

# JUMP POINT

ISSUE: 08 05

IN THIS ISSUE →→→

03	<b>DEVELOPER INTERVIEW:</b> Drake Cutlass Blue
13	<b>VISUAL DICTIONARY:</b> Military Ships
27	<b>GALACTAPEDIA:</b> Centennial Bloom
29	<b>ARK ARCHIVES:</b> Xi'an Emperor Letter

## FROM THE COCKPIT

### GREETINGS, CITIZENS!

Happy Invictus Launch Week! First up this month, we're taking the brand-new Cutlass Blue for a spin. When we initially developed the Cutlass variants back in 2013, the idea was that they'd touch on more than just combat, with one built for medical operations and the other for non-lethal prisoner capture. How wonderful then to see that, today, the game has expanded to the point where those things are second nature! I can attest that it's one thing to come up with broad concepts for ships and their variants, it's quite another to deliver them in-game. I have such an incredible amount of respect for the teams making our early squiggles and thoughts a playable reality. And we were lucky enough to speak to some of those developers to learn what makes the Blue tick!

A question I frequently get working on *Star Citizen* is, "Why teach players how a game is made?" There are lots of answers to that question, ranging from the simple fact that it's interesting, to the idea that we're helping to educate a new set of game developers. But I wanted to highlight one answer in particular that's sometimes overlooked: Understanding how a game works gives you a marked advantage when it comes time to play it. I'm not talking about memorizing statistics or repeating gameplay until it's second nature, I mean a holistic understanding of why a game does what it does. I'm certainly a better Wing Commander player for knowing how the game works and why various design decisions were made, and I

think the same will be true for everyone who has been following our development. When everything is said and done, I suspect *Star Citizen's* Subscribers will be the best pilots in the universe because they'll be the best versed (no pun intended) in the game.

We're also taking a look back at *Star Citizen's* military ships in honor of the big Invictus Launch Week event. From the F7A Hornet that Chris Roberts rode into battle against the Vanduul in the original GDC online presentation back in 2012 to the deep-space fighters and frigates coming online today, spacecraft of a military origin have been and remain to be an essential part of *Star Citizen*. Okay, I'll admit that we did this one because it's just so darned cool seeing all those powerful warships laid out together.

Last but not least, we have some exciting lore content. We've got another in-depth Galactapedia article covering the famed Centennial Bloom plant (already familiar to Subscribers!) and then a historical letter from the Xi'an Emperor Kr.ē relating to his first dealings with the UEE. Fascinating stuff!

With that said, I'll wish you a happy month to come. I'll see you at the end of June... through the **Jump Point!**

Ben

[JumpPoint@cloudimperiumgames.com](mailto:JumpPoint@cloudimperiumgames.com)

Creative Producer: Jared Huckaby Marketing Art Producer: Arianne Garin  
Editor & Writer: Benjamin Lesnick Narrative Team Writers: Adam Wieser & Cherie Heiberg Copy Editor: Martin Driver  
Layout design: Michael Alder In-engine imagery: Simon Ravenhill, William Turner & Charline Wegria





# DRAKE INTERPLANETARY CUTLASS BLUE



**It looks like 2020 is the year of the Cutlass! Last month, we profiled the medically focused Red. This month, we're learning more about the Blue, which was introduced to the PU at Drake DefenseCon 2950. We talked to the designer and artist who helped launch this long-awaited police ship that completes the Cutlass lineup! (...for now?)**

**BEGIN TRANSMISSION →**

**JUMP POINT:** Please let us know what you've worked on for Star Citizen.

**MICHAEL SIZEMORE:** My first project with *Star Citizen* was the Origin 300 series rework. Since then I've been responsible for the Ballista, Cutlass Red, and am currently responsible for the Cutlass Blue, M50 rework, and Star Runner.

**JOSH COONS:** I've worked on the Connie series, Herald, Khartu-al, Defender... so many ships. But my babies are the Red, Black, and Blue Cutlasses.

**JP:** What was the original concept behind the Cutlass Blue?

**MS:** The original concept was a police/bounty hunter style ship. It was what I would consider to be an upgrade for a bounty hunter looking to move out of the Avenger series.

**JP:** What kind of work went into making the Cutlass Blue flyable? New design thoughts, artwork, animations, sound?

**MS:** As is pretty well known at this point, the entire Cutlass series received a considerable amount of rework. The original Blue asset was never actually flyable and was only a hangar ship, so aside from that, new work had to go into getting it IFCS-compliant. All new artwork had to be done and some design changes had to be made, particularly in how we were going to utilize its primary feature, prisoner transport.

**JC:** Paint, lots of paint. Lots of lights and a brand-spanking-new canopy too.

**JP:** The Cutlass Blue has gained quantum dampening tech! What is it and how does it work?

**MS:** The Cutlass Blue was always intended to have this tech, or at the very least back then, that was the dream. However, as I was working on the ship and designing its overall fit within *Star Citizen*, it didn't feel right to just throw in a device similar to what the Mantis has. As such, while the Blue's device cannot take ships out of quantum, it can release a dampening field to prevent enemies from using their quantum drives to run away.

**JP:** How does the Cutlass Blue compare to the RSI Mantis? When would you choose to fly a Blue over a Mantis?

**MS:** These two vessels are really quite different from one another in intended gameplay. The Mantis is more of a support craft, intended to function with something like the Cutlass Blue or Black by taking another ship out of quantum and letting its support do most of the dirty work. The Blue on the other hand is more of a brawler, intended to

actually hunt down targets, snare them, and detain them. Truthfully, the two ships hold two entirely different purposes as well. The Mantis is more like your police interceptor, while the Blue is more akin to a prison transporter. Another thing to note is that the Blue rocks two S2 power plants, so unlike the Mantis which must lose some systems to power its much more powerful dual-purpose QED, the Blue can continue running and gunning while keeping targets locked down.

**JP:** Same question but the Avenger. Who flies an Avenger versus a Cutlass Blue?

**MS:** As far as bounty hunting goes, the Avenger is a good ship starting out, but eventually players may feel they need more guns, more space, and maybe they have a friend and want to become a bounty hunting duo manning the same ship. That is where the Blue comes in. It has more prisoner pods, more armament, and better systems for stopping and capturing targets. It's just a more capable ship all-around and something I'd suggest most serious bounty hunters upgrade to once they start to outgrow their Avengers.

**JP:** How did you balance the three Cutlass versions? What's the upside to owning a Blue over a Red or a Black?

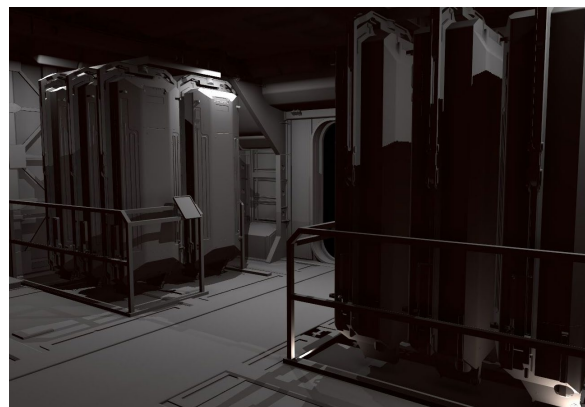
**MS:** These three ships are unique in the 'verse and while they're all sisters, each has its own personality and unique traits and purpose. Balancing the three was quite interesting. The Black being the raider

has some unique features you don't see in the Blue or Red. Of the three, the Black is the only one that can house a dragonfly inside of it. It is the only one with the 'raiding' doors on the sides and, as such, balancing it requires keeping much of that purpose in mind. Oh sure, it can just be a standard cargo hauler, but it can also be a good strike craft in a raiding party.

The Red on the other hand is a medical ship. Being primarily intended for EMS, it didn't need the same guns as the Black. The sensor array on it is far more purposeful for its mission in finding escape pods and drifting victims. The larger cargo bay is sacrificed for the medical bay, and while it's less gunned than the Black, it is a little faster in a straight run. Most of the balance tuning for the ship kept with that mindset. The 'verse is scary, so it has some defense capabilities but it isn't a brawler like its two sisters.

Then we come to the Blue. It has more guns than the Red due to its bounty hunting purpose, so has a similar loadout to the Black (just with more missiles). The cargo bay is lost for the prisoner bay, though the turret we see on the Black returns. Of the three ships, the Blue is the fastest due to a reworked engine set done by Drake specifically for the model. Balancing this one was interesting as, in some ways, it's better than the Black but in others it's not. Simply put, the way I really balanced these in my head was this: The Black is what exists when perhaps you want to run cargo but perhaps you feel like raiding some trade lanes. The Red exists for when the Cutlass Black owner wants to be bad and raids those trade lanes, and the Blue is what is called in to deal with the Cutlass Black that's behaving badly.





**JP:** At present, the Cutlass Blue is listed as being somewhat shorter than the Red (by seven meters). Is that still the case? How do the overall dimensions compare between the flyable Cutlasses?

**MS:** I'm pretty sure that is legacy data that has not been updated fully yet. This happens often with the reworks, particularly with variants that may be built after the original rework. At this time, all three Cutlasses are the same length. The primary difference between their body styles being the airlock doors on the Red and Blue as well as the different cockpit design on the Blue.

**JC:** Technically the red is the longest, because it has a crash bar on the nose.

**JP:** A big feature of the Blue is the prisoner pods. How do they work?

**MS:** The Blue prisoner pods work in many ways you would expect most bounty hunter cells to function. A player who is captured will be placed in one of these pods, which is then stored in a rack. These players, at time of writing, can choose to wait in that pod for rescue (assuming they have friends that love them enough to risk possible death for them) or 'sleep.' If they choose to sleep, the current intended functionality is for them to then spawn at the prison and begin their sentence. However, the bounty hunter who captured them will still see the pod as 'occupied' until they go to the prison and drop off their prisoner. I must stress again that this is the current iteration of the mechanic and it may change greatly from the time I have answered this question and the Blue is in players' hands.

**JP:** We've heard getting them to look right hasn't been the easiest process. What can you tell us?

**MS:** Game design is an ever-flowing and changing process. Effectively, one set of prisoner pods was made as designed by Josh Coons. I personally loved it and had it set up in the ship fully functioning. However, it took up a lot of room, so it went back through concept multiple times before we landed on what I now call the "Prisoner Suit Rack" setup. There are some perks to the new setup vs. the old pods. The older pods were bigger, clunky, and looked something a tad more akin to what you would see in Aliens or other sci-fi movies. They were nice, but they took up a lot of space. The new pods are far more space-efficient and the storage mechanism is pretty cool and I'm looking forward to adding some other functionality to it, particularly in how players pick which pod they want to call forward. They really are nice, even if they do remind me a bit of a dry cleaner's.

**JP:** What other interior changes have gone into this update?

**MS:** In large, much of the interior changes that have gone into the Blue are very similar to the interior changes you would see in the Red. The biggest difference being we've swapped the med beds out for prisoner pods and we swapped the toilet out for a turret. The Blue is a hybrid of the Black and Red in a few ways.

**JC:** Aside from the canopy, mostly new materials. The side doors will look familiar as they are also on the Red. Each Cutlass has something the other does or doesn't in varied combinations.



**JP:** What went into refining the unique canopy on the Cutlass Blue?

**JC:** I actually started immediately modeling the canopy as soon as the Black was finished. I had to build off what I had already done for the Black and I really like older sci-fi, so was inspired.

**JP:** Can we use the police lights? If yes, do they have any practical effect in space?

**MS:** You can! Much like with the Red, it was very important to me that we had appropriate lights on the ship. The EMS coloring you see on the Cutlass Red has been changed to a more traditional American red, blue, and white accent lighting you'd see on police vehicles. I still have not convinced Audio to make me EMS and police sirens though for those times you're chasing someone in-atmosphere. For now, you have to fly around going "WEE WOO WEE WOO" on your own. As for any practical use in space, they do. For example, a player could activate them when they have the quantum dampening device turned on to further signal their intent. Similarly on the Red, a player could use the lights to help make them more visible in space. (I've been rescued by a Red in space and let me tell you, those lights helped significantly in seeing it.)

**JC:** Oh yes! You can use them to inspire law and order on perps while you pull them over and take all their contraband. Remember to search the entire ship, those pods ain't gonna fill themselves!

**JP:** How does the Cutlass Blue tie into the bounty hunting and prison mechanics? Can we deliver targets to prison?

**MS:** The big purpose around the Blue is prisoner transport, so it goes hand-in-hand with the bounty hunting and prison mechanics. One of the prisoner transport intended functionalities is to have you be able to transport players to the prison. However, if the player has not committed any crime, they won't be able to be dropped off at the prison as there is no punishment for them to serve time for.

**JP:** Will we be seeing NPCs using the Cutlass Blue as a police ship?

**MS:** Very much so. I'd expect sometime in the future to see most of those security stops that players get tagged with to be made up of at least one Cutlass Blue.





**JP:** With this launch, the original Cutlass lineup is complete. Could we see another role for the platform in the future? There are plenty of colors left in the spectrum!

**MS:** At this time, there are no other color variants of the Cutlass planned. However, I do want a 'Star Kitten' cutlass that has a dance floor where the cargo bay is, a bar, and a sound system. Party Bus Cutlass.

**JC:** I have all kinds of ideas about different things a Cutlass could do. I would love to do a full-blown armored military style Cutlass. Maybe like an armored car VIP type deal, but armed to the gills. So armor, no windows, and more armor.

**JP:** Now that interdiction tech has expanded beyond the Mantis, could we see more of it applied to other ships in the future?

**MS:** It is likely we will see other ships using either the Mantis' full QED or the half system that the Blue uses. Though I know there are no intentions to add either to any current ships.

**JP:** Were there any paths not taken on the road to the Blue going flyable? Anything you wanted to do that just didn't work out?

**MS:** In the case of the Blue, not really. I had been planning it out while I was working on the Red as I knew the two ships were a bit more 'official

business' than the Black. It made decisions for the Blue a lot easier.

**JC:** A wise man once taught me that games are never finished, only published, and the same is true for the Cutlass.

**JP:** Do you have a message for the community that's getting ready to fly the Blue? Is there anything special you're hoping to see it do in the 'verse?

**MS:** I'm going to forgo my usual call for 'chaos' here and hope this ship adds a bit more 'order' to the 'verse. I want players taking it out and actively hunting down criminals, getting them into the prison system, and properly running that bounty hunting gameplay side with it.

**JC:** I want to see people getting pulled over in space for speeding tickets. I'd love to see as many Cutlass Blue and Red ships as possible get together and all turn on the lights... maybe try and pack them all into a giant orb of ships in space. That would probably scare some people and look pretty cool.

**JP:** Please let us know who else worked on the Cutlass Blue for our credits!

**MS:** Elwin Bachiller, the artist who worked on the new prisoner pods.

END TRANSMISSION ←

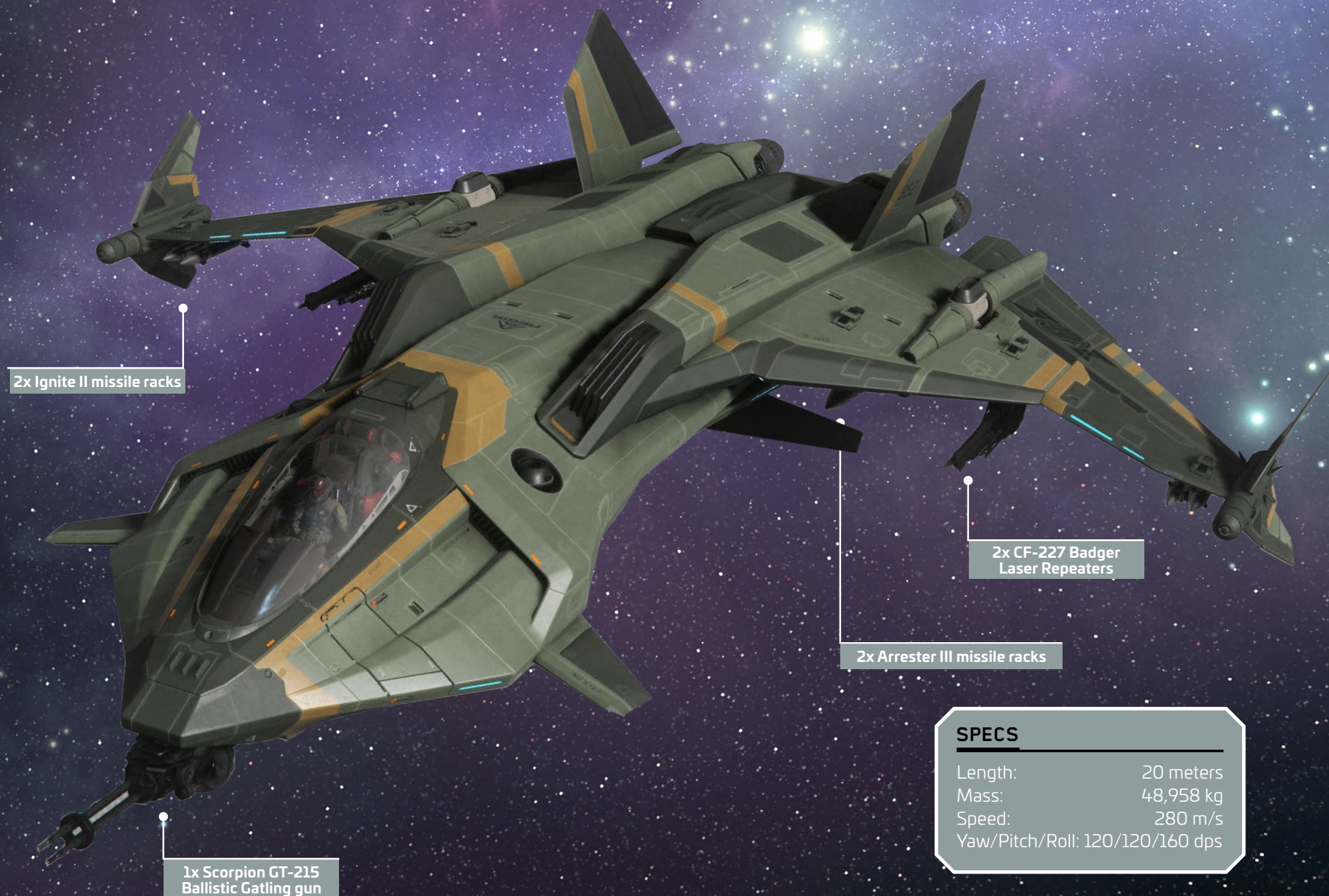
# VISUAL DICTIONARY: MILITARY SHIPS

Is there anything more thrilling than war in space? As Star Citizen continues to expand its offerings, this guide goes back to the fighting ships that offered so much fun in the beginning and continue to do so in the present day. Star Citizen's fighters and warships have been inspired by a long history of sea and aircraft adapted for action in the 30th century. From the nimble Gladius interceptor to the massive Idris frigate, we've put together a unique look at some of our hard-hitting favorites.

## AEGIS DYNAMICS GLADIUS

The Gladius was designed for Hornet pilots who prefer a little extra maneuverability over heavier weapons; it's a true artist's ship, one capable of dodging around the battlefield until it can strike a killing blow with its long-range guns and missiles. In-fiction, the Gladius has a long history of UEEEN service, where it was previously the premier space superiority fighter. However, the rise of modern

composite spacecraft like the Hornet and Lightning led the Gladius to be retired to picket, training, and reconnaissance duties. Don't let that service history fool you, though. The Gladius is a powerful weapon as far as spacecraft available to civilians go and is truly deadly in the right hands.



2x Ignite II missile racks

1x Scorpion GT-215  
Ballistic Gatling gun

2x CF-227 Badger  
Laser Repeaters

2x Arrester III missile racks

### SPECS

Length:	20 meters
Mass:	48,958 kg
Speed:	280 m/s
Yaw/Pitch/Roll:	120/120/160 dps

## ANVIL AEROSPACE HORNET

The very-first Human ship designed for *Star Citizen*, the Hornet made its proud debut in the original launch trailer and the design has been upgraded and improved upon ever since. The Hornet proved its space superiority as the flagship vehicle when *Arena Commander* launched in 2014 and it has continued to evolve as the Persistent Universe has been built out. Three major civilian

variants have been developed: the F7C-R Tracker hunter, F7C-S Ghost stealth ship, and the heavily armed F7C-M Super Hornet. The Hornet is an excellent fighting platform upon which the UEE relies heavily, with Hornet squadrons serving across the Empire aboard everything from Idris frigates to mighty Bengal carriers.

MODEL SHOWN: HORNET F7A

### SPECS

Length: 22.5 meters  
 Mass: 73,535 kg  
 Speed: 235 m/s  
 Yaw/Pitch/Roll: 90/90/130 dps



## AEGIS DYNAMICS AVENGER

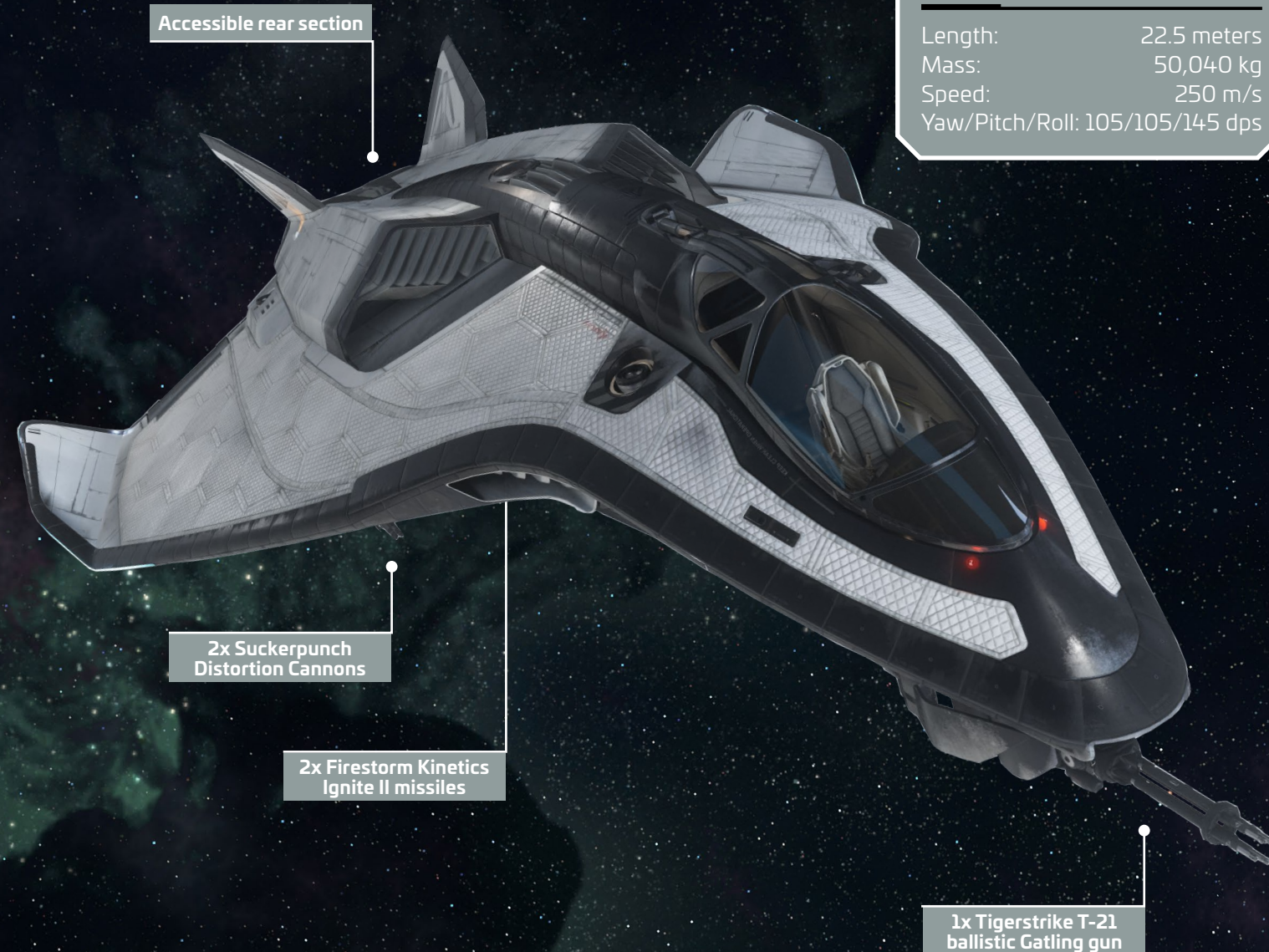
The development of the Avenger began with a single image - the heavy Gatling cannon found on the real-world A-10 Warthog. While the ship's weaponry has changed over the years to be balanced with the rest of *Star Citizen's* forces, the role has not. The Avenger has long served as a police interdictor with the UEE Advocacy, using its modular rear section to house prisoners and

equipment. The military currently uses the Avenger as a training ship, with its rough and reliable frame ideal for new pilots who tend to be harder on a spacecraft. A variety of civilian variants have been introduced too, including the Stalker electronic warfare platform and the ubiquitous Avenger Titan mini-freighter.

MODEL SHOWN: AVENGER STALKER

### SPECS

Length: 22.5 meters  
 Mass: 50,040 kg  
 Speed: 250 m/s  
 Yaw/Pitch/Roll: 105/105/145 dps





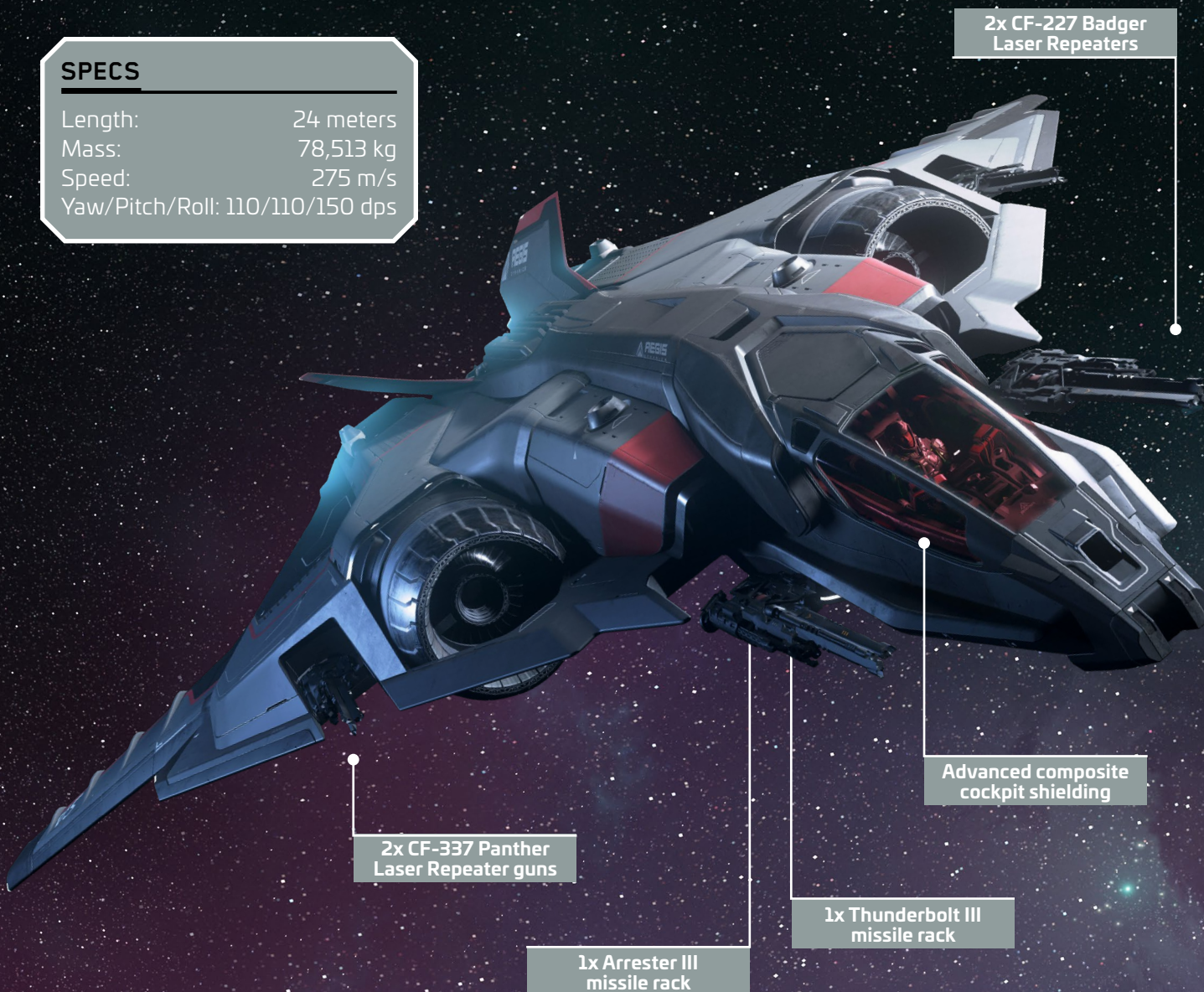
## AEGIS DYNAMICS SABRE

Aegis is back, baby! The Sabre is Aegis' modern take on a space superiority fighter intended to supplant the Hornet as the UEE's frontline ship. Inspired by ultra-modern fighting aircraft like the F-22 Lightning, the Sabre offers a detailed look at cutting-edge military spacecraft design circa 2947. While it lacks some of the Hornet's heavier weapons or modularity, the civilian Sabre can outrun and

out-mass the standard Hornet, making it a truly impressive ship. Military Sabres currently serve with the more elite fighter squadrons across the Empire, replacing the Hornet and Gladius wherever possible. Best of all, it looks like nothing else in space, cutting a dashing figure as it wreaks havoc among Vanduul formations!

### SPECS

Length: 24 meters  
 Mass: 78,513 kg  
 Speed: 275 m/s  
 Yaw/Pitch/Roll: 110/110/150 dps



2x CF-227 Badger Laser Repeaters

Advanced composite cockpit shielding

2x CF-337 Panther Laser Repeater guns

1x Arrester III missile rack

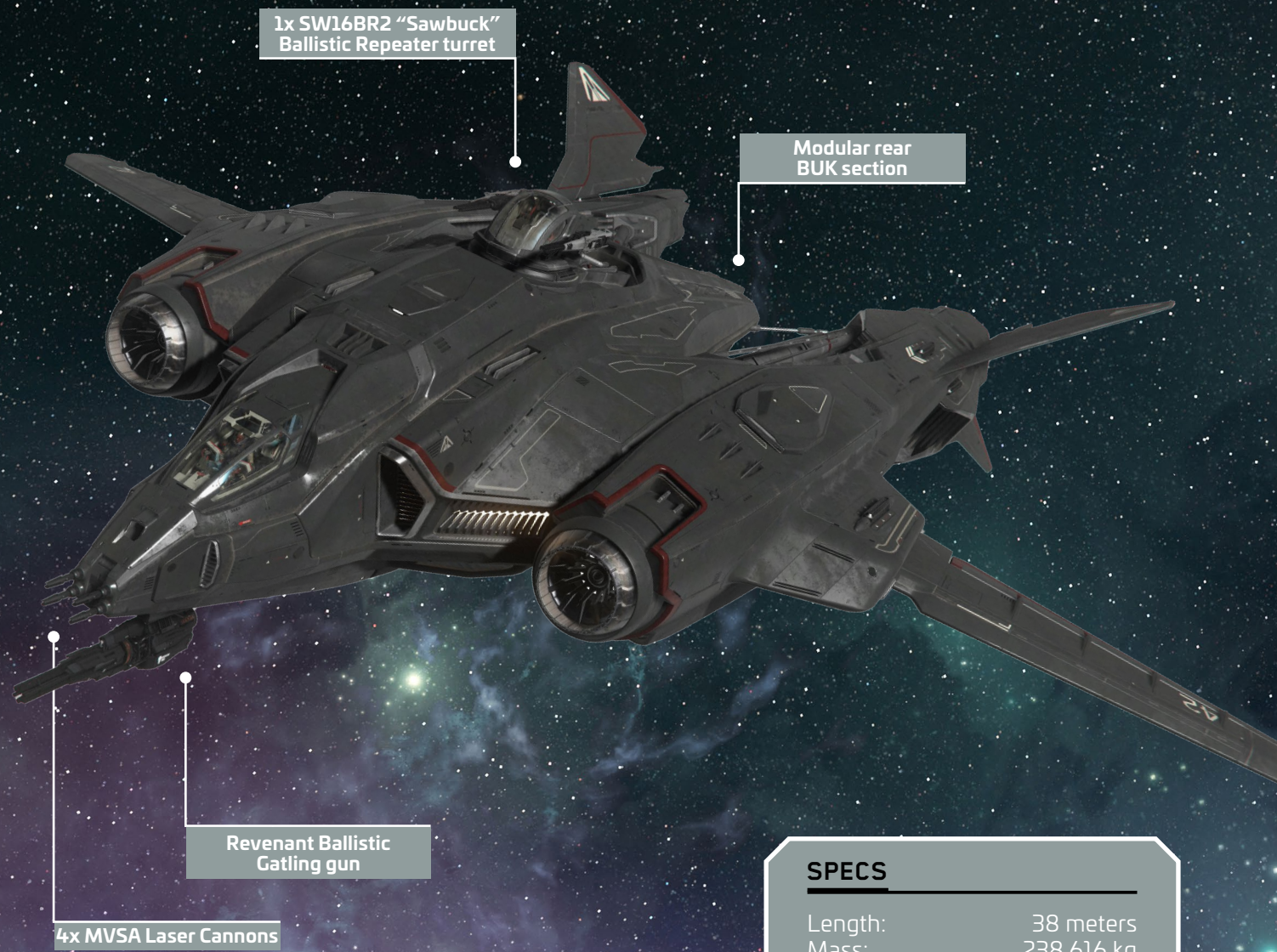
1x Thunderbolt III missile rack

## AEGIS DYNAMICS VANGUARD

Known as the UEE's premier deep-space fighter, the Vanguard was developed from the mid-century concept of a 'night fighter,' which typically took the form of larger, multi-engine aircraft that could fly long duration missions or that were large enough to store radio equipment not viable with carrier-based fighters. *Star Citizen's* version of the concept uses that extra space to stock the

Vanguard with an array of weapons and reusables that make it the perfect choice for long-range patrols. It might not stack up 1:1 in a dogfight with a Hornet or Lightning, but it can wipe the floor with most anything else... and a formation of Vanguards working together is a true threat.

MODEL SHOWN: VANGUARD WARDEN



1x SW16BR2 "Sawbuck" Ballistic Repeater turret

Modular rear BUK section

Revenant Ballistic Gatling gun

4x MVSA Laser Cannons

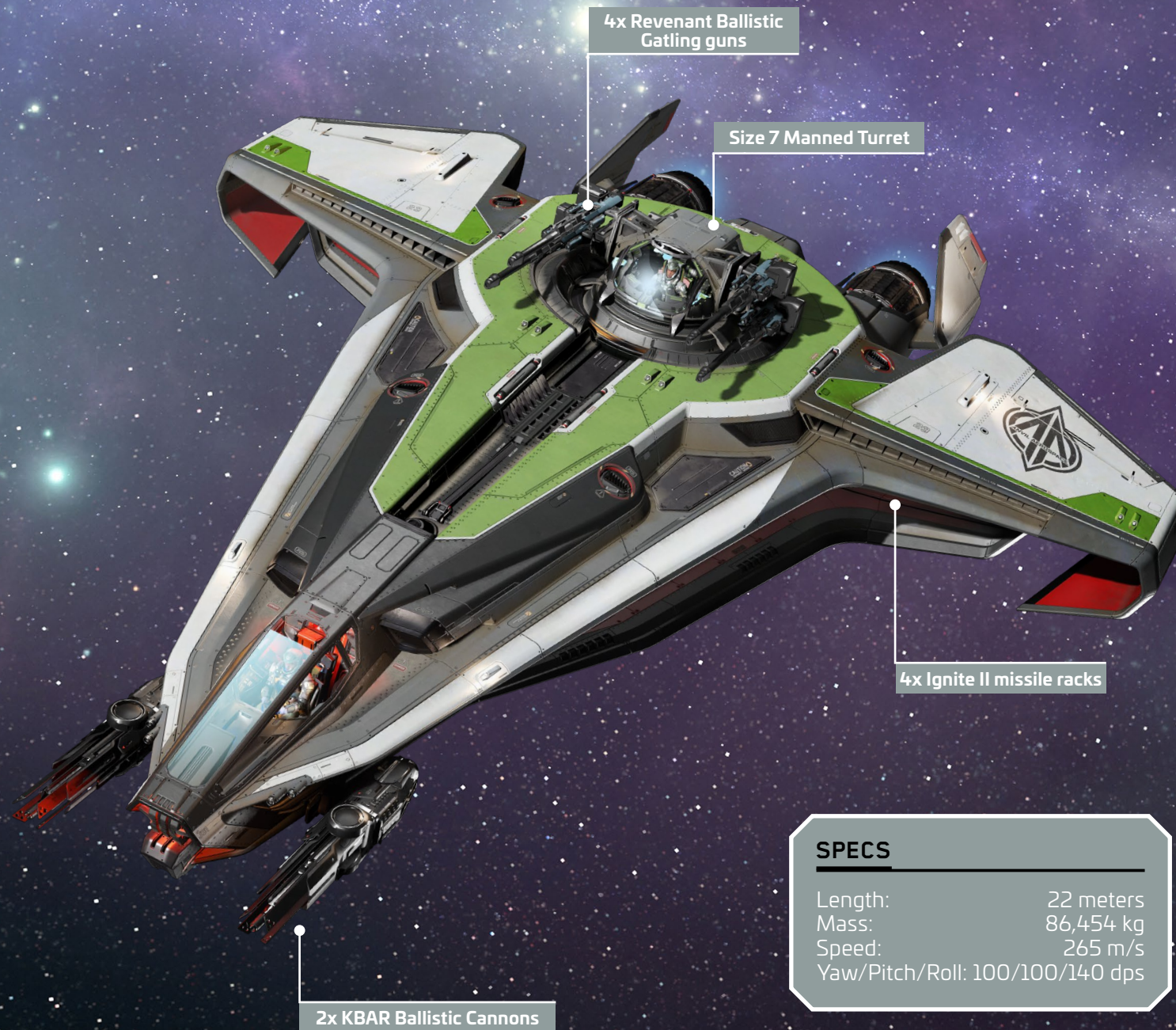
### SPECS

Length: 38 meters  
 Mass: 238,616 kg  
 Speed: 225 m/s  
 Yaw/Pitch/Roll: 80/80/120 dps

## ANVIL AEROSPACE HURRICANE

The Hurricane is a utility fighter inspired by the long-abandoned 'turret fighter' concept that was popular early in the Second World War. The idea, most often exemplified by the Boulton Paul Defiant, was mating a smaller fighter with a second crewman operating a bomber-style rotating turret, giving it a mix of

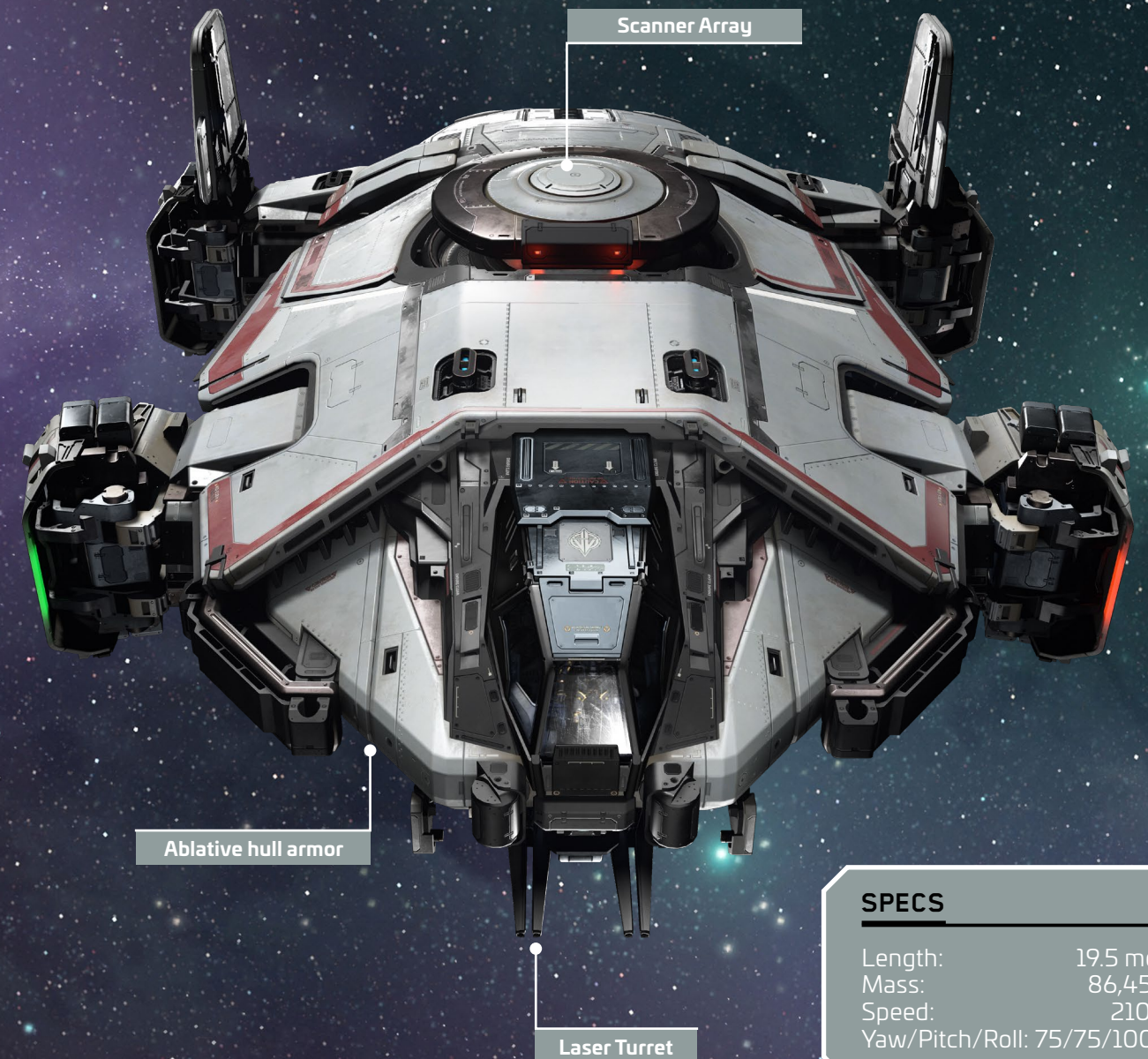
maneuverability and unexpected striking power. While the real-world idea wasn't especially effective because of the limitations of turrets, the Hurricane has ably served the UEEN for years and is now available to fight-minded civilians as an alternative to the more modular Hornet platform.



## ANVIL AEROSPACE TERRAPIN

A lightly armored ship with big guns not to your liking? Then the Terrapin might be the military conversion for you. Where the Hurricane is intended to be something of a glass cannon, the Terrapin is, well, a turtle! With extremely heavy armor and shields, the Terrapin can easily protect itself from taking damage from heavy barrages. Basically, it's a ship designed from the beginning

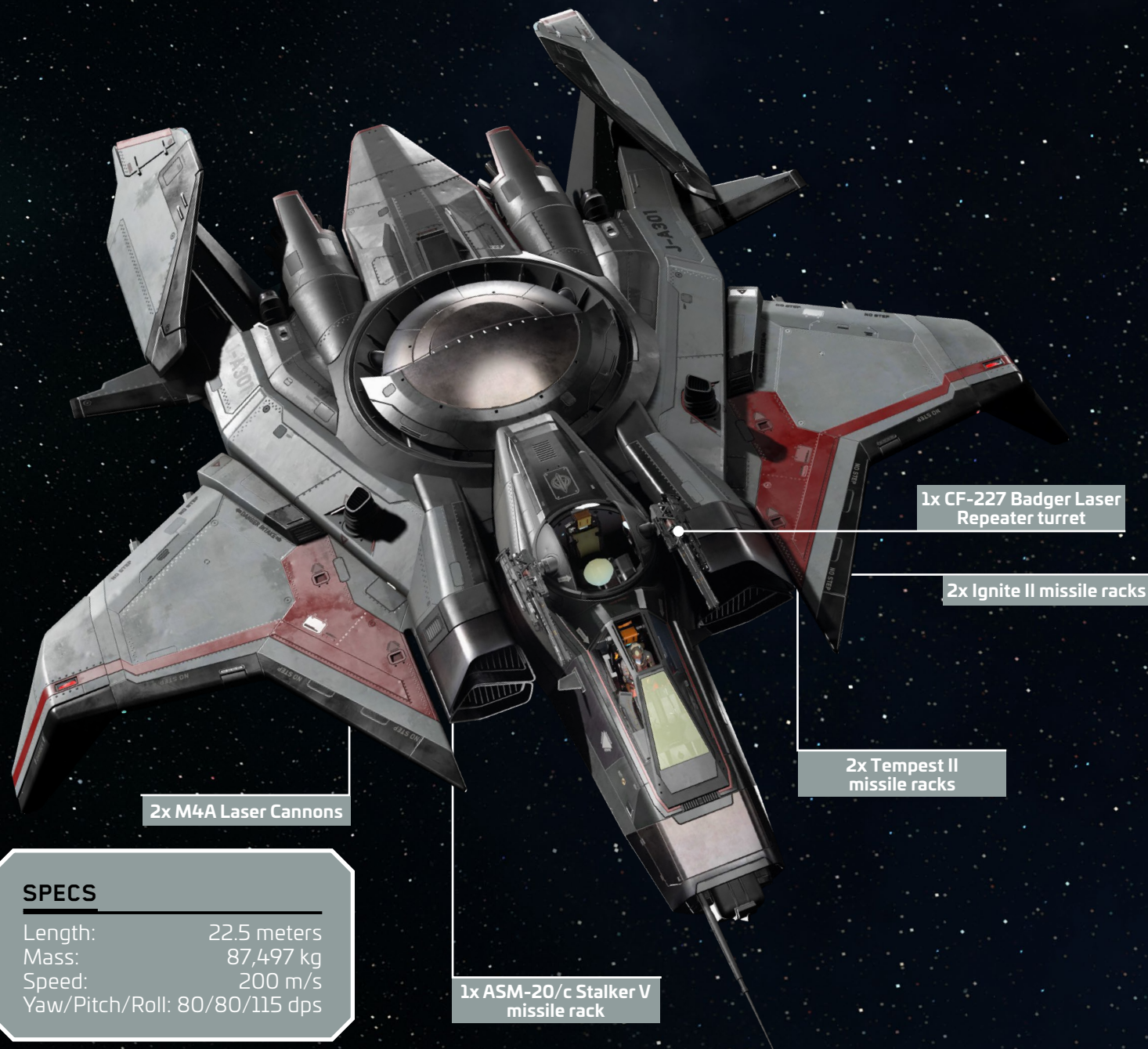
to take a licking and keep on ticking. With advanced scanners and a somewhat larger interior than typical fighting ships, the Terrapin can double as an explorer, a role for which the UEEN initially purchased the design, though it has since seen service against the Vanduul as a more traditional armored fighter.



## ANVIL AEROSPACE GLADIATOR

*Star Citizen's* very first bomber is not to be confused with the Gladius. The similarly named Gladiator was introduced during the original pledge campaign as a carrier-based bomber inspired by the likes of the Douglas Dauntless dive bomber. The Gladiator is a smaller bomber designed to be operated aboard frigates, cruisers, and escort carriers without the larger footprint of ships like the Retaliator. However, that doesn't stop it from packing quite the

punch. As the testbed for *Star Citizen's* bombing mechanics, the Gladiator has fired everything from large missiles to explosive torpedoes since it was first introduced in *Arena Commander*. The smaller size and more open canopy mean that the Gladiator is an easy transition for fighter pilots seeking to take on a bombing role. The UEEN operates the Gladiator extensively against the Vanduul, with a number of squadrons reaching elite status.



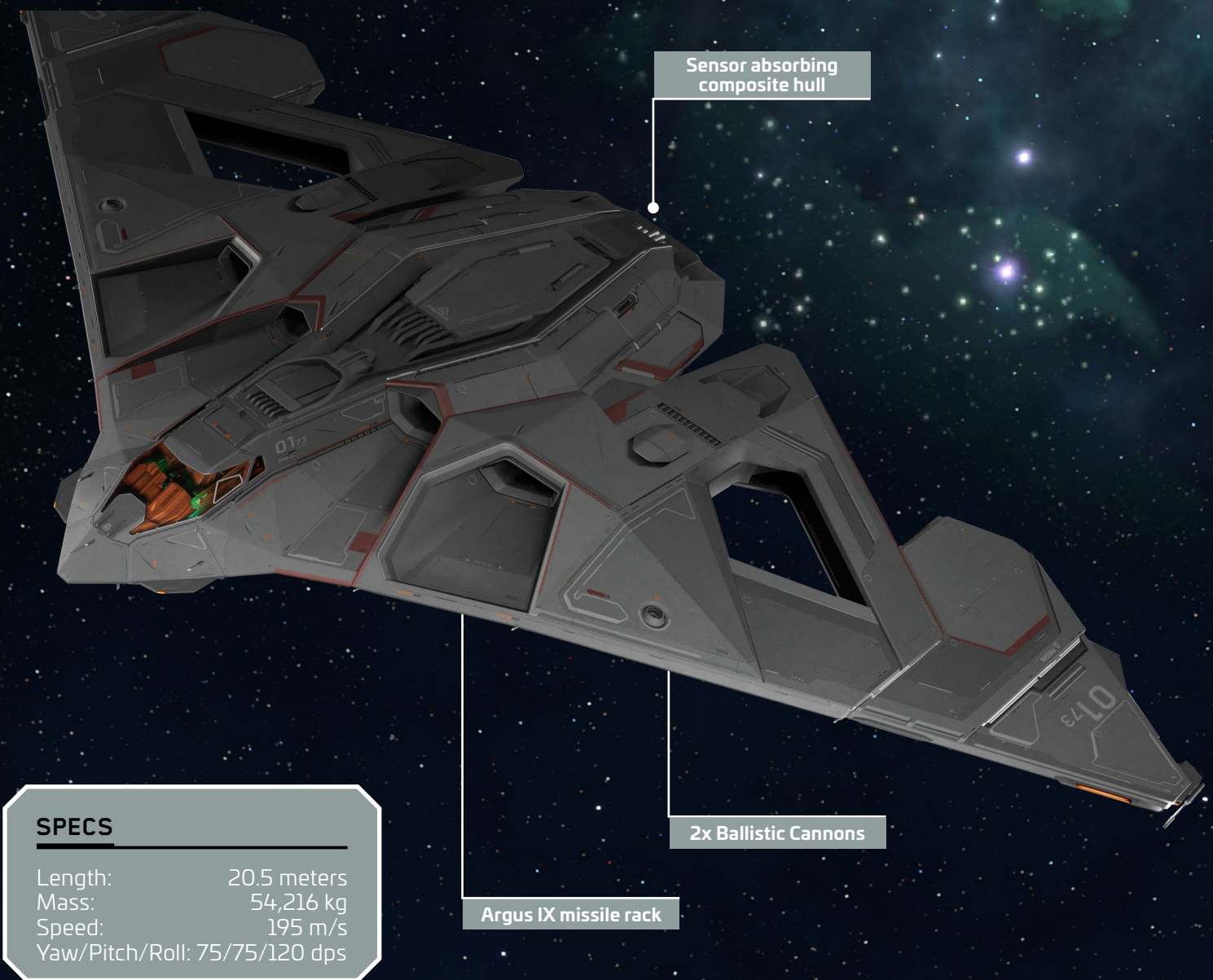
### SPECS

Length: 22.5 meters  
 Mass: 87,497 kg  
 Speed: 200 m/s  
 Yaw/Pitch/Roll: 80/80/115 dps

## AEGIS DYNAMICS ECLIPSE

TOP SECRET! The Eclipse is *Star Citizen's* take on stealth bombers like the B-2 Spirit and the F-117 Nighthawk. The Eclipse was introduced in 2017 in an exciting campaign that saw citizens recovering top secret footage of the ship in service before it was finally unveiled to civilian audiences for the 2947 model year. Part flying wing, part high-tech

masterpiece, the Eclipse's silhouette looks like nothing else today. The UEEN typically operates jump-capable Eclipses from ranged bases, although it is expected that they will see more open service now that the design has been revealed to the rest of the galaxy.



### SPECS

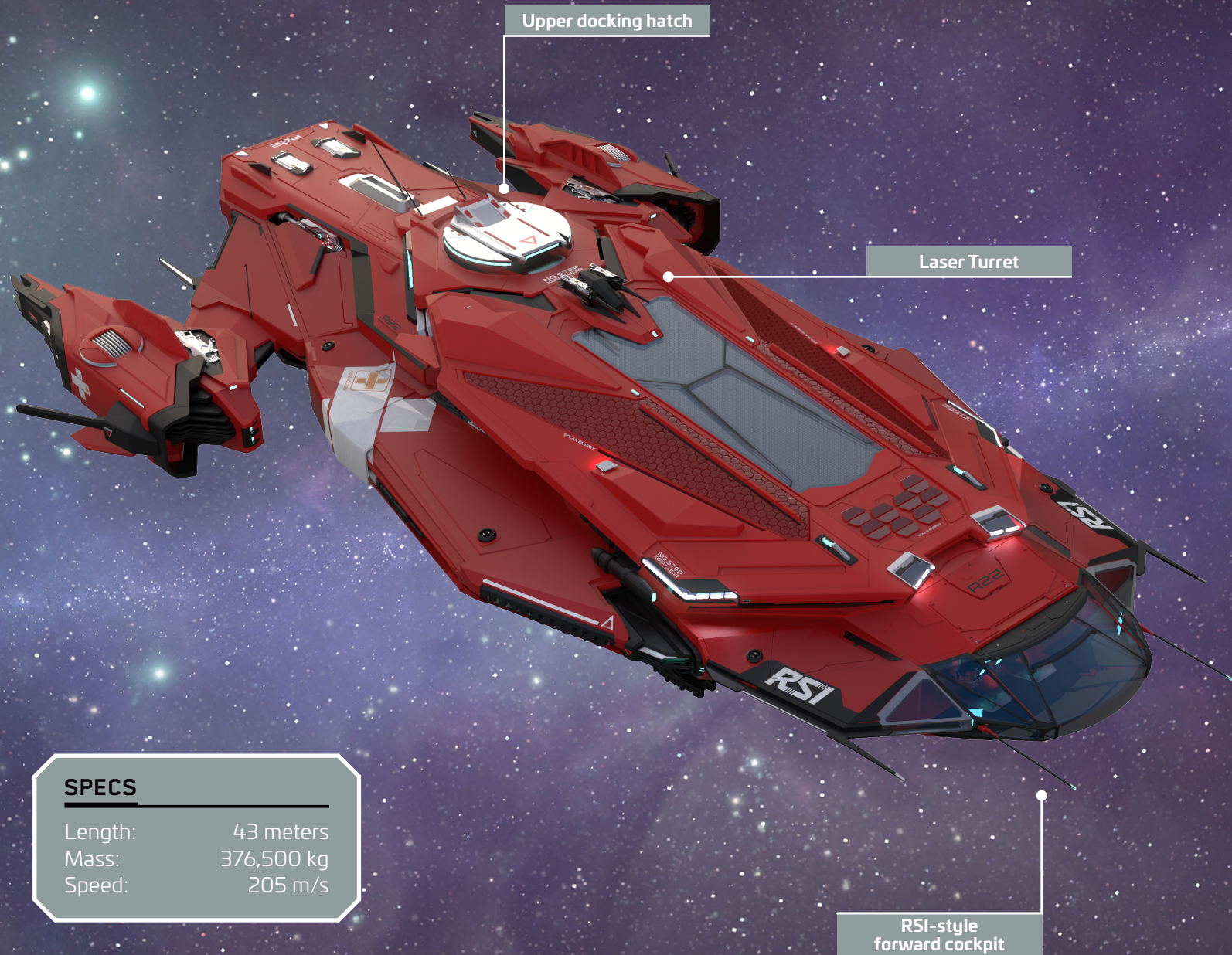
Length: 20.5 meters  
 Mass: 54,216 kg  
 Speed: 195 m/s  
 Yaw/Pitch/Roll: 75/75/120 dps

## ROBERTS SPACE INDUSTRIES APOLLO

This ship is here to help! While the other spacecraft on this list are primarily dedicated killers, the Apollo's job is healing. Military-operated Apollos are the ultimate battlefield support ship with the capacity to rescue downed pilots and treat those injured in small-arms engagements without the need of a larger hospital ship. Add an Apollo to your force to make sure you're at peak fighting

efficiency during battle! RSI currently offers two variants of the Apollo on the civilian market: the Triage is focused on rescue operations, while the Medevac is focused more on treatment. With a distinctive red livery, the Apollo is easily sighted on the battlefield, but you'd have to be a monster to make a point of targeting it!

MODEL SHOWN: APOLLO TRIAGE



### SPECS

Length: 43 meters  
 Mass: 376,500 kg  
 Speed: 205 m/s

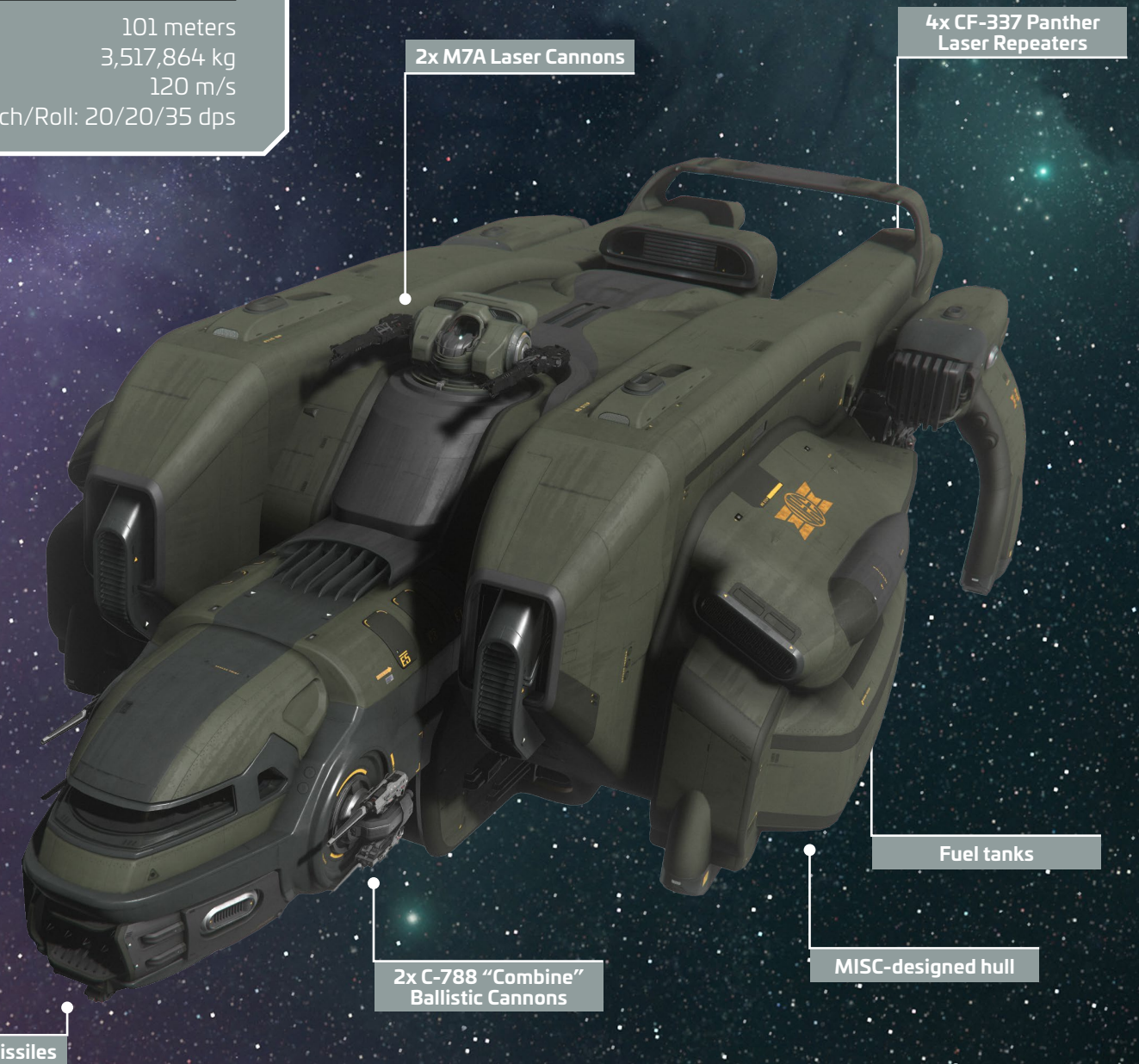
## AEGIS DYNAMICS STARFARER GEMINI

Once upon a time, the Gemini was just an interesting piece of flavor text in the history of the MISC Starfarer tanker, the smallest mention that Aegis Dynamics produces the Starfarer under license for the military. The idea was inspired by World War II bombers that were often produced by multiple companies in the rush to bring aircraft to the front. These aircraft were assigned slightly different designations, making them stick out in the history books. But the

Gemini was fated to be more than a brief mention in a design document when citizens rallied to demand access to the military tanker and, after some development, it was made available! Aegis has adapted the MISC-designed ship with additional armor and weaponry for battlefield support missions. As such, Starfarers can now be found in the supply chains of any major UEEN battlegroup.

### SPECS

Length: 101 meters  
 Mass: 3,517,864 kg  
 Speed: 120 m/s  
 Yaw/Pitch/Roll: 20/20/35 dps

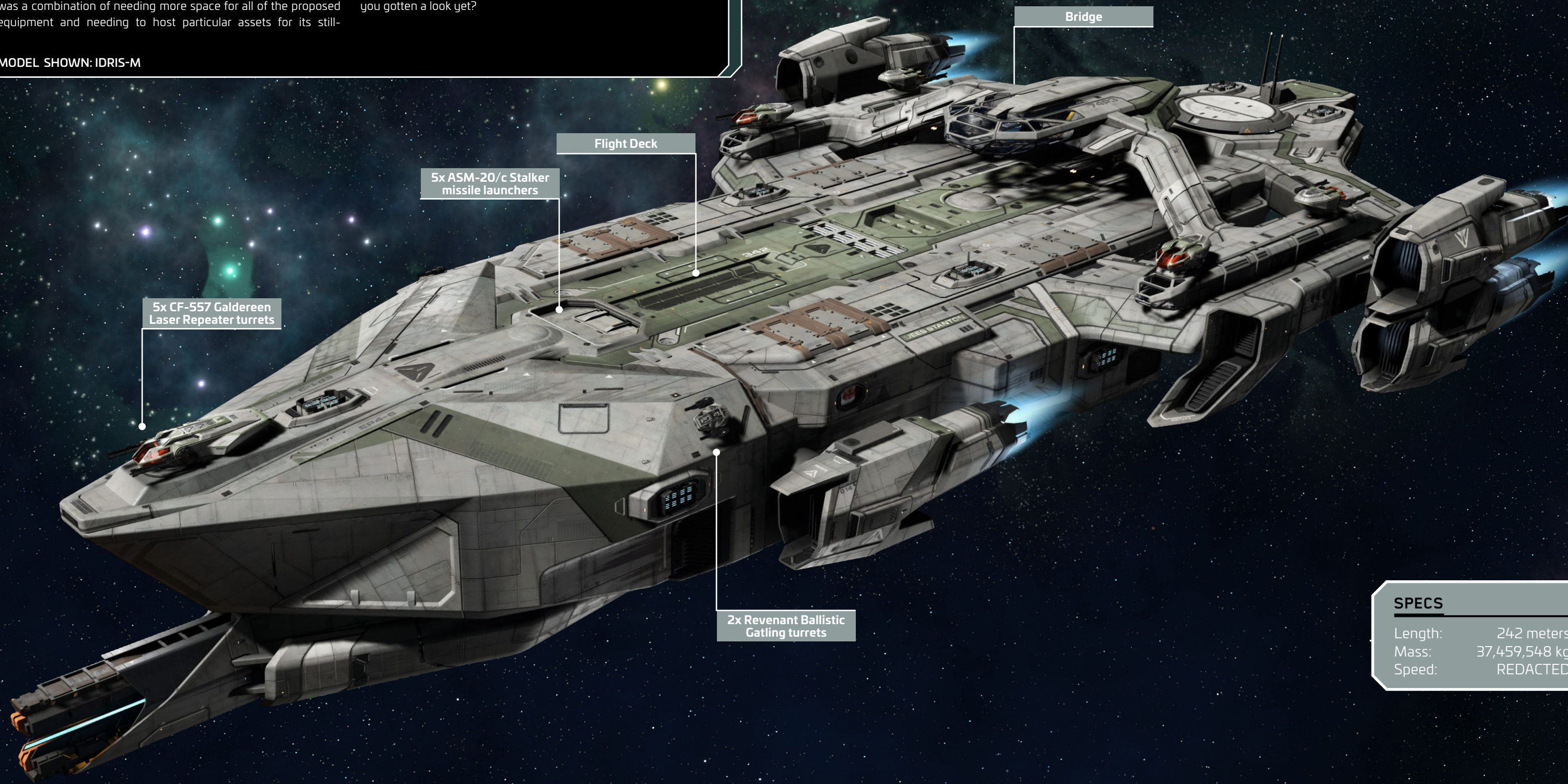


# AEGIS DYNAMICS IDRIS

Up there in the sky, is it a bird? Is it a corvette? No, it's a frigate! The Idris-M was the first capital ship intended for use by civilians, designed in the process of working out the initial plan for larger crewed starships. The Idris started life as a corvette but famously became much, much larger when it entered production. That was a combination of needing more space for all of the proposed equipment and needing to host particular assets for its still-

classified role in *Squadron 42's* storyline. The Idris is, in truth, a fully-fledged mini-carrier capable of hosting several smaller fighters and an impressive array of ship-smashing weapons. The Idris has been expanded significantly since its original announcement and has recently been sighted in Stanton... have you gotten a look yet?

MODEL SHOWN: IDRIS-M



Bridge

Flight Deck

5x ASM-20/c Stalker missile launchers

5x CF-557 Galdereen Laser Repeater turrets

2x Revenant Ballistic Gatling turrets

SPECS	
Length:	242 meters
Mass:	37,459,548 kg
Speed:	REDACTED

# GALACTAPEDIA

## CENTENNIAL BLOOM

The centennial bloom (*pui'arai.ly'ii*) is a plant indigenous to Ko'li (É'aluth III) that flowers once every 100 Standard Xi'an Years (128 Standard Earth Years). Many centennial blooms are tended on R.aip'uāng (Kai'pua II), the center of Li'tova in the Xi'an Empire. Like the centennial bloom's reproduction cycle, R.aip'uāng's rotation period completes once every 100 years.

## DESCRIPTION AND LIFE CYCLE

Standing half a meter tall at its highest, the centennial bloom is a small tree that varies in coloration depending on its particular cultivar. The most common variety has a sturdy, woody trunk with dark-brown and light-brown horizontal banding and dark-green elliptic leaves. Its light-pink flowers are bilaterally symmetrical and have stamens about twice as long as the flower itself. During the short time it blooms, it gives off an earthy scent. Flies and other carrion-eating bugs are its main pollinators on its world of origin, Ko'li. The flower blooms for around 40 hours before it starts to wither, putting all its energy into reproduction.

The centennial bloom grows a small, dark-purple berry that's eaten by local wildlife and propagated in the surrounding areas. Its native desert climate dries out the seeds in preparation for the rainy season. It takes a seed one full Xi'an year to sprout. During that year, it must only be watered sporadically and must never be allowed to remain wet for more than 20 hours or the seed is in danger of rotting. Centennial blooms on R.aip'uāng grown in more temperate areas are kept dry through constant, careful attention and specialized equipment that mimics the day/night cycle on Ko'li. Lovers of the centennial bloom often keep theirs in a sealed arcology that automatically regulates the environment to suit the

plant's needs. Over the past decade, it has increased in popularity as a shipboard plant.

## IMPORTANCE TO LI'TOVA

Li'tova is a spiritual practice centered around the understanding of time. One of the main facets scholars contemplate is the way actions ripple backwards and forwards across time. Acknowledging the seen and unseen ramifications of one's deeds is one of the core principles in the Li'tova code of ethics. Other aspects include the exploration of time as a dimension, the perception of time on an individual level through metabolic manipulation under meditation, and the measurement of time on a collective level. The centennial bloom's 100-year flowering cycle appeared to the explorers who discovered it on Ko'li to be a poetic manifestation of Li'tova itself. The plant was extracted from Ko'li en masse before its terraforming and exported to R.aip'uāng to be raised and contemplated.

## END OF THE COLD WAR

At the end of the Xi'an-Human Cold war in 2793 (III.1053), Emperor Kr.ē invited the new Emperor Erin Toi for a tour of R.aip'uāng. Though the existence of the jump point was public knowledge, Humans had long been barred from entering the É'aluth system. The Emperor personally clipped a branch from a centennial bloom and handed it to Toi. The offer of the centennial bloom and the subsequent opening of the system to all Humans were gestures of peace, made in the hope that the previous age of strife and misunderstanding between the United Empire of Earth and the Xi'an Empire would be replaced with one of cultural exchange and harmony.





Today we open the Ark Archives for a look at an important and unique historic document. To celebrate the Ark's centennial anniversary in 2901, Xi'an Emperor Kr.ē gifted the institution a letter he wrote prior to his secret meeting with Terra Senator Terrence Akari in 2789. Emperor Kr.ē instructed his house that the letter should be opened and read to the Xi'an Empire only if he failed to return from this dangerous diplomatic mission into UEE space. Thankfully, Emperor Kr.ē returned safely after negotiating what Humans would come to refer to as the Kr.ē/Akari Treaty. This symbolic-but-vital agreement

would play an instrumental role in ending the Xi'an-Human Cold War and the eventual toppling of the Messer regime.

Upon his return from Tohil, the letter was returned to Emperor Kr.ē and remained in his possession until given to the Ark. Before the Emperor unsealed and read the letter at the ceremony celebrating the Ark's 100th anniversary, he said that sharing this deeply personal piece of history would hopefully remind both Empires of how far they had come and inspire continued harmony between species.

### All Xi'an, Take Heed

Per my directive to the honorable and wise members of my House, the dissemination of this letter means but one thing — the end of my reign and the descendency of House Kr.ē. This decree will mark the end of the Third Imperial Age.

House Kr.ē will provide the necessary details of my final moments when intelligence services deem it appropriate, but I believe the particulars matter less than the decisions our Empire will be forced to consider in the wake of my passing. Recently, I embarked on a covert journey into Human space to finalize a treaty with a leader of their kind who, unlike the Human Ruler, appears to be wise, reasonable, and a champion of peace. For years, this individual and I have corresponded about what peace between our two species might actually mean and how it would manifest in the real world and affect the everyday lives of both sides. As we watered the seed of trust, I came to not only believe that this future could exist, but that it was my duty to do everything in my power to ensure that it did exist. That is why I deemed it worthy to put my life on the line to venture into Human space in the pursuit of peace.

Though my journey may have ended there, away from the home of my mothers, I wish to advise my fellow Xi'an to not abandon this path of peace. Whatever fate befell me, as innocent or treacherous as it may be, is not worthy of war with a species we have only begun to benefit from. My time with Humans has led me to believe that we can find a use for them that is favorable to the future of our Empire.

Consider a growth of thorns. Left unchecked it may overtake the garden. Attempt to remove it, and the risk to yourself is great. Attempt to destroy it, and the beauty that surrounds it may be destroyed as well. However, if you tame the growth to become part of the garden, its danger can be put to new use.

Humans discovered Hui sen Th.us'ūng the year I was born. I grew up watching my House handle diplomacy with this interesting and animated new species. As a child, I attended enough formal dinners with Human emissaries to know what food of theirs I enjoyed. As an heir, I practiced their language and studied their ways. I learned their history and experienced their art. I even found their music to be quite meditative.

Compared to us, Humans are a young species, one who only recently discovered the universe is not theirs alone. Still, they developed spacefaring technologies of impressive sophistication and spread their diverse culture across dozens of systems in less time than our First Imperial Age. My experience with them taught me that Humans overflow with emotion, ambition, and competing desires. They may act irrationally but they are not illogical. Their potential as a species is both great and terrible.

Since first contact, House Kr.ē has maintained distance, but remained engaged. Diplomacy was difficult but preferable to armed conflict. It seemed perilous to underestimate their military capability or willingness to use it. Humans had already won two wars against the Tevarin and there appeared to be much to learn from them and much risk in provoking them.

This strategy of distanced diplomacy also allowed time for House Kr.ē to produce an heir that could continue the dynasty. As I ascended to Emperor and the possibility of such a successor diminished, I meditated on the impending end of House Kr.ē's imperial dynasty. Above all I did not want the Third Imperial Age to end while the Empire warred with a dangerous and unpredictable new enemy. Particularly since history has taught us that the search for the next Imperial line can be long and complicated. For these reasons and others, I focused on finding common ground, fostering peace, and creating a universe where we Xi'an can prosper from



our proximity to Humans. Though I may not have succeeded, I still believe peace to be our best option, and pray my actions have not doomed it.

To those Houses who would proclaim that our safety lay in subjugating the Humans, I would remind you that scars inflicted by battle are slow to heal. Victory too often comes with a price too great. Let us not completely abandon the lessons we hard earned from the Spirit Wars.

My death brings an official end to the Third Imperial Age. With no legitimate heir to the throne, House Kr.ē's last act will be to administer the ascension of the new House that will lead our people. I hope this sacred endeavor will be swift, smooth, and provide the Empire with a strong and steady leader to navigate the challenges ahead.

As my last act, I wish to share with the entire Empire the same advice I would give the next Emperor. Trust Li'tova to provide guidance and solace. Be benevolent in action, diplomatic when faced with opposition, and wise when encountering the unknown. Finally, remember that taking no action can often be the best action.

It has been an immeasurable honor for me to have served the Xi'an Empire as your Emperor. Long may the Xi'an Empire reign.

**Emperor T.uēng Kr.ē**

Benevolent and righteous caretaker of the Xi'an people and protector of all our worlds

Translation courtesy of Ary Alfonso, who was the Ark's Xi'an Archivist from 2887 - 2913.



# RYT TOOL FOR THE JOB



Wherever people are working, the Pyro RYT multi-tool is there helping get the job done. Whether you're repairing a power converter in space or welding amidst a harsh snowstorm, having the right tool at hand can make all the difference. That's why Greycat Industrial is proud to release a new line of high-visibility color options for the Pyro. Always know where your tool is, no matter where the job takes you.

**PYRO**  
**RYT**  
MULTI-TOOL