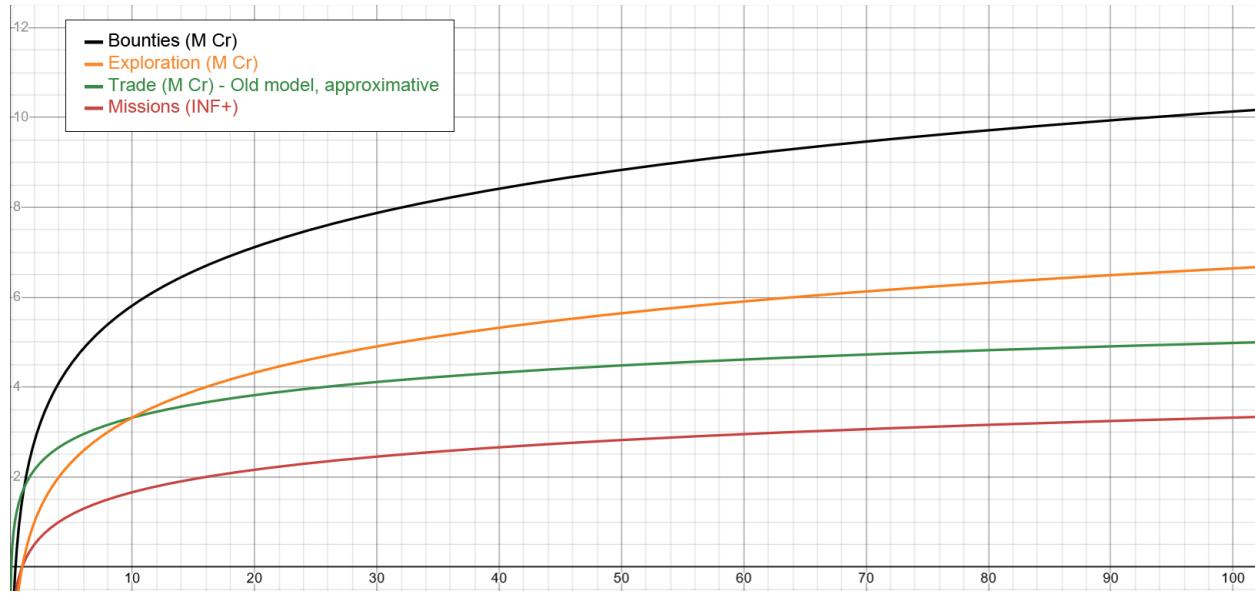
Figure 4 Relative influence effect against effort. Note the Y axis is not influence gained directly, but a relative effect of each bucket. Source: Commander Cluster Fox

The curves in Figure 3 add up. This shows that doing mostly some bounties, exploration data (if you have it), and some trade is of the most help, followed by missions. Note how quickly the curves taper off, so it is worth doing a little of each bucket, rather than a lot of any single bucket.

There are four functions that govern the BGS influence points, listed in order of their impact to the BGS from highest to lowest impact:

$$bounty\ points = 1.33\ \times\ log_2(\frac{bounty}{450,000})$$

$$exploration\ points = 0.5\ \times log_2(\frac{exploration\ value}{1,000,000})$$

$$trade\ points = 0.5\ \times log_2(\frac{trade\ value}{100,000})$$

$$mission\ points = 0.5\ \times\ log_2(mission\ influence)$$

These calculations are provided by Cmdr Taipandot: "*BGS gets boring after you know this*." To my mind, it shouldn't be boring, as limits give you more latitude to try out new game loops, such as taking on difficult or challenging missions, NPC piracy or smuggling, or taking immediate scenarios with an installation you've never been to before. Limits mean there is little harm in mixing it up because in the end, you might get a few more influence points. Worst case scenario, you sit in a hazres holding down your trigger for 40 minutes.

Modeling by other factions bears these calculations out. The obvious conclusion is that BGS is well modeled and acts reliably to the same inputs by all factions. Working too hard in any one bucket is simply counterproductive, because you could be filling another bucket instead.

Initially, your actions will have a large effect, but as you do more of the same actions within a single bucket, your actions will have a reduced effect until the increase to the bucket is negligible.

The returns on effort are related to system population size. Heavily populated systems require a lot more work to move the same amount of influence; the maximum achievable daily influence effect will be lower as well.
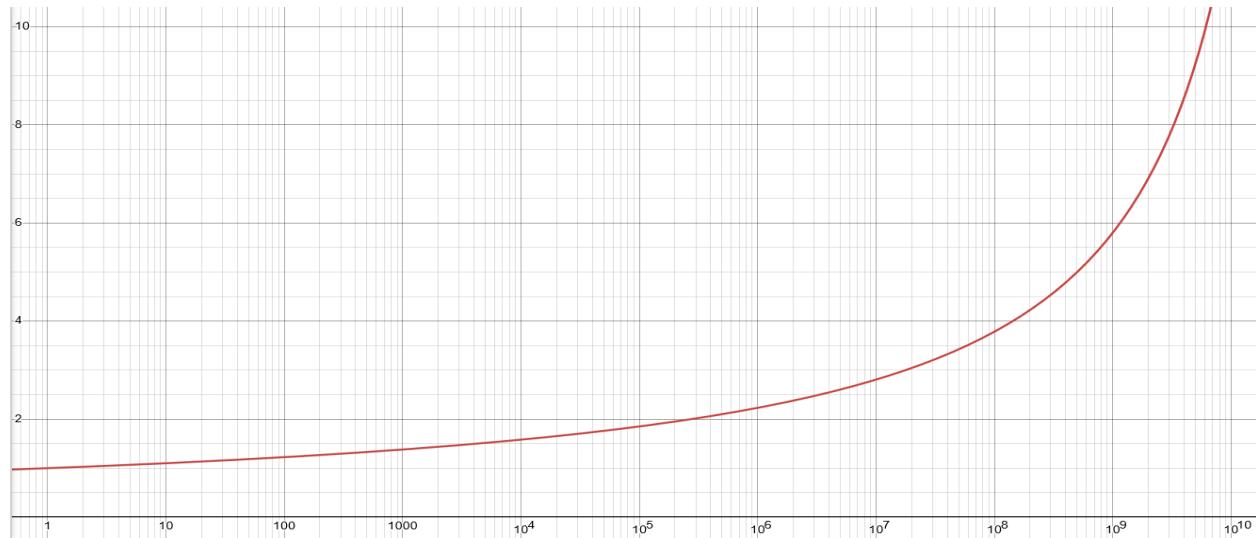
Figure 5 - Effort required (Y) vs population size (X). Source: Cmdr Cluster Fox

Using the equation:

$$Effect \ = \ max(0.025 , (1 \ - \frac{log(Population)}{10.875})) \ \times \ Effort$$

This equation says that to get the same effect (influence change) in a large system, you need to do six times as much effort in a one billion population system as you would need to do in a 1000 population system.

Someone who is boosting a faction at less than 5% influence does not have to do anywhere near the amount of work of someone defending a 60%+ influence. Low influence factions can take an outsized amount of influence from a controlling faction. You can use this to your advantage. If you are reducing the controlling faction, you will want to push all the other (influence unlocked) factions a little in concert with negative actions for the controlling faction to maximize influence transfer, remembering that influence flows to low influence factions more easily than high influence factions. This is a force multiplier compared to doing substantial amounts of negative actions against the controlling faction. You will earn some credits, and you will not appear on the bounty boards in station news.

For most factions, who have a bit of a contested space and moderate size systems, SINC recommends the following contributions per BGS operative per day per system to avoid player burn out and yet still produce appreciable influence gains for the effort exerted.

	Small (< 1m pop) Uncontested	Medium (1m-25m)	Large (>25m) Contested
Combat bounties	10 mCr	20 mCr	30 mCr
Exploration data	5 mCr	10 mCr	15 mCr
Trade profits	10 mCr	20 mCr	30 mCr
Missions INF	15 INF	25 INF	50 INF

Your faction may decide to do more or less than this. If you are in a highly contested part of the galaxy with multi-billion population systems, you will almost certainly want to do more, but you're also likely to need more BGS operatives than a faction operating in an uncontested part of the galaxy.

If you are being contested, regardless of system size, make sure that you are leveraging the yin-yang model by doing positives and negatives for all relevant factions. A good rule of thumb is to have a single beneficiary faction and a single victim faction that will give up influence for the beneficiary.

The only exceptions to the diminishing returns model are wars and elections. You need to do as many of these as you can. Winning a day in a conflict is measured by successful objective completion, such as winning a combat zone, handing in combat bonds, or completing election missions. The best way to win conflicts is to do more than your opponent, so it is always worthwhile to team up and do them together. You will have more fun, and you are more likely to win.

Influence distribution

When Commanders do actions or missions to boost or reduce a faction's influence, it will affect the overall system influence levels:

- Influence adds to 100%, so make sure you are doing positive and negative activities.
- Pushing a controlling faction is hard, especially in large population systems or above 50% influence. A table in the reference section shows the expected results based on population size and effort.
- If you only do positive actions for your controlling faction, you will work much harder than BGS Coordinators pushing the controlling faction and pulling influence (reducing) secondary factions.
- The bigger the population, the harder it is to shift influence. Smaller systems require less effort.
- Pushing a low-influence faction (less than 10%) will have outsized effects on high-influence factions, you can reduce a controlling faction by boosting several low influence factions.

Interpreting the leaderboards

The game provides a leaderboard function that can give canny BGS Coordinators an insight into the activities of a hostile faction – and vice versa, it gives an insight into what you do as well.

The method regardless of what you're trying to observe is to go to the right-hand panel, Squadrons > Leaderboards. Choose the type of leaderboard you wish to analyze, find the faction that you are trying to get intel on, and note down the current points. Do it again the following day. If there is

movement, the faction has participated in that activity. Be warned, there's thousands of factions, and finding one faction among many can be time consuming, so you're unlikely to do this for many factions.

Interpreting the results is up to you; if you're analyzing a large and busy faction, you'll get to know what's a normal day look like for them, and then suddenly there might be spikes during wars or in contested systems, so you can use the information in the leaderboard to give you a gut feel as to how much effort to invest to counteract their actions.

If it's a small and quiet faction, and they usually have little to no activity, you can easily work out what they are doing if they are contesting you in a system.

Combat

If you're fighting a war, the faction's combat points will go up. Each CZ clear and kill is represented by several points. You can work out the faction's combat capabilities compared to your own by comparing their effort to your effort. This works best if the faction is only fighting a single war – preferably with you, but sometimes some factions are doing wars, combat bounty hunting, and more, which will give you a hint as to how much effort you need to put in, but it can also be confusing.

1	STELLANEBULA PROJECT	2040780
2	LAVIGNY'S LEGION	1984142
3	ANTI XENO INITIATIVE	1415743

Trade

If you know that a faction is doing trade to boost influence, you can work against that by dropping combat bounties or negative trade.

| 30 | CANONN | 8543527068 |

Some factions have trade specialists who make money for the faction's BGS operatives by doing the highly profitable trade loops documented in Earning money fast on page 18. This can obscure BGS boosting activities involving trade, which tend to be much smaller.

Some factions are into mining in a big way, and their trade is representative of all sales, and not necessarily BGS manipulation.

Exploration

Although a neglected bucket by many BGS Coordinators, now that you've read this guide, I hope you're incorporating exploration via roads to riches to boost your most difficult systems. If a faction regularly goes on expeditions, this leaderboard is likely to be the most confusing, because expeditions hand in tens of millions to hundreds of millions of credits of exploration data all the time. However, most factions rarely touch exploration data because it can take a while to collect.

RANK	SQUADRON NAME	POINTS
1	STELLANEBULA PROJECT	3597198222
2	THE STELLAR CARTOGRAPHERS GUILD	2960957348
3	INTERGALACTIC ASTRONOMICAL UNION	2719791796

However, most active BGS factions will be far down the exploration leaderboard. You can use this information to see if the faction is using a little exploration data every day to boost their systems. You can undo that work by smuggling, negative actions, and negative trade, or simply boosting the other factions within the system.

Interpreting station news

Station news is where you will find out first about your efforts. There are several sections:

- Factions' status. This is where you will learn about the current states, and the other places a faction is having conflicts, and if expansion is pending or active.
- Local bounties. You can often find out the names of Commanders who are targeting your faction in this section.
- Power bounties. If you are in a PowerPlay system, the Commanders who have been targeting the local power's ships will be listed.
- Global bounties. In certain systems, global bounties will be listed. These are often given by the superpowers (Federation, Alliance, and Empire). These bounties can be difficult to get rid of, and so Commander names might be listed for some time.
- Number of bounties issued. The higher the number, the more activity occurring.
- Number of Commanders within the system. If you have a quiet system with 100+ Commanders being shown, you are about to have an unbelievably tough time.
- Ships in the system. Understanding the nature of the Commander traffic entering the system is important. Realize that ships that do not jump into the system are not shown, so it is entirely possible that you might not see ships that are attacking you if they are staying on a local carrier or station.

Multiple Ethos Factions

Frontier allowed early player minor factions to have multiple government types, and thus have multiple ethos types as well. For example:

Race Marshalls is an anarchy that has a hidden government or ethos type, but it's one of the few anarchies in the game that offers donates and has a working security slider and thus can experience civil unrest and lockdown, but they are also an anarchy, so there are no bounties for bounty hunting, and no fines or bounties for murders and crimes within their controlled systems, stations, and settlements. As a result, managing the Race Marshalls is both easier and harder than normal anarchy.

Sirius Inc is a Corporate Democracy, which means that we close black markets and go to elections more often than would otherwise be the case, because we match the ethos of multiple government types:

	Criminals	Autocrats	Corporations	Social
Criminals	War	War	War	War
Autocrats	War	Elections	War	War
Corporations	War	War	Elections	Elections
Social	War	War	Elections	Elections

Table 7 - Sirius Inc's conflict table

There are many more examples out there such as these. Unfortunately, the modern game and external tools cannot show these multiple government types, but they do exist and might surprise even seasoned BGS Coordinators.

Ethos / Social Group Effects

Social groups (i.e. ethos) affect two major outcomes: whether black markets will be present and the number of illegal missions on offer.

	Criminals	Autocrats	Corporations	Social
Black Markets	Open	Close	Close	Open
Illegal missions	Many	Average	Average	Average

Maintaining anarchy systems

Maintaining anarchy systems is a challenging task, and so it is in the reference section for BGS Coordinators.

After the Odyssey release, anarchies, which were already difficult to maintain, became a nightmare with years of effort lost because random players wanted to grind out shiny suits. Many player anarchy factions are now defunct, and there's fewer and fewer anarchy-controlled systems in the game.

This is due to the difficulties in maintaining anarchies, let alone letting them expand. Getting sufficient system influence to remain in control can be an uphill battle even for experienced BGS coordinators. Some of the issues include:

- No bounties. Earning combat bounties can only come from mission targets.
- With the rare exception of the Race Marshalls, anarchies do not offer donate missions.
- No security slider. Efforts to bolster security may not translate to boosting the anarchy's influence.
- No (or drastically reduced) penalties for murder and violent crimes.
- Smuggling (i.e., selling stolen or illegal goods on the black market) helps anarchy, but smuggling requires massive quantities of stolen goods, which can be difficult to obtain in bulk.

The best way to keep an anarchy faction in control of a system is to shed all assets other than the controlling station. All Odyssey settlements, Horizon settlements, and installations must be transferred to other factions. This reduces the risk of random players entering the system and effectively murdering all your inhabitants. Although random players do not receive any notoriety and no bounties from murdering your inhabitants, it still penalizes the anarchy's influence, albeit at a slower rate than normal factions.

To boost an anarchy, take all forms (Horizons, passengers, Odyssey) of missions for the anarchy, particularly those that target factions within the same system, dropping exploration data, and trade all work. Obtaining bounty vouchers by taking on missions with mission targets is the only viable option to earning bounty vouchers. You can also bounty hunt within 1000 km of anarchy owned orbital star ports, but this is tricky, and it is just easier to let the mission targets interdict you in anarchy owned space, and then kill them.

If you have any further tips on how best to manage anarchy factions, please do drop us a note.

Actions

	Economic	Security	Influence	Conflict	Other
Mission	Varies	Varies	Varies	Varies	Varies
Trade	Up		Up	Election	Pirate attack up
Trade Food	Up		Up	Election	
Trade Medicines	Up		Up	Election	Outbreak down
Trade Weapons	Up	Up	Up	Election	Pirate attack down
Search and Rescue		Up	Up	Election	
Smuggle	Down		Down	Election	Pirate attack up
Smuggle Food	Down		Down	Election	
Smuggle medicines	Down		Down	Election	Outbreak down
Smuggle Weapons	Down	Down	Down	Election	
Redeem bounties		Up	Up	War and civil war	Pirate attack down
Redeem combat bonds		Up		War and civil war	Pirate attack outbreak up
Sell exploration data	Up		Up	Election	Outbreak down
Scenario objectives	Varies	Varies	Varies	Varies	Cargo scenarios affect trade, vary by commodity. Anything combat affects war and civil war
Violent crimes		Down	Down	War and civil war	

Source: an old image found on the Internet ("from BGS stream" according to ED BGS).

Figure 6 An example from the actual developers back in 2016 for some of the actions.

https://www.youtube.com/live/y5DGyG6Qwvk?si=JemkxjuwY5jOvg0j&t=415

This is not a comprehensive list and needs confirmation. To see a full list of potentially known actions versus source and destination effects, please see https://cdb.sotl.org.uk/missions

State Duration Table

Slider

State	Pending	Duration	Cool Down
Boom	1	1-∞	0
Bust	1	1-∞	0
Civil liberty	1	1-∞	0
Civil unrest	1	1-∞	0
Investment	1	1-∞	0
Lockdown	1	1-∞	0

Conflict

State	Pending	Duration	Cool Down
Elections	1	4-7	1
War / Civil War	1	4-7	1

Event

State	Pending	Duration	Cool Down	Inf / tick
Blight	0	1 -7	14	-1
Drought	0	1-Unknown	14	0
Expansion	5	5-7	14	-15 at end
Famine	0	3-28	14	0
Infrastructure failure	0	1-∞	14	-1
Natural disaster	0	1-Unknown	14	0

State	Pending	Duration	Cool Down	Inf / tick
Outbreak	3	3-28	14	0
Pirate attack	0	1-Unknown	14	0
Public holiday	0	2	14	+1
Retreat	1	6	1	-2
Terrorist attack	0	3	14	-1

These values need to be confirmed with Elite Dangerous: Odyssey

Sources: ED BGS Hive mind

https://novaforce.com/guides/bgs/

https://remlok-industries.fr/the-complete-background-simulation-guide/?lang=en

Conflict table

	Criminals	Autocrats	Corporations	Social
Criminals	War	War	War	War
Autocrats	War	Elections	War	War
Corporations	War	War	Elections	War
Social	War	War	War	Elections

Active States

None

None is the default state. Although it does not come with any modifiers or bonuses, it is the state that is required to farm certain HGE types, such as core dynamic composites for Federation systems, or Imperial Shielding for Imperial systems, both of which are essential for engineering.

How to get into the None state. If you're lower than None, boost the relevant economic or security sliders. If you are above the None state, reduce the faction by doing negative actions or boosting other factions.

How to get out of the None state. Boost the faction via trade, missions, exploration data, or combat bounties. Or if they are above None, reduce the faction by doing negative actions against the faction, or boosting other factions.

Blight

Blight is where the system is being affected by some form of disease affecting crop yields. Failing to deal with blight will lead to Famine. Food and basic medicine demand goes up, as do prices. If the system is an agricultural economy, food supply is dramatically cut. Agronomic treatment has twenty times more demand with a 1.5x price over normal.

How to get into blight. You cannot. It just happens. It might be possible to get a system that is in bust to enter blight, drought, or famine given a bit of effort, so try to reduce the economic slider through smuggling, negative trade, and failing donations.

How to get out of blight. Trade agronomic treatments from nearby station markets (not fleet carriers).

Boom

Boom means your faction is doing well. Trade will be more efficient due to boosted profits and demand. It is highly likely that there will be a supply increase of between 1.7 and 2.4x normal, a dramatic increase in (sell) prices for minerals, an increase in demand, and a change in the demand (buy) price, usually increasing the prices of in demand goods. Boom is a good opportunity to make money with trade loops.

How to get a faction into boom. High-demand trade loops, source and return missions, donate, and drop exploration data. The following mission types will help extend boom, including group and VIP passenger missions (exploration ones let you double up!), trade (source and return) missions, and donations. If you wish to preserve Boom specifically, then take care not to push the economy slider too high and end up in Investment instead.

How to get a faction out of boom. Any negative economic activity, such as unprofitable trade and smuggling, piracy, take economic missions that target this faction, and if possible, cut off their ability to trade by getting into conflict with the faction and taking the station.

Bust

Bust is where the faction cannot pay its bills. You must work hard to get out of this state, but the usual levers work fine.

Demand for narcotics, food cartridges, and liquor rise, supply goes down significantly. Trade loops between bust and boom systems can be highly profitable if there's sufficient supply to make it worthwhile.

How to get a faction out of bust. Buy and sell highly profitable trade in high-demand goods, drop exploration data, and do economic missions, and do the following mission types:

- Assassinate pirate leader (has negative effects for the target faction)
- Cargo transfers of illegal drugs (has negative effects for the target faction)
- Hostage rescue (has negative effects for the target faction)

How to get a faction into bust. Smuggling is one of the best ways to get a faction into this state, but any negative economic action will work. Doing the above mission types *to* the victim faction will help maintain the Bust state.

Civil liberty

Civil liberty is the state above "None" on the security slider. It is thought to double the effect of combat bounties and bonds.

How to get into civil liberty. Drop combat bounties, do combat-related missions, and drop combat bonds if in a war zone.

How to get out of civil liberty. Take negative security actions against the faction, such as murders, or take combat missions against the faction.

Civil unrest

Civil unrest is the state below "None" on the security slider. Systems in this state have increased chances of piracy. Civil unrest drives demand for narcotics, liquor, beer, non-lethal weapons, personal weapons, but does not significantly change prices.

How to get into civil unrest. Do negative security actions, such as murder and violent crimes, and take combat missions against the faction.

How to get out of civil unrest. Drop combat bounties, clear weapon fire, pirate, or terrorist USS, take combat missions for the faction.

Civil war

Civil war is identical to war. Civil wars occur when two factions share the same home system and end up in conflict.

How to get into civil war. Push together two factions with the same home system who would otherwise go to war. When they cross each other's influence, a civil war will result.

How to win civil war. Fight the war – see the Wars (and Civil Wars) reference section on wars on page 43. Combat bounties, combat bonds, and all security slider activities count. Economic missions, trade, donations, exploration data, do not count.

How to lose civil war. Fight the war for the other side. Combat bounties, combat bonds, and all security slider activities count. Economic missions, trade, donations, exploration data, do not count.

Drought

Drought is a lack of water in a system. Drought dramatically reduces the availability of food and increases prices (if any availability at all). Drought increases demand for grain, fruits and vegetables, water, basic medicines, and increases prices for these goods.

How to get into drought. You cannot, it just happens. But if prolonged, it will lead to infrastructure failure.

How to get out of drought. Deliver water and emergency supplies from nearby systems (not fleet carriers).

Elections

Elections are conflicts that occur between factions of the same ethos, other than anarchies. Anarchies will always go to war.

How to get into elections. Push together two factions with the same government ethos (i.e., both Democracies). When they cross each other's influence, an election will result.

How to win elections. Fight the election with election missions, trade, and donations. Combat bounties and other security slider activities will not count.

How to lose elections. Fight the election for the other side. Combat bounties and other security slider activities will not count.

Expansion

Expansion allows a faction to expand to a nearby system, following the rules set out in Rules of Expansion on page 52. Expansion drives high demand and soaring prices, which can form a highly profitable trade loop between expansion systems and infrastructure failure systems.

How to get into expansion. A faction that wishes to expand its territory pushes a system above 75%. Once it remains there for a tick, expansion will go pending.

How to get out of expansion. Reduce faction influence by all available means to prevent high influence systems from entering expansion. Once pending, you cannot stop expansion.

How to derail expansion. The only well-known expansion outcome is through having a single expansion target. The game chooses a random expansion target on the last day, but it often chooses the highest influence system if there are multiple systems with greater than 75% influence. Lower the influence of the system you do not wish to expand from and raise another system (or three) to be higher. This will force squadrons to push themselves down to bring their preferred target back to the top, whereas normally they would have to do no work during expansion.

Famine

Famine is where a faction cannot feed itself. Famine is an opportunity to massively boost your faction's influence because there will be support missions in nearby systems, which are also highly profitable. This will bring random Commanders to your system, inadvertently helping.

How to get into famine. Force the eco slider down using the usual mechanisms such as negative trade, smuggling, and missions that target the faction economically.

How to get out of famine. Trade high demand foods and do food related source and return and food donation missions, which should be in abundance. The following missions will help reduce the duration of the famine state:

- Cargo transfer: illegal food
- Passenger: bulk scientists
- Donation: credits for famine
- Donation: food

Infrastructure failure

Infrastructure failure is both a blessing and a curse. A blessing in that it generates a lot of missions such as power on / restore Odyssey missions, and a curse, because the game suggests that trade in machinery helps shorten the state but does not seem to work. During infrastructure failure, the security slider and system influence will take a hit every day, so be prepared to drop bounties.

How to get into infrastructure failure. It is unclear precisely how to enter infrastructure failure, but it is thought that delivering too many combat bounties or bonds (i.e., too many wars in a system involving the faction) may cause infrastructure failure. Try to generate wars to spur on the delivery of mass quantities of combat bonds and bounties. Another observation is that the effect might take 14 days to come to fruition.

How to get out of infrastructure failure. Make sure you are regularly boosting the security slider by dropping combat bounties. Take Odyssey power on / restore missions. Trade in high demand machinery from nearby systems (not fleet carriers). Or just wait.

Investment

Boom 2.0. Supply of agronomic treatment and insulating membranes are huge. Demand and prices for painite and a range of other goods is dramatically increased.

How to get into investment. Do positive trade with stations (not fleet carriers), economic missions, and drop exploration data.

How to get out of investment. Negative economic activity, such as unprofitable trade and smuggling, take economic missions that target this faction, and if possible, cut off their ability to trade by getting into conflict with the faction and taking the station.

Lockdown

Lockdown for a controlling faction completely closes the faction's stations. Every day, a little influence is taken from the controlling faction and spread to the other factions. However, this state has an unseen benefit. If you are facing a much more powerful adversary, you can put your own faction into this state to slow down negative actions, as the only activity that now works is dropping combat bounties. This means you can spend time on more important systems elsewhere, or counterattack somewhere else.

How to get out of lockdown. The only activity that helps get out of lockdown is to drop combat bounties.

How to force a faction into lockdown. Any negative security activity will push a faction into lockdown. Examples include combat missions targeting the faction, such as assassinate terrorist leader, smuggling or selling illegal weapons (battle weapons and landmines), and attacking Goliaths at Odyssey settlements.

Natural disaster

This rare state occurs very infrequently, often considered to be "FDev Hand of God." Natural disaster is a specialized internal bucket with very unclear triggers. There is insufficient information to really be clear on how this state works.

How to get into natural disaster. You do not. It happens.

How to get out of natural disasters. Do everything – missions, trade, exploration data, drop bounties.

Outbreak

Outbreak, like public holiday and pirate attack, is random, but is likely to be related to not treating bust in a timely fashion.

How to get into outbreak. It is very unclear. It is a side effect of taking missions to deliver biowaste, with the destination faction potentially ending up in outbreak. There is unlikely to be enough of these missions to cause an outbreak. There is some anecdotal evidence that too many bounties and war bonds can also lead to outbreak, but this is untested.

How to get out of outbreak. Take missions that clearly say that they are helping clear outbreak, such as outbreak donation missions, outbreak data courier missions, and more. Bounty vouchers do not work.

Pirate attack

Pirate attacks occur from time to time at a random time, usually when things are going well. It is thought that positive player actions cause the pirate attack state. During pirate attack, more pirate threat USS appear, and interdictions of trade ships increase. Demand for weapons increases, along with narcotics. Prices for some goods skyrockets as it is riskier to trade in the system.

How to get into pirate attack. Although it is not predictable, we know that more pirates exist when trade is booming, so try to get the system into boom via trade and do not clear the pirate USS.

How to get out of pirate attack. Clear pirate USS, drop combat bounties, take kill pirate lord missions, any action that positively affects the security slider, such trade in legal weapons.

Public holiday

Public holidays occur when things are going well for a faction. Although what triggers it is unknown, it is certainly an internal bucket that when triggered causes the public holiday.

How to get into public holiday. Keep the population happy by doing things they want such as missions, high demand trade from other stations (not fleet carriers), exploration data, and combat bounties. These actions may trigger a public holiday. We simply do not know.

How to get out of public holiday. Pull down the economic slider by doing negative actions, such as smuggling, taking negative economic missions target.

Retreat

Retreat occurs when a faction's influence falls below 2.5% for a day. Once in retreat, the state is locked in. On the last day of retreat, if the faction is still below 2.5%, they will be forced to leave the system. Retreats have one day pending, and last six active days, but only the fifth active day going into the six active day counts, so to avoid retreat, push hard from day four onwards – regardless of if you are trying to retreat a faction or keep a faction present in a system.

How to get into retreat. Do all negative actions, including violent crimes, murders, and take violent combat missions against the faction, such as wet work contracts. Murdering is the most effective method, but variety is the spice of life.

How to get out of retreat. On the last day, drop combat bounties, do highly profitable trade (if possible), trade and combat missions, and drop exploration data (if possible). As the last day is random, it might be necessary to push on multiple days.

How to use retreat to take over a system. Retreat is a special state that has an unseen benefit – when in retreat you cannot end up in conflict, so you can use retreat to zoom straight past all the other factions. If you can get the retreating faction to be more than 60% influence, a coup will occur, which forces a mandatory war (regardless of ethos). This is a considerable risk for a small faction with limited BGS resources, but for uncontested systems, it is the fastest way to take over a system.

Terrorist attack

Terrorist attack is the slightly worse version of pirate attack. Security is low in the system. Demand for basic and advanced medicines, survival equipment, and non-lethal weapons becomes remarkably high, as does buy prices. Buy prices for minerals goes through the floor, so this state can be used to punish refineries and extraction economies.

How to get into terrorist attack. Reduce the security of the system by committing violent crimes and murders. Take combat missions against the faction.

How to get out of terrorist attack. Drop combat bounties, do security related missions, clear terrorist USS.

War

War is a conflict that occurs between two factions of a different ethos, including against anarchies. Civil war, which is identical to war, occurs between two factions that share the same home system. Anarchies will always go to war.

How to get into war. Push together two factions with a different government ethos such as Corporate or Democracies. When they cross each other's influence, a war will result.

How to win war. Fight the war – see the Wars (and Civil Wars) reference section on wars on page 43. Combat bounties, combat bonds, and all security slider activities count. Economic missions, trade, donations, exploration data, do not count.

How to lose war. Fight the war for the other side. Combat bounties, combat bonds, and all security slider activities count. Economic missions, trade, donations, exploration data, do not count.

AX States

At the time of writing, the game has no systems in the following states. We cannot evaluate these states, so we will not consider them further.

- Alert
- Invasion
- Control
- Recovery

Defunct States

These states were never implemented, are no longer used by the game, or are so rare as to be untestable. We will not consider them further.

- Cold war
- Colonization
- Historic event
- Incursion
- Infested
- Revolution
- Technological Leap
- Trade war

Superpowers and Powers Discords

Power	Discord	Superpower
Aisling Duval	https://discord.gg/5uejtc4	Empire
Archon Delaine	https://discord.gg/0nLvLOrzijjO2POL	Independent
Arissa Lavigny-Duval	https://discord.gg/h28SG5H	Empire
Denton Patreus	https://discord.gg/RjWn3qv	Empire
Edmond Mahon	https://discord.gg/TXYBjgw	Alliance
Felicia Winters	https://discord.gg/8QjHwMF	Federation
Li Yong-Rui	https://discord.gg/0g95XxxKRcw7ypJZ	Independent
Pranav Antal	https://discord.me/antal	Independent
Yuri Grom	https://discord.com/invite/PEUp2zA	Independent
Zachary Hudson	https://discord.gg/8QjHwMF	Federation
Zemina Torval	https://discord.gg/cj2DgwQ	Empire

Bibliography

Older information

The information in these threads was accurate then and probably still mostly correct.

Jane Turner:

[Don't Panic: BGS guides and help | Frontier Forums](#)

- [When and what is the tick? | Frontier Forums](#)
- [Influence caps/gains and the wine analogy | Frontier Forums](#)
- [Transactions: BGS Guide Best Current Thinking | Frontier Forums](#)
- [States: "Best Current Thinking" | Frontier Forums](#)
- [Expansions: BGS Guide Best Current Thinking | Frontier Forums](#)
- [War and Civil War: BGS Guide - Best Current Thinking | Frontier Forums](#)
- [Elections: BGS Guide-Best Current Thinking | Frontier Forums](#)
- [Retreat: BGS guide best current thinking | Frontier Forums](#)
- [Retreating faction has an asset | Frontier Forums](#)
- [Defending against Murder Monkeys and other BGS attacks: Best Current Thinking | Frontier Forums](#)

Frontier

- [Dev Update (07/01/2016) | Frontier Forums](#)
- [AWS re:Invent 2015 | (GAM403) From 0 to 60 Million Player Hours in 400B Star Systems](#)
- [Join the Elite - Everything You Need to Know About the Background Simulation](#) (2016)

Older BGS guides

These guides refer to earlier versions of the game that pre-date fleet carriers, the current crime and punishment system, the new trading system, and Odyssey. They are included here for reference only.

[The Elite Dangerous Background Simulation, Factions and Powers guide - Nova Force](#)

[Remlok Industries » The Background Simulation guide – Elite: Dangerous (remlok-industries.fr)](#)