

JUMP POINT

ISSUE: 07 02



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FROM THE COCKPIT

GREETINGS, CITIZENS!

Last month, we promised more changes were coming to **Jump Point** and, this time around, I think you'll see that the proof is in the pudding! Thanks to our talented layout artists and the incredible narrative team that need no introduction, we're featuring some additional content from the 'verse itself. When we started **Jump Point** back in year one, the goal was twofold:

- Create a record of *Star Citizen's* development that went a little deeper than regular page updates
- Give subscribers their first taste of our vision for the 'verse, which at the time we did through short stories and other lore articles.

As *Star Citizen* releases became bigger and more comprehensive, we focused more on the former, because we realized that it was possible for you to start having your own interstellar experiences.

Now, as *Star Citizen* becomes ever larger and more impressive, it's time to look at in-fiction **Jump Point** content again... but this time, in a way that supports the adventures you're having today. In the grand tradition of Claw Marks, we're excited to start building in more content that you might read in a magazine in the 30th century: travel guides, advertisements for future products, and articles you might someday pull up in a future Galactapedia. This month, we have a new worker's first impressions of Hurston, a portfolio introducing the Rust Society, and a look at Stella

Fortuna - a new holiday specific to our universe. As someone who has recognized everything from Life Day to Captain Picard Day and once spent weeks of his youth trying to figure out the orbital dynamics of the Kilrathi homeworld so he would know when to celebrate the Sivar-Eshrad ceremony, I fully approve of adding some *Star Citizen* to my real-world calendar!

Of course, our continued dives into the game's development remain. This month, we've got a great one: a look at the new ARGO SRV. I know what you're thinking - an ARGO variant?! But remember, ARGO Astronautics is the company and not the model. The first ships from ARGO were little working ships intended to solve specific problems (including moving personnel and shifting cargo from massive freighters to its final planetary destination). ARGO is continuing the tradition with a completely new design for a completely different role and I think you'll enjoy learning how it came to be. So whether you're a personal fan of the ARGO Personnel or you were calling for an ARGO Cargo embargo, there's a good chance you'll find this a ship worth looking into!

With that, I apologize profusely for that last sentence and wish all of you an excellent February. I hope you enjoy this issue and that you continue to let us know what you'd like to see in future editions of **Jump Point**.

Ben

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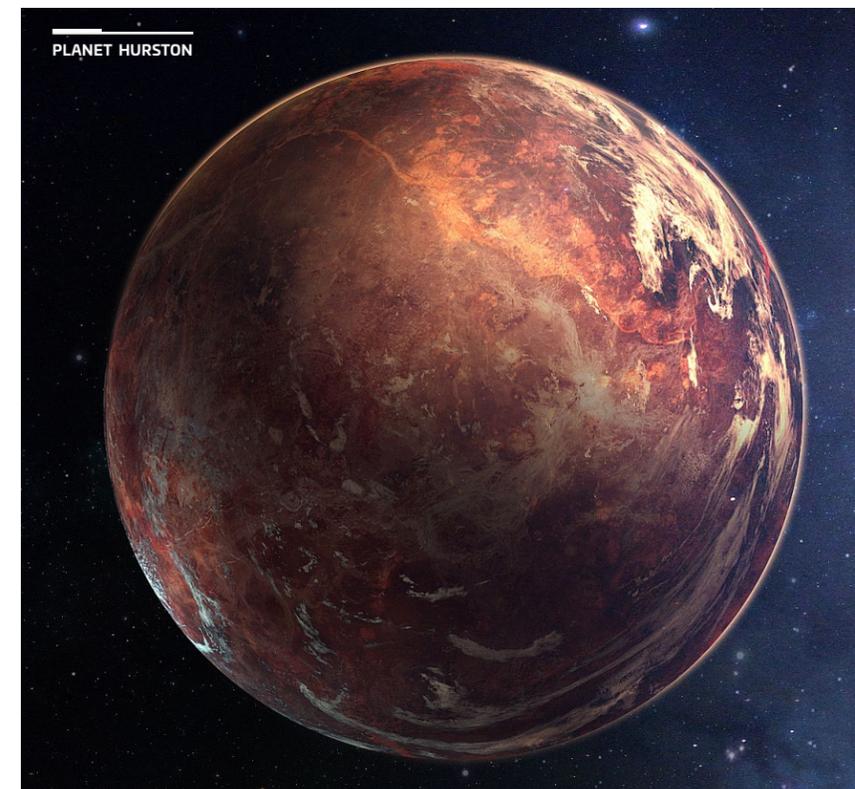
WELCOME TO HURSTON

WELCOME TO YOUR NEW CAREER! Your Hurston Dynamics employment offer is dependent on your agreement to relocate to the city of Lorville on Hurston in the Stanton System. Hurston's corporate planet is a bold new experiment in business management and we are excited to have you as part of our team. In addition to your standard paperwork, the following document written by a recent Hurston transfer employee is provided to help introduce you to the area in which you will be living and working.

When my manager told me that that I was being reassigned off-world for a long-term project, I had stars in my eyes and visions of lush scenery and strange new worlds flashed into my forebrain. Unfortunately, the next words out of her mouth were "we're booking you a coach ticket to our headquarters on Hurston."

Hurston, in the Stanton System, is a relatively new world as far as human planets go. It was first discovered in 2903 and was sold by fiat to the Hurston Dynamics corporation, the UEE's favorite major military contractor. Over the past three-plus decades, the company has built a massive headquarters, a capital city and starpoint, dozens of outposts, and has cleared swaths of the planet for weapons testing and development. Hurston has been rapidly developed with more consideration for industry than preserving natural wonders, a process encouraged by the fact that the world was largely a near-lifeless desert planet when discovered.

I had always understood the planet's reputation to be that of a world being ground down quickly for the sake of human expansion, so I was surprised to learn that there's a new sense of the place emerging. I mean, this is the planet with a region casually called, without any hint of irony, the "polluted coast." And people are going there by choice? I was surprised to learn that yes, that is very much the case. As I prepared for my trip, I quickly found a common refrain: "oh, you're heading to Hurston? It's not just a company planet anymore!" Not just a company planet anymore. I heard it repeated by everyone from travel agents to store clerks to my mother calling to check in from Earth. If the Hurston tourism board isn't using this slogan, they should sure consider it! Hurston, here we come...





THE NEW DEAL SHIP SHOWROOM

As our Starliner exited quantum travel and began the approach to the Lorville marker, the dusty, larger-than-expected world filled the view. Within minutes I was doubting the company planet line: I could already see the enormous Hurston headquarters from orbit. As we descended through the atmosphere, the surface and the sprawling city of Lorville, the planet's only approved port of trade, took shape. There was a little turbulence as we passed through the upper atmosphere, but the landing and egress through customs at Teasa Spaceport was as smooth as commercial travel gets.

Coming from a long flight to what seemed like another dreary industrial planet had my spirits at a low point, so I decided to do some window shopping. Terminal 5 of the spaceport features the largest starship showroom on the planet, New Deal, and it was wonderfully close to my arrival gate at Archimedes Flight. I'm no space pilot, but since a young age I've always found myself calmed by visits to ship

dealers; there's something about seeing so much of our collective scientific and technological potential made real in the always-varied form of spacecraft. New Deal proved to be an extremely impressive showroom with two areas displaying some of the latest hardware 2948 has to offer, including the ubiquitous Roberts Space Industries Constellation and an imposing Aegis Hammerhead. I couldn't imagine ever living a life that would need such a formidable personal warship, but it was quite an experience getting to pore over the display model!

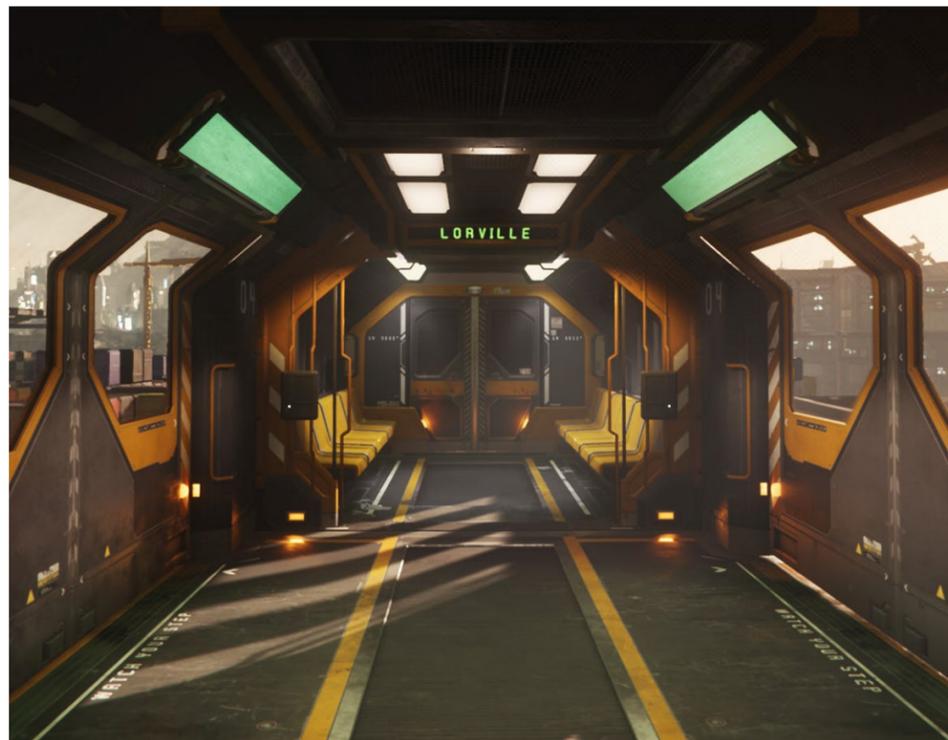
I scrolled through the options long enough to consider what life would be like if I were to invest in a little Aurora. They say picking up the controls is as easy as driving a car these days and even interstellar jumps are something achievable by the common man. Maybe I could just grab the controls of one of the floor models and never look back? Not likely - security guards are everywhere in Lorville.

THE CENTRAL BUSINESS DISTRICT

With that, I decided to move deeper into the city of Lorville. The quickest (and possibly only) way is through Hurston's comprehensive rail system. A short train trip took me from the spaceport to an area referred to as the Worker's District. Centering around Leavsdan Square, it caters to those considered Hurston's privileged class: corporate employees. This particular area served the "FD19 Production Quad," an unending factory complex that builds... well, I was never able to determine for sure, but it's certainly important to either the war effort or company bottom line. To support the workers, the company designated a swath of real estate as commercial and allowed outside vendors to take over.

I wandered over to Tammany and Sons, a clothing and equipment outlet that serves both civilians like myself and the job needs of contract workers passing through (so, space armor in any number of colors and varieties). I admired a line of bag-like helmets, but in the end decided to save my credits. Leave only footprints, I suppose! As I was heading to my next destination, I observed an excited shopper who had been searching the city for a multitool. This is, apparently, where they're hidden

Realizing I hadn't eaten since I'd landed, I stopped by the local watering hole, MacIntyre & Victor's. The bartender was gruff and rebuffed my first attempts at conversation, but ultimately chatted about the area with me. The hottest tip? The nearby Reclamation & Disposal is apparently the place to look for extra work for any of you starfaring types.





THE L19 RESIDENCES

Next, I resolved to find out how I would be living during my assignment. As I sipped my noodle broth I decided to make nice with a local, sharing the story of how I was in the process of relocating for a job in weapons design. My new friend, Aaron, didn't ask many questions but instead offered me a great deal of advice on how and where to live in the city. The small towns I'd seen during the flight in, he explained, weren't accessible to the population: they were essentially early refugees without a claim to the land that were forced out when the area was built up by the company. The ticket, he said, was to find an affordable hab. "They're not pretty," he told me, "but they're not all so bad."

I was directed to the nearby L19 Residences for a sample of how life is lived in Lorville. The facility contained about a hundred habs with identical structures located near all of the major plants and research facilities in the city. It's served by the nearby Maria Pure of Heart Hospital and an administration building allowing workers to take care of all of their organizational needs. The building contains several floors of habs with each floor containing a host of individual quarters similar to the one I would be assigned.

To say that the basic accommodations were spartan might bring in too much of the romance of ancient history into the story. I was allowed to tour several lived-in rooms, most of which were equipped with the bare necessities to keep someone alive and part of the working masses. Single beds, closets for equipment, the occasional desk with a separate viewer. Still, as I stood in the hallway with its massive windows looking out on a city that now seemed moodier than smog-laden, I was struck by a certain purity of it all. This is not a summer estate on Earth or an upscale penthouse on Terra... it's life and in a very real way it was appealing to stop and think of the comfort a lifetime company job gives you. Surely, the Hurstonians are happy.



THE DESMOND MEMORIAL CONVENTION CENTER

Now that I'd seen normal life in Lorville, it was time to experience something abnormal. For my next stop, I needed to back-track all the way to my old friend, Terminal 5. But the train ride back to the starport was more than worth it as what I found at the convention center proved to be a star attraction. First, a little background: Hurston Dynamics has started to move from aggressively building out their factories and begun serious efforts to lure additional skilled workers and precious tourism credits. The centerpiece of this outreach has been the Desmond Memorial Convention Center located just off the starport. Hurston has pumped credits into building the structure itself and in bidding to bring in top events from around the Empire, which range from high-tech showcases to cutting-edge scientific expositions.

The conventional wisdom is, of course, that if you've seen one convention center then you've seen them all. Whether you're in Baltimore or Fujin City, convention centers are inoffensive architecture, wide-open exhibit halls, and an impossible warren of breakout meeting rooms. And let me

tell you, Hurston's Desmond Memorial center is... inoffensive architecture, wide-open exhibit halls, and an impossible warren of breakout meeting rooms. But what you don't get from that description is just how enormous the place is. It's the size of a center you'd expect deep in developed space with room to do, well, just about anything.

In my case, that anything was the final day of the spectacular 2948 Intergalactic Aerospace Expo. By the time this goes to print you'll have seen the coverage and pretty much experienced the thing first hand, so I will mainly add that yes, it was as cool as it surely appeared on Spectrum. I thought climbing on a Hammerhead at New Deal had made my day, but here there were test flights and displays of all sorts from around the galaxy. Credit where it's due to Hurston for bringing the best of the rest of the galaxy to this one event. Here's hoping the aerospace show will be a regular event here! The convention center isn't open to the public all of the time, but when it is, the company makes sure it's for a very big show.





HURSTON OUTPOST PINEWOOD

Despite the dry air and the dusty skies, Lorville had proven to be much more than I expected. I knew that so often simply visiting a city doesn't really give a true picture of a planet, so I couldn't go home without taking a day trip to see what life was really like in the deeper expanses. Leaving the city meant two things: I would need to go through customs again and I would need to either rent a vehicle or hire a ride. Luckily, both options were plentiful and I ended up procuring the services of a kind-faced young man who was eager to tell me all about his brand new Tumbril Cyclone (one of the recent re-builds). He was, however, somewhat bothered that I continually referred to our chariot as a car. "It's an all-terrain vehicle!"

I picked our destination somewhat arbitrarily. Hurston is dotted with mining outposts and other corporate facilities that the company was good enough to grant me permission to visit. I chose a mining base called Pinewood from a map, mostly curious as to how such a woodsy name made it to such a barren planet. We rode off into the desert and I have to say... it's beautiful. Just absolutely stunning. Being out in the open space

on a distant planet was a true rush followed by the realization that this really was an amazing place. Dark and desolate? Sure. Polluted? Near the cities maybe. But the long expanses of untouched terrain as we jetted across the landscape were something else, some great reminder that we are so insignificant in the scheme of things. If this one simple planet (one of the roughest we've colonized) can provide so much beauty, then there's a lot more out there for me to explore.

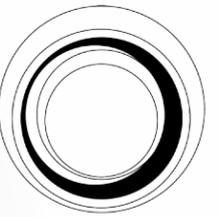
Filled with a sense of excitement over my connection to the desert, the mining base itself was almost an afterthought - a set of prefab buildings and platforms almost unnoticeable until you're right on top of them. Again, I was fascinated by the workers who make this place their home. But unlike the ones punching a clock at the Habs, I could relate to these lives. I ended with the sense that there were countless lives to live and secrets to unlock on Hurston.

I wouldn't have believed this sentiment going into this adventure, but I can't wait to start my adventure here.

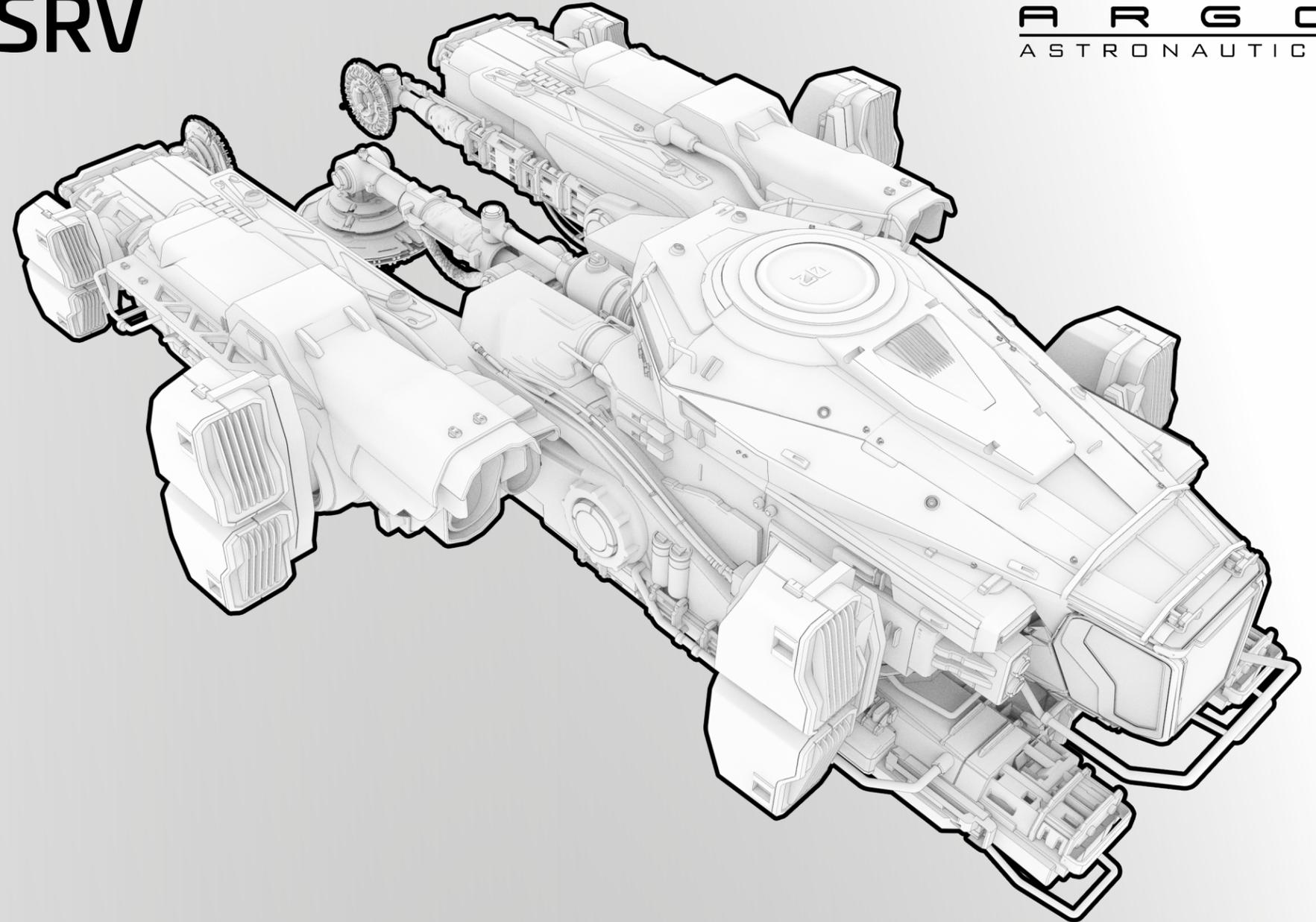


WORK IN PROGRESS...

ARGO ASTRONAUTICS SRV



ARGO
ASTRONAUTICS



AIMS

- The ARGO SRV is a single player recovery ship.
- Designed to get people into the job role of ship recovery - the SRV is made to be used by a single player allowing them to tow anything they come across to safety or salvage.

AESTHETIC

- Having a small cabin area separate to the cockpit to store recovered goods and players while their ship is recovered.
- Having no firepower but heavy armour makes it a safe ship that allows people to start a new career.

Length	28.5 m
Width	19.5 m
Height	8.7 m
Mass	231.680 Kg
Speed	200 mps
Max Crew	1
Powerplants	1 x Medium
Shield	1 x Medium
Cargo Capacity	10 SCU
Armor	Medium
Mounts	1x S3 - Utility Mount Tractor Beam
Counter Measures	Flare/Chaff Launcher
Passengers	4

The vehicle depicted herein is undergoing concept and design as of the release of this publication. Specifications and appearance are subject to revision during development.

KEY CONTRIBUTORS:
 DESIGNERS: JOHN CREWE & MARK GIBSON
 CONCEPT ART: SARAH MCCULLOCH
 ART DIRECTOR: PAUL JONES



A JOB FOR ARGO

Open on a major contemporary seaport...

A massive cargo ship laden with containers lumbers into port, stirring awake a precise dance of technicians and laborers operating some of the most complex bespoke machinery on the planet. As the silhouette grows on the horizon, a team of tugboats steams to meet it, their stubby design belying the fact that they're more engine than ship. At the docks, enormous cranes prepare to unload thousands of tonnes of goods while crews ready themselves to restock the mothership for its long return home. Networks of rail cars, canal barges, and other equipment make ready to distribute precious cargo further inland. The scene is repeated hundreds of times before the day is through, the oft-unconsidered organ of global commerce.

The task ahead for *Star Citizen's* Design Team? Figure out how to do this... in space.

Where games of the past would simply offer up a menu system for selling and buying cargo and turn unrealized bits into imagined credits, *Star Citizen's* dedication to realism and building out a working 30th century world means the entire process needs to be thoroughly developed. As in the modern world, the future United Empire of Earth will run not on its successes battling enemies, but on the regular heartbeat of its commerce system. Enter ARGO Astronautics, a company developed to help fill the working support ship gap and allow *Star Citizen's* industrial careers to function correctly. ARGO premiered their first vehicle, the MPUV, in late 2016 to determine how cargo is moved from orbital-scale freighters (like the Hull D and E) to the trade networks of their planetary destinations. Now, as *Star Citizen's* industrial careers continue to diversify, ARGO was called on once again to manufacture the game's first working zero-g tugboat.

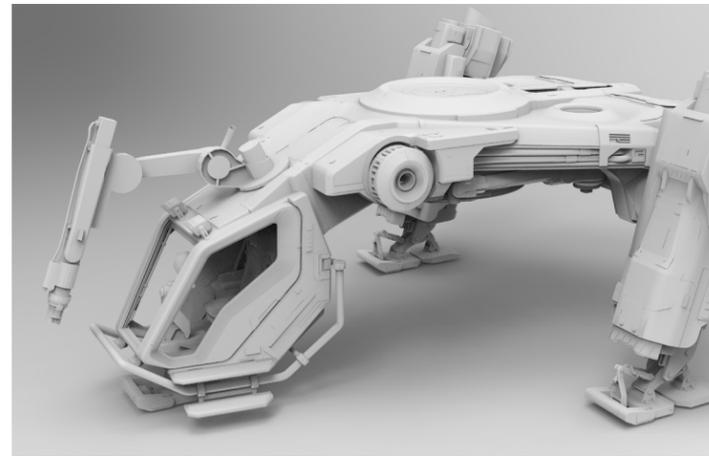
SOFT SRV

Putting *Star Citizen's* first tug ship to paper was more of a challenge than simply instructing the Art Team to build a little, overpowered pusher vehicle. To make the ARGO SRV work, the team would need to undertake additional development on all of the systems it would touch, including rescue, freight, and the oft-considered but never-locked tractor beam. Countless questions needed to be answered: How does a small ship tug a larger one? Is a larger ship needed... or do many smaller tugs work together to tow larger vehicles? Is there a physical magnetic grappling system or a more traditional sci-fi energy beam? How would this touch existing and in-development plans for rescue and repair processes? Vehicle Pipeline Director John Crewe and his team put together a "future proof" brief to allow artists to begin work on the ship while further details of these processes were drilled down.

As with the MPUV, the SRV's overall role in the game universe is accompanied by specific aspects of career gameplay. The Design Team opted to classify the SRV as a recovery ship, owing to its immediate

appeal as a career starter for independent operators who could tow damaged spacecraft home or to bases for repair. With this in mind, the team considered what this gameplay would look like, which meant considering the experience for all players involved. Asking how SRV captains would physically operate their tractor beams was just the start. What would the experience be like for players trapped aboard a disabled ship? The final brief provided several directives:

- Tractor beam should face the rear of the ship to tow ships behind/below it
- Small seating area inside the ship to allow the pilot of the broken down ship to wait while being tugged
- Separate cockpit section from the main body of the ship
- Pilot needs a console option to switch to the tractor beam on a remote turret setup
- Gimballed tractor beam to allow the pilot to maneuverer into position, then grab the ship/vehicle



Perhaps the boldest choice in the initial design was something that would've been unthinkable several years before: the ARGO SRV would not require any weapon hardpoints. It would center solely around career-based gameplay instead of fighting, as the team was now confident that players understand how much depth the game will have beyond combat.

FROM 3D TO 2D AND BACK

There's a special challenge to developing the look of a second ship released for a new company. Building out the design of the first ship, in this case the MPUV, has a sense of freedom to it. There are no restrictions on what the ship *should* look like. In fact, the first artist sets many of the rules canonized as signatures of the brand. The team faced exactly this challenge with the SRV: building a ship that is distinct in appearance, role, and capacity but also calls back the earlier ARGO design enough that future pilots know they're part of the same development line.

To make the SRV a reality, Art Director Paul Jones chose in-house concept artist Sarah McCulloch, who was most recently responsible for helping expand another industrial starship line with the Crusader Industries Mercury Star Runner. To start her on the design process, he provided four additional functionality notes:

- Towing form: the arm should be as flexible as possible to cover a wide range (which is why some of these sketches have a lower arm beneath the ship)
- Transport stranded crew: we would like them to feel comfortable, so could include refreshments inside the cabin, like a coffee machine. Maximum of four passengers in the rear of the craft
- Cargo capacity: small amount, around SCU 10 in total. The ship design should be rugged and tough-looking, especially since it lacks firepower
- Loading: cargo should be easily loaded, not hindered, and should not obstruct passengers

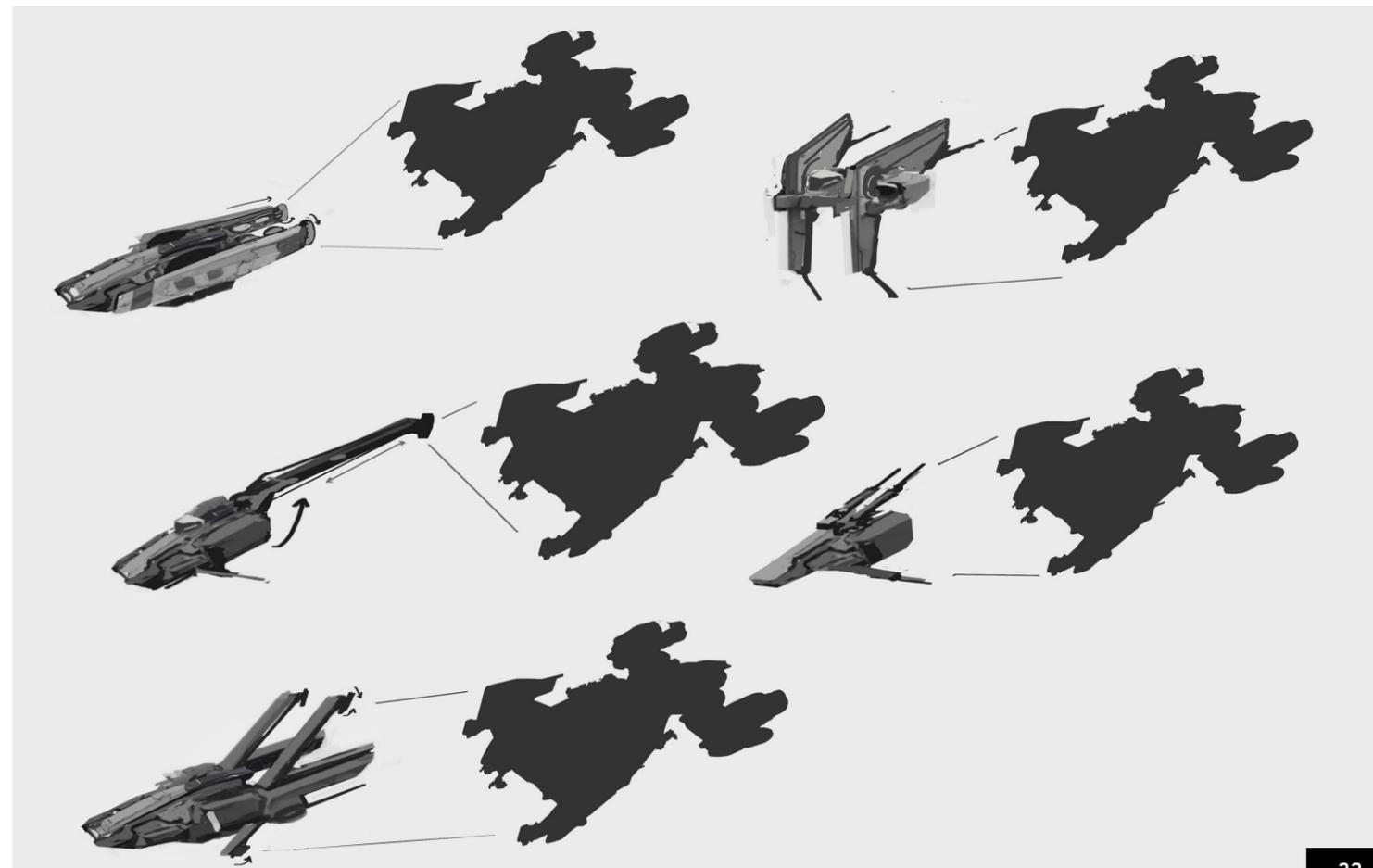
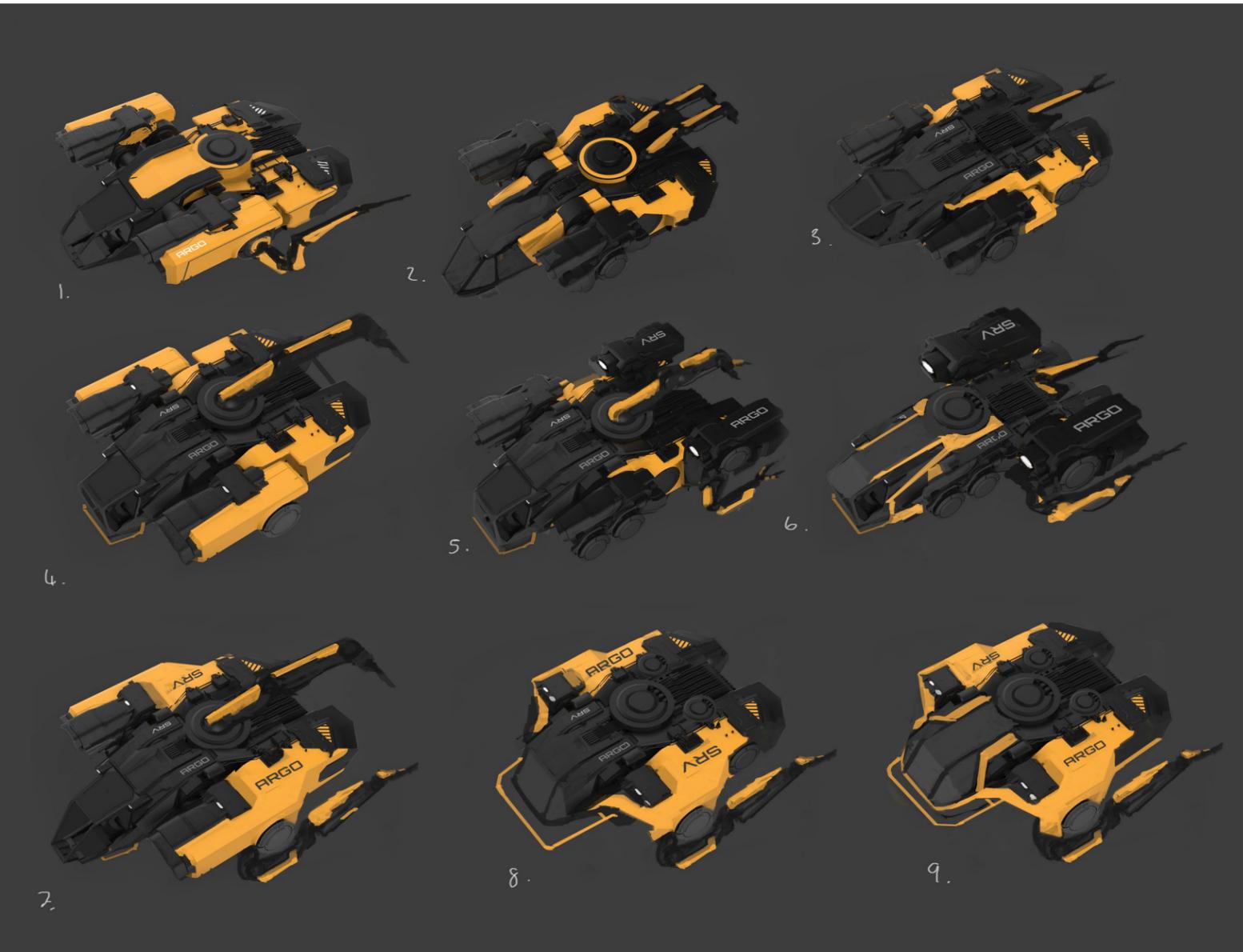
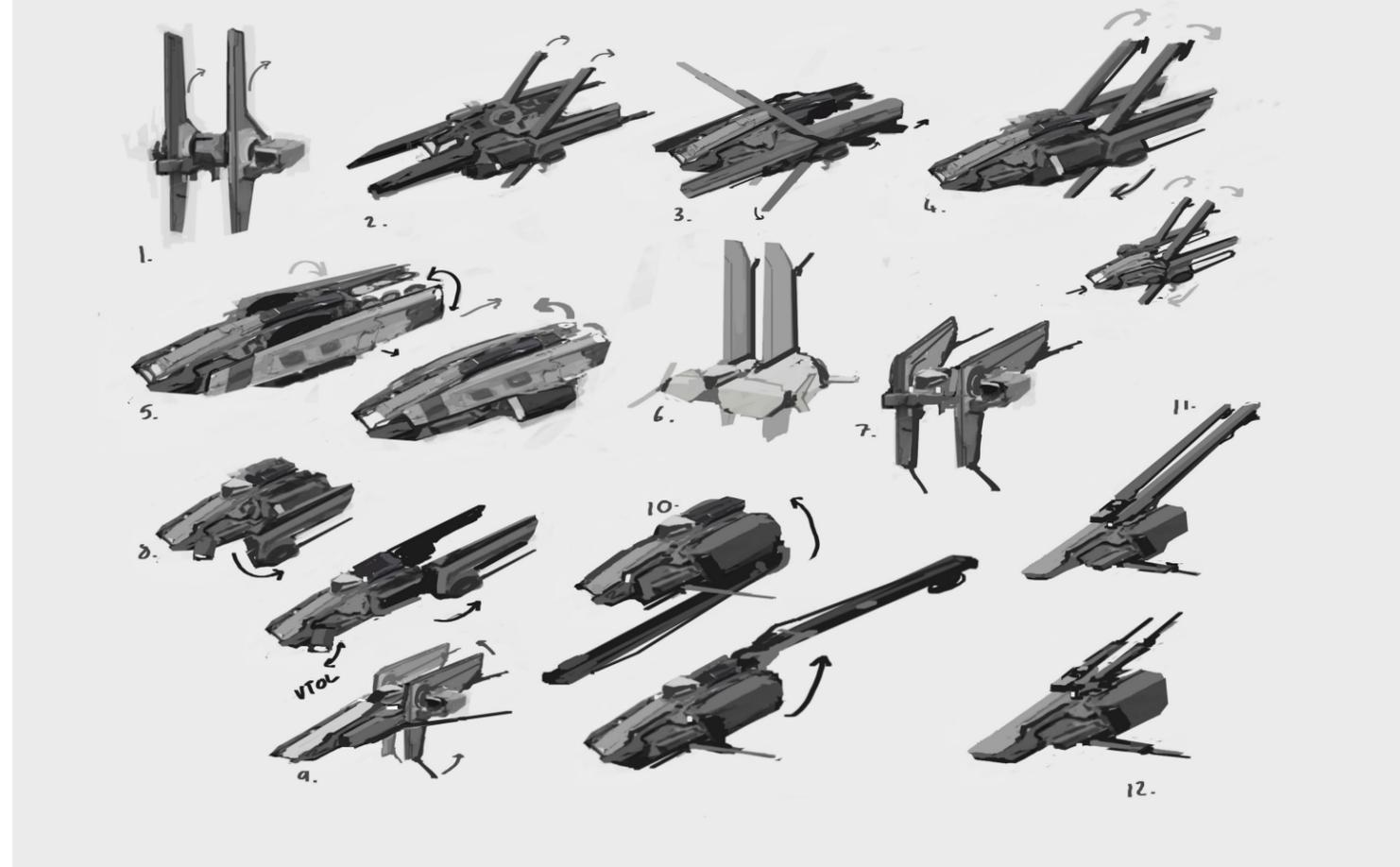
For reference, Jones and the team collected photographs and other material showing off tugboats, cranes, tractor trailers, and other working vehicles. Renders of the various ARGO MPUV models were also referenced, as great consideration went into how to define the permanent look for the corporation's style guide.

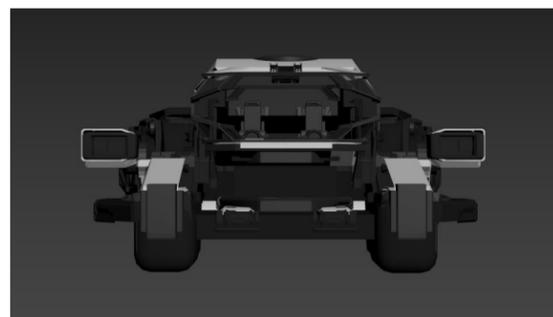
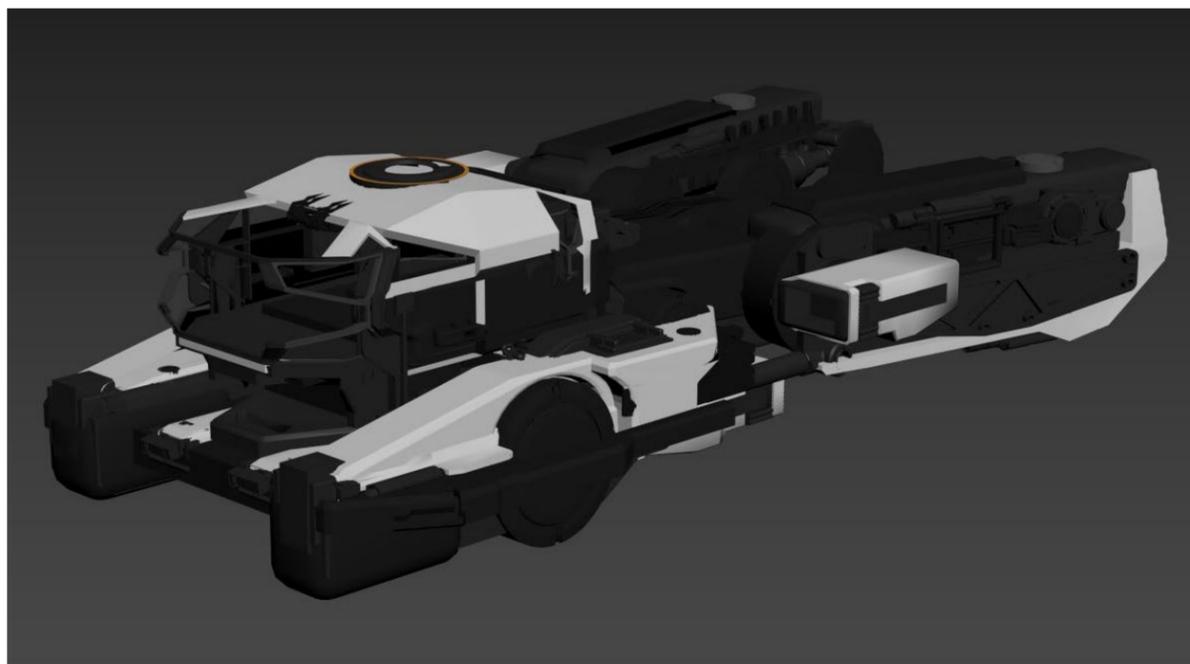
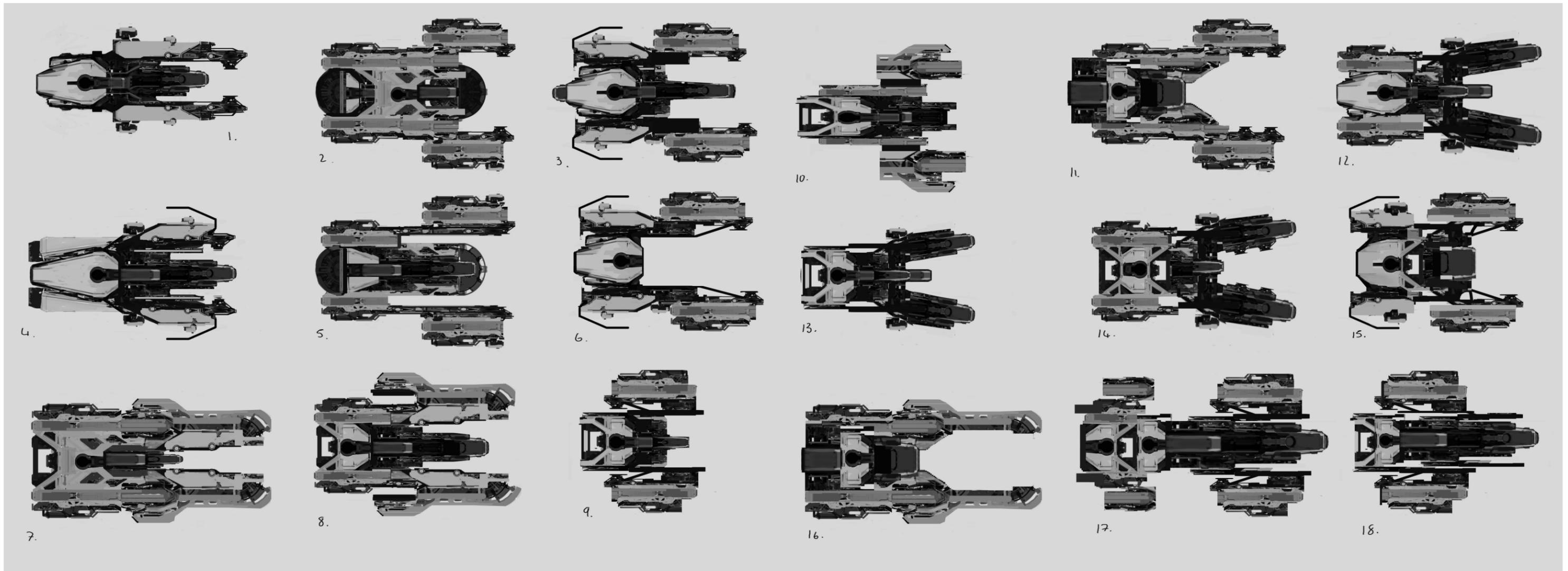
McCulloch began the sketch phase in earnest by applying her well-earned 3D skills to rough out nine potential directions for the ship. The result was an array of small and squat kitbashed options for early consideration, each focused on an overall “industrial construction vehicle” aesthetic. Jones felt that, while the designs met the brief, they were somewhat safe and asked that McCulloch keep pushing in different directions to make the SRV both utilitarian and visually distinct. “This is a new career ship,” he noted, “Chris Roberts always likes to see function but with a twist of interesting mechanics that he hasn’t seen yet.”

A proponent of finding ways to take concept artists out of their own heads as part of the creative process, Jones further suggested changing things with a series of 2D passes. He noted that while the artists are clearly skilled enough to jump right into kitbashing ships in 3D, “happy accidents” can occur during a 2D concept phase. “Try getting some

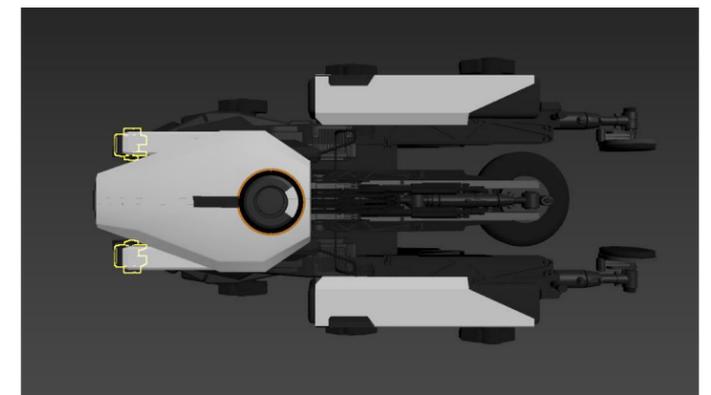
photo reference and bashing it around to break out your brain, so you can get some slightly wacky ideas that can be worked with and reigned in,” he suggested. To prove his point, Jones created some 2D ideas of his own and stumbled upon a totally unexpected Rosetta stone that would help heavily guide the look of Argo SRV: a mirrored image of a rescue tow truck viewed from above! He added bars to the back to give the silhouette a multitool-look and the spirit of the ARGO SRV was born.

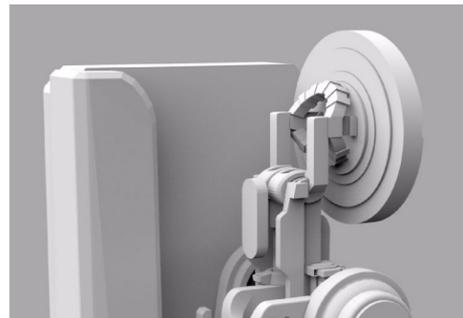
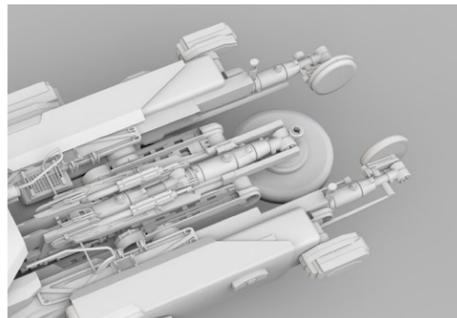
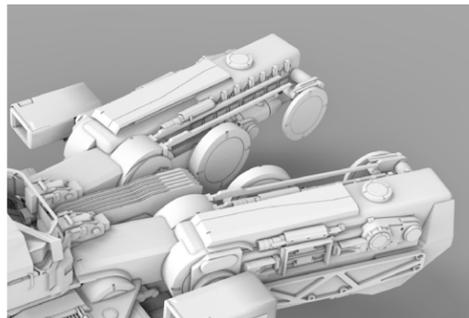
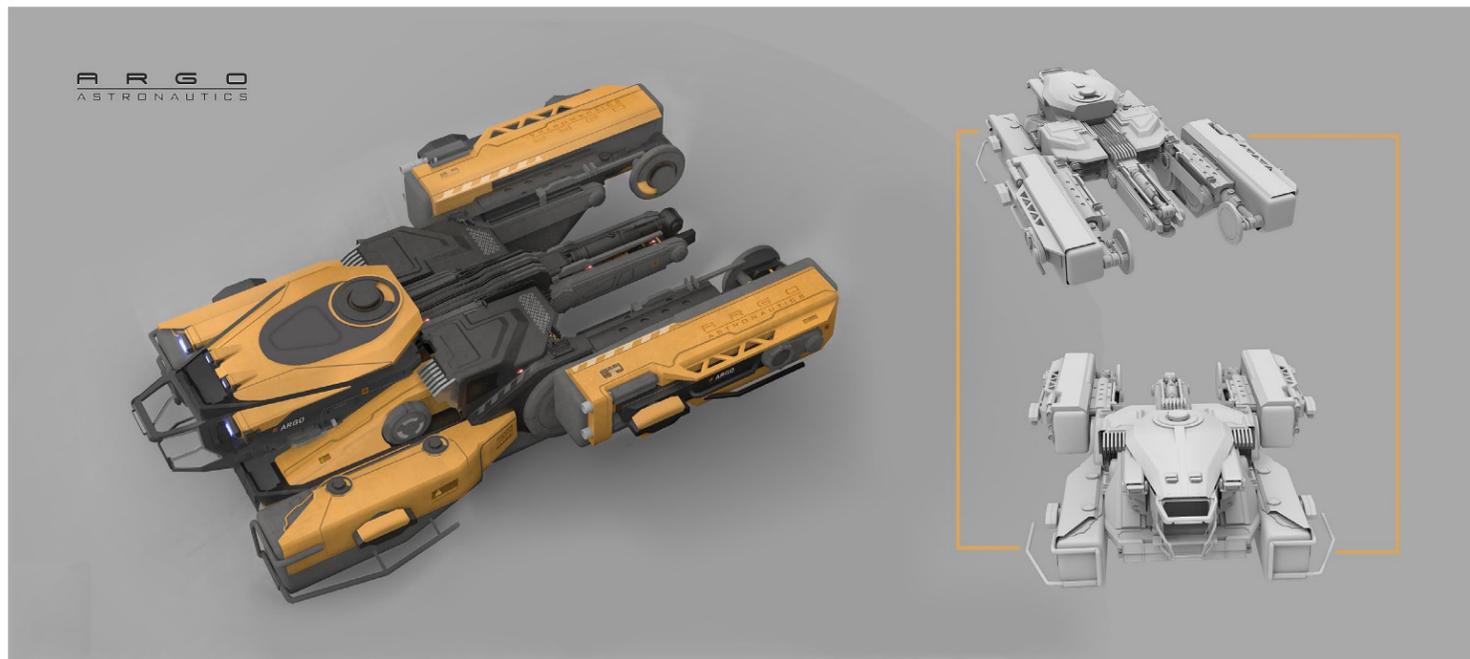
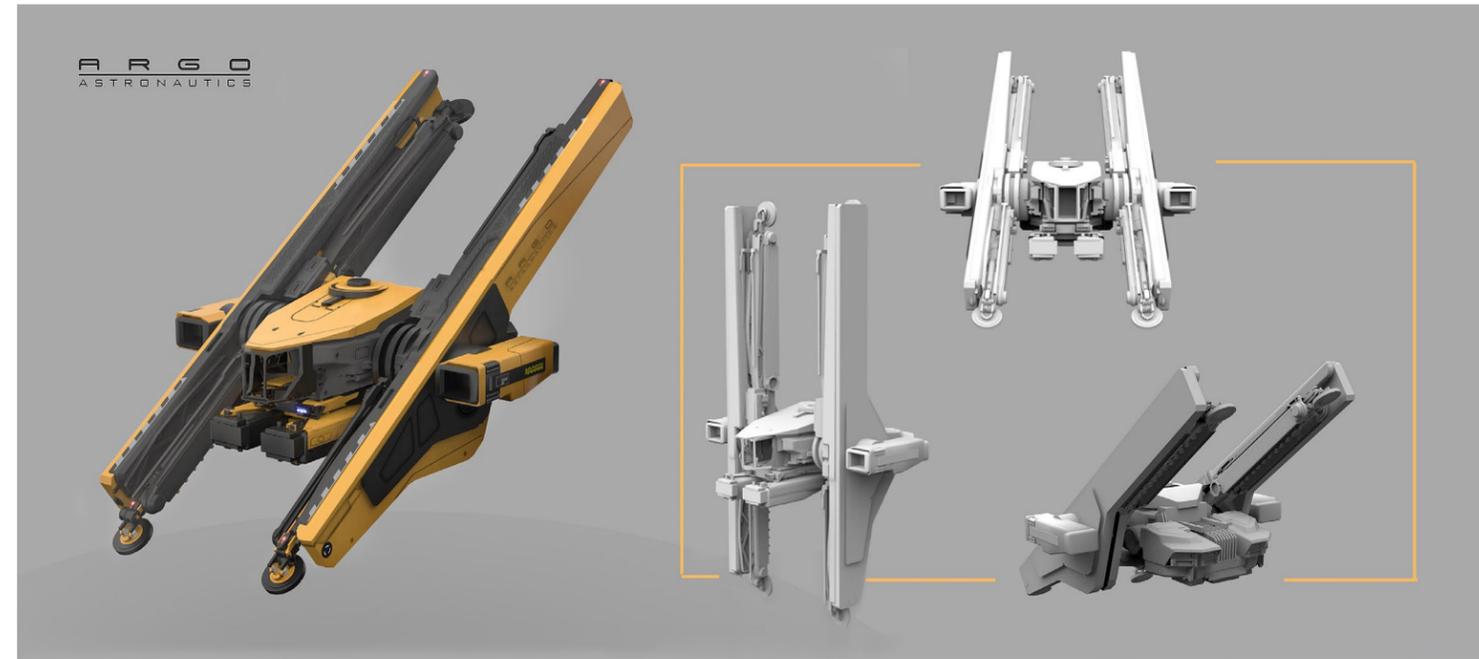
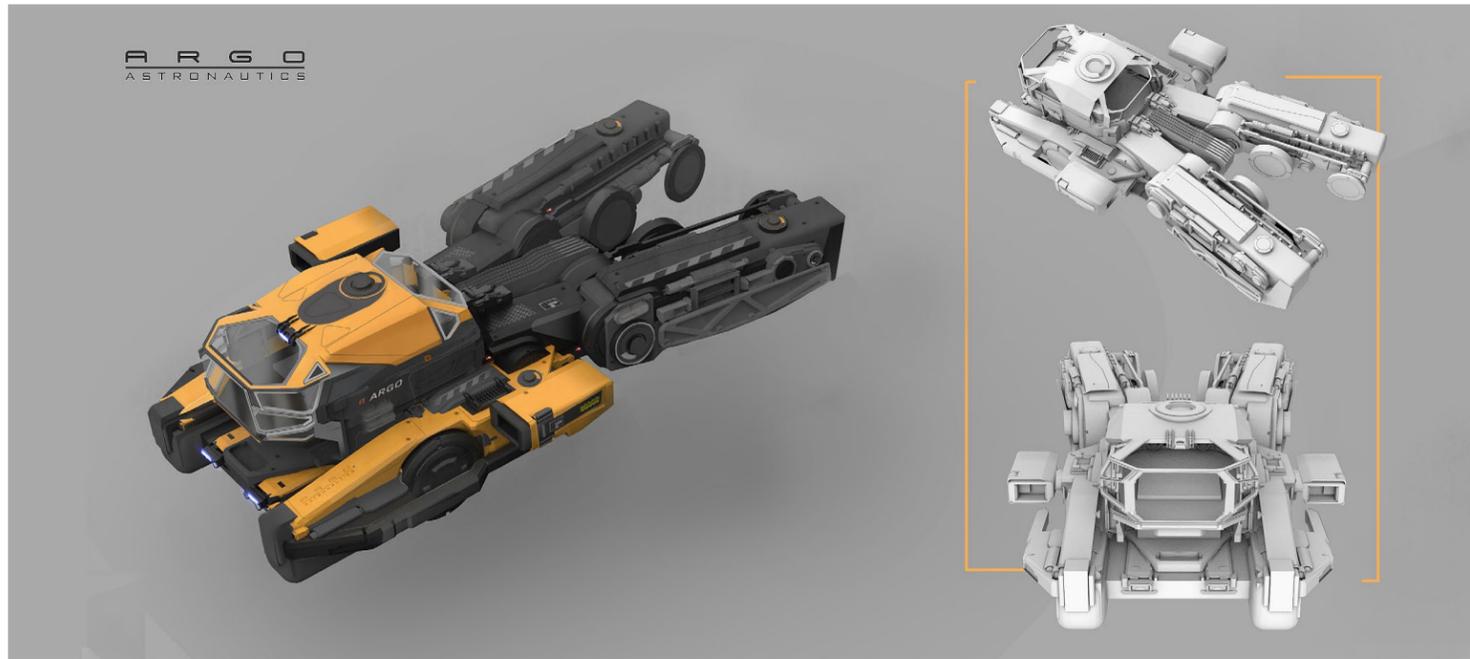
Jones’ instructions worked wonders for the blockouts: McCulloch returned with a dozen wildly different options, with 2D takes that showed a great deal of potential movement and a series of plans for how they would physically tow a ship in-game. Thinking outside the box, she focused on details like the silhouette, which makes for a good indication of how it might remain distinct when viewed flying nearby and as a tiny dot several kilometers away. She also focused on selling points, like how it might articulate in a distinct fashion.





Feedback on the 2D options was good, with the major change being to drop the longer nose and keep the cab shorter. Working with the mirrored tow truck in mind, McCulloch proceeded to develop a sheet of eighteen options viewed from above, each with a clear form to their function. She also introduced more industrial themes as she went, including bumper bars, two-part hulls, and a more clearly-defined tractor beam section. Jones chose a favorite from this set and 3D concept development resumed in earnest.

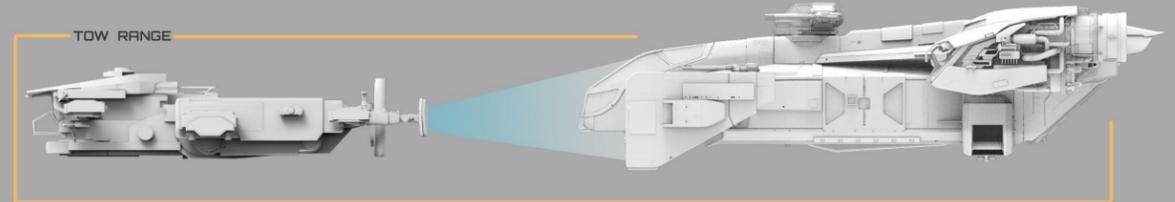
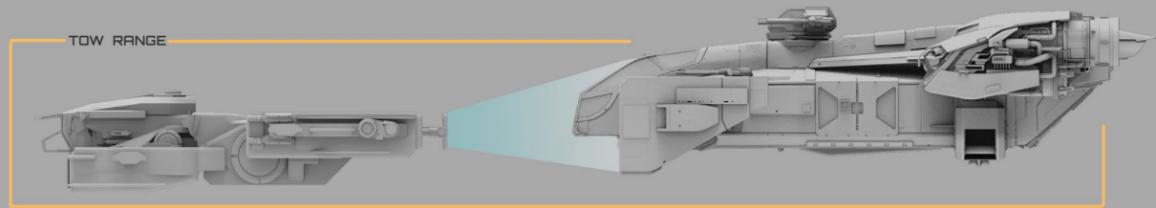
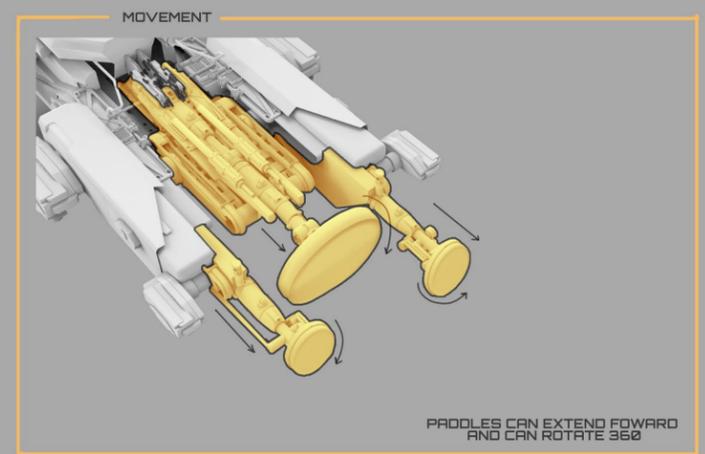
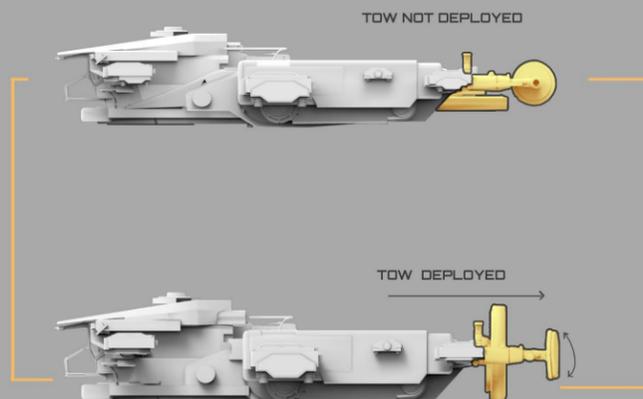
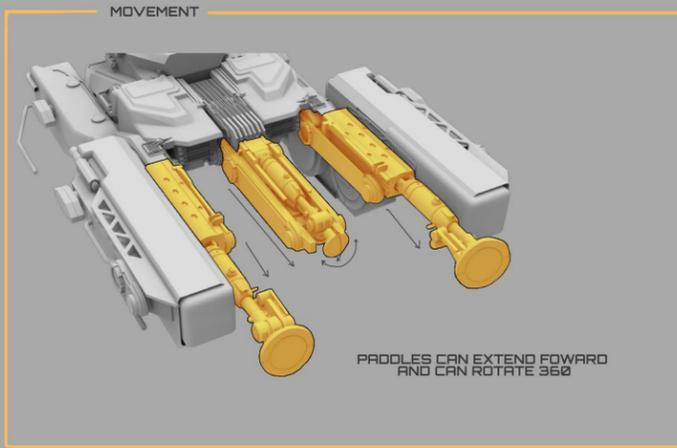
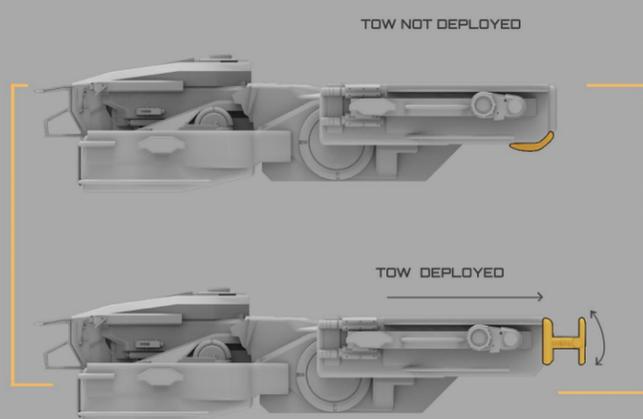




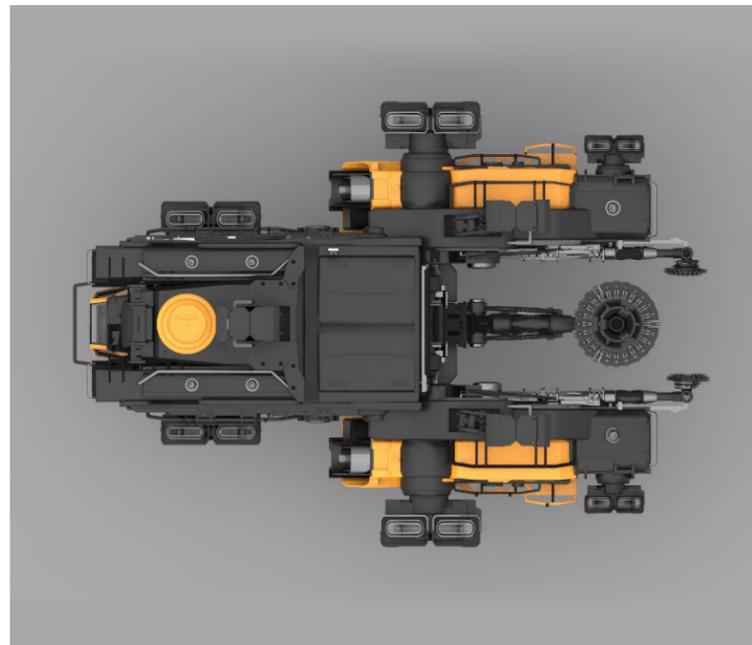
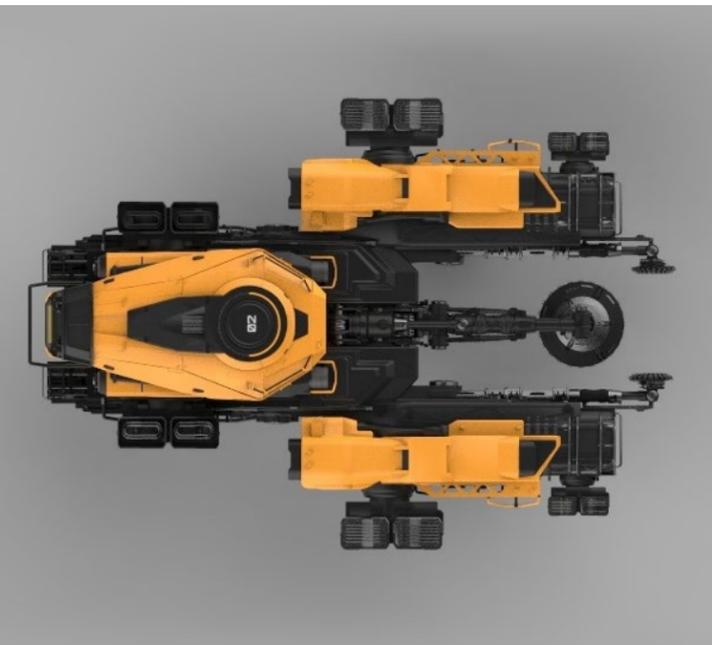
In preparation for the first pass review by Chris Roberts, McCulloch developed Jones' preference into four different 3D models, three of which were similar and the fourth very distinct. The team rendered each from different angles to consider their overall appearance and the distinctiveness of their silhouettes. Rough cockpits were rendered for each, allowing the team to informally review them all for playability before they were shared.

With plenty of time before the review, McCulloch and Jones continued riffing and developing a sheet for each version featuring different

angles and animations so that Roberts would see what they were trying to achieve. Refinement took place over the course of several weeks, including the development of basic animations to answer some of the obvious questions, like how does it land? One early version featured gear that swept out from the sides to keep the ship stable, which was ultimately dropped for a more familiar system. How is it going to tow a ship? This question would be revised several times throughout the process as design debated whether it would tow a ship from above or below and ultimately whether it would be able to tow ships crashed on the ground through atmosphere.



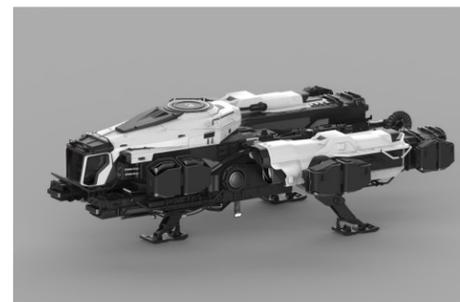
Development of the tractor beam attachment itself began at this point. First passes had traditional science fiction aesthetics, which was eventually rolled back to a more familiar industrial look with futuristic detailing. Wanting again to have his team escape their own heads, Paul went with the real-world inspiration of a scrapyards magnet and its associated cranes. McCulloch developed a series of animations to show potential tractor beams that would apply to the mechanic still under development by the Design Team.

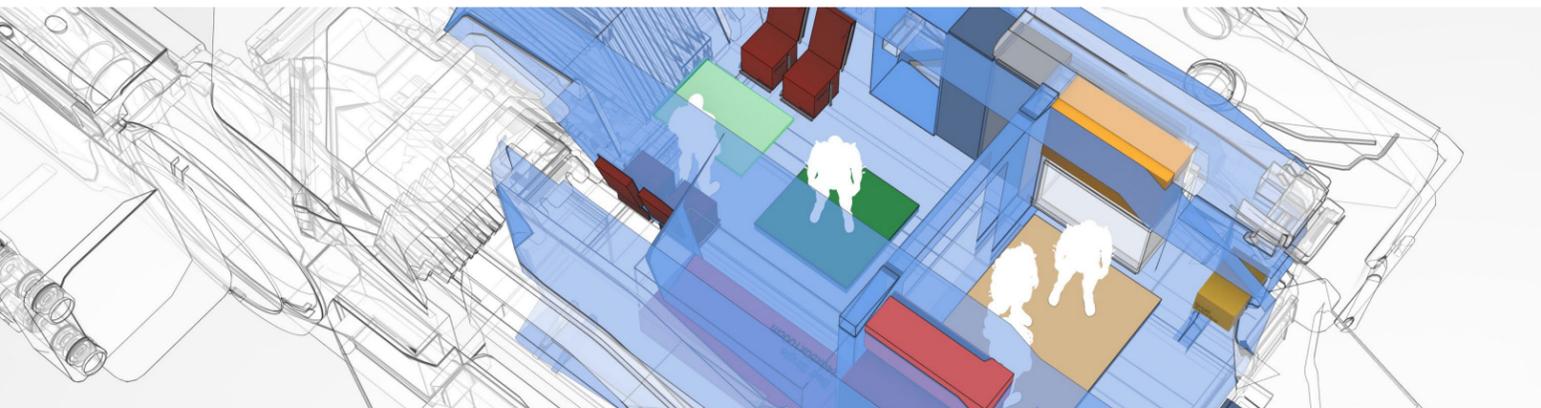
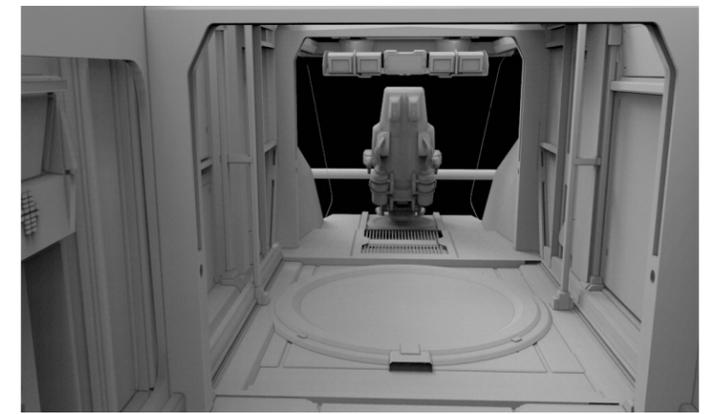


ALMOST THERE!

The first pass review went extremely well! Chris Roberts chose option four, which was sent for additional refinement. The other major change from the review was the landing gear, as it was deemed too similar to the MPUV. The team opted for a series of six smaller VTOLs, giving the SRV a more distinctive look. Bumpers were added for close maneuvering, although Design had not yet determined whether this tug would ever need to physically bump ships into place.

As the final look for the ARGO tugship came into being, McCulloch moved to develop additional markings and color variants to help move the marketing process forward. Additional work on the tractor beam removed the arms and gave it a wider aperture that expands and pops out while still looking like a magnetic lift. A new entry mechanism was also developed in response to confusion among players trying to access larger ships: a lit screen now pops down when you land that shows you exactly where to board the ship.





ARGO INSIDE

As a veteran of several larger ship projects, McCulloch was experienced enough to know to begin working on an interior blockout for the SRV early in the process and produced a rough interior chart alongside her first pass of the four 3D models. With Design still cracking on with the tractor beam mechanics, the decision was made to keep the cockpit simple rather than fill in details that might be contradicted when functional tow controls come online. Much of the interior would follow McCulloch's original plan, with most of the process changes surrounding ingress and egress. One early animation suggested as many as three elevators: one for the cargo, one for the crew, and one that raises the pilot straight up.

The effect was considered extremely cool but unnecessarily complex for such a utilitarian ship and the elevators were reduced to only one for the main crew and one for the inaccessible-in-flight cargo.

The most exciting decision about the interior came down to the addition of a simple window at the rear of the cabin to allow passengers seated around the small table to look out and see their ship being towed. The effect is striking and shown well in one of the key pieces of concept art. It's easy to imagine a nervous ship owner nervously watching their damaged pride and joy towed behind a tough little tug.



READY, SET, (AR)GO

With the concept complete, the second ARGO headed on to the marketing phase. The team built out a variety of action renders showing the ship at rest and at work towing larger vehicles alongside the now-standard glossy presentation page from the team at Turbulent. With the launch of the SRV, *Star Citizen's* armada of realistic industrial ships continues to expand alongside the options for non-combat players. And with Argo Astronautics now no longer a one-trick company, the stars are the limit for future working starships.

...close on any starport of tomorrow. A massive Hull-D laden with containers lumbers into port, stirring awake a precise dance of technicians and laborers operating some of the most complex, bespoke machinery in the galaxy. As the silhouette grows on the horizon, teams of Argo MPUVs and SRVs rocket to meet it...

ARGO ASTRONAUTICS SRV PAGE:

<https://robertsspaceindustries.com/comm-link/transmission/16971-The-ARGO-SRV>





GALACTAPEDIA

STELLA FORTUNA

Stella Fortuna is a Human cultural celebration associated with good fortune and success in new ventures. It was first established as a commemoration of the successful colonization of Mars (Sol IV). Feasting, fireworks, festivals, and other forms of mass celebration are hallmarks of the holiday, along with the colors gold and green. It is celebrated each year on March 15th throughout the United Empire of Earth (UEE).

ORIGIN

In the mid-22nd century, the United Nations of Earth (UNE) established Humanity's first successful extraplanetary colony on Mars. This was the second attempt at colonization; the first Human colony on Mars failed late in the terraforming process when an error in the atmosphere processors led to sudden mass atmospheric collapse. 4,876 Humans died. The second attempt at a colony was largely regarded as doomed to failure. In a widely-circulated article on the potential dangers a Mars immigrant might face, Kelsey Forset of *Sentinel NewsOrg* simply wrote, "Don't tempt fate." This message was ultimately co-opted:

"Tempt Fate" with "Don't" crossed out became an unofficial slogan of the early Mars colonists.

In 2200, the UNE announced plans for an interplanetary holiday to celebrate 45 successful years of Human habitation on Mars. It would be held during the following Earth-Mars conjunction (18th March 2202) to emphasize the connection between the planets. Martian schoolchildren were invited to submit possible names for the new holiday. "Stella Fortuna" was selected from an entry provided by Estelle Priya, age 11, of Port Renatus Public School 17.

Large public carnivals sponsored by space travel and terraforming companies were held on Mars and Earth. They featured rides, food, games, and half-price tickets to attractions throughout the Sol System, from space stations on the asteroid belt to the volcanoes of Io. New parcels of land on Mars were raffled off to festival attendees, along with a ship outfitted with a quantum engine provided by Roberts Space Industries. Local businesses sold souvenirs stamped with the slogan

"We Tempted Fate: Stella Fortuna 2202." The day ended with a green and gold firework display.

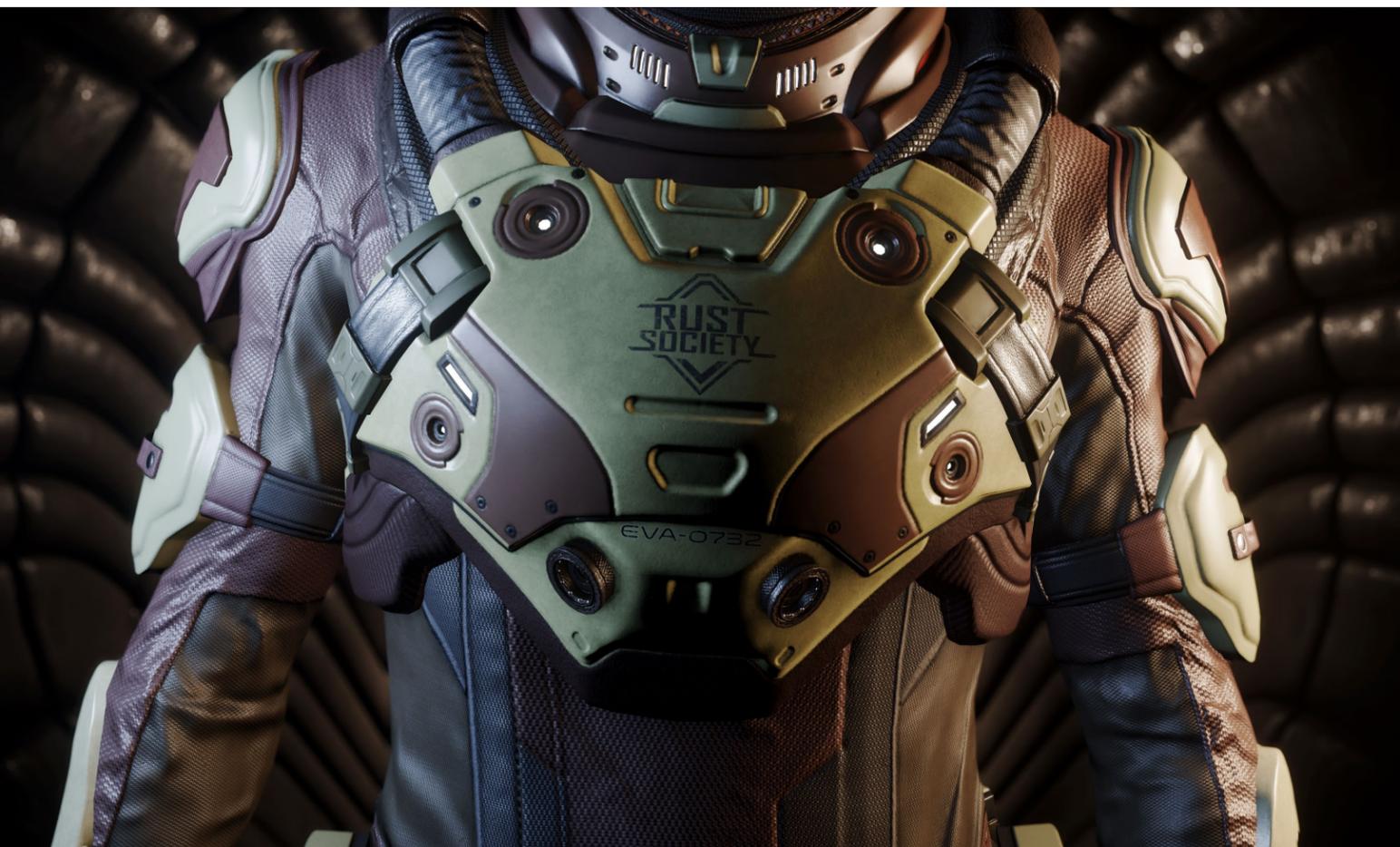
Stella Fortuna was held at varying times of the year during Earth-Mars conjunctions for over a half century. In 2257, the UNE declared March 15th the official holiday. While March 18th was initially proposed, it was not selected due to conflict with another holiday - the anniversary of the first Human born on a planet other than Earth.

CELEBRATION AND TRADITIONS

Stella Fortuna has evolved from a holiday commemorating the early Mars colony to one that celebrates good fortune, boldness, tempting fate, and embarking on new business ventures. This was caused by a number of factors, but the against-all-odds success of the Mars colony combined with the long-term success of early settlers were two major influences. In particular, the families who won land during the first Stella Fortuna did a great deal to promote the idea that the holiday

was associated with good luck. By the time the holiday's final date was selected, people preparing for interplanetary trips were already asking the stars for their blessing. It became a tradition in the late 2200s for explorers to toast the stars before embarking on searches for jump points, or for people launching new business ventures to begin them on March 15th.

The largest celebrations still occur on Mars. Most businesses close for the holiday and the day after. The festival officially kicks off with a parade featuring elaborately decorated floats in the form of spaceships or stars. Celebrants clad in colorful, light-up costumes throw candy, raffle tickets, or other small prizes from atop the floats into the crowd. Carnivals filled with rides and games run throughout the day and night. Intoxicated crowds will spontaneously burst into traditional songs such as "Aim for the Stars but Strike from Mars" and "Illuminate the Way." Marriage proposals are as common as new business ventures; the green and gold firework display that concludes the festival is a favorite time to seal the deal on business and romantic partnerships alike.



RUST SOCIETY

The Rust Society is an organization of scrapyards veterans and long-haul philosophers dedicated to mentoring the next generation in the “right” way to salvage and haul. Focused on improving the local community and providing perks to its members, chapters exist in most UEE systems and many unclaimed ones.

Franklin Yeung, known by his callsign “Knocks,” downplayed his role in creating the Rust Society. Yet, there’s no denying that the organization would not exist without him. Five centuries after the first official meeting, Knocks would be shocked to see what the Rust Society has become and undoubtably heartened to know that it has helped so many.

FORGED BY FAILURE

Franklin Yeung emigrated to Caliban in the late 24th century. He operated as a solo hauler but struggled to find consistent work. Although he spent his days scouring job boards, his best gigs came recommended by a grizzled group of pilots that frequented a local dive bar called Delilah’s. Knocks became a regular, earning a nickname for his erratic balance when drinking. He referred to these informal gatherings

as “meetings with the Rust Society,” a homage to the potent brand of alcohol regularly consumed en masse by attendees.

As older members either moved away, retired, or died, Knocks became the group’s respected veteran. A willing mentor and a veritable fountain of Caliban knowledge, he freely shared information about what shipping lanes were safe or which scrapyards used rigged scales. He also provided work to struggling youngsters, even when in need of creds for himself. To compensate, Knocks took more lucrative but also more dangerous runs into Oberon. On a haul in 2436, he barely survived an attack by outlaws. Knocks made a full recovery, but his extensive injuries and age made subsequent long flights in the pilot’s seat painful. After canceling three consecutive contracts, he retired, never to fly another hauling gig again.

Knocks took a comm-ops job at a local hangar and realized the information he got from those coming and going could be put to good use. He continued holding court at Delilah’s and ushered in a new era of the Rust Society, hoping that this new gathering would continue to support the next-generation of long-haul travelers. Within five years,

Knocks had quit his job to focus entirely on the Rust Society. Delilah’s couldn’t house the meeting’s growing popularity, so Knocks found an alternate venue, though associated costs forced him to charge membership dues. This expansion allowed them to establish mentorship programs, publish weekly system security reports, use their influence to boycott businesses that exploited haulers, and more. It quickly became an essential institution for independent contractors in Caliban.

Since its members took jobs throughout the empire, it wasn’t long before Rust Society chapters appeared in Oberon and Nul. Personal experience had taught Knocks how hard it was to gather accurate information about these lawless systems and he hoped these new chapters would keep others safe from suffering his own fate. Knocks ensured that all chapters shared information and that membership in one meant membership in them all. Knocks ran the Rust Society until failing health forced him to step down in 2477. He remained a resource to its brain trust and a mentor to younger members until his death two years later. An apocryphal story claims that Knocks’ funeral ended only after all the Rust on Crion was consumed. Though local members associated the organization with its founding member, Knocks ensured that it would survive without him and the Rust Society remained an important regional organization

for decades. That changed in 2541 when Humanity encountered the Tevarin and found itself involved in the first inter-species war.

ENCOURAGED EXPANSION

The First Tevarin War struck fear into the heart of Humanity. Relatively safe systems suddenly become battlegrounds and secure supply lines Tevarin targets. While the military recruited haulers to the Merchant Navy to shore up their supply chain, civilians found themselves lacking basic necessities as many pilots avoided deliveries to Tevarin-threatened systems. Rust Society members stepped in by hauling food to heavily rationed communities, organizing escorts for civilian haulers, and patrolling shipping lanes to ensure their security. These operations so impressed military officials that, after the war, they approached the Rust Society and advocated for its expansion. The society doubled in size over the next five decades. However, it was the Second Tevarin War that truly turned the Rust Society into an empire-wide institution.

The Tevarin’s use of asymmetrical warfare meant that no system was safe. Everyone, military and civilian, were targeted. Rust Society members once again kept the civilian population fed and cared for





during the brutal seven-year war. They were so invaluable that the government poured money into their coffers to aid operations and accelerate their expansion.

POLITICAL PROBLEMS

The Second Tevarin War brought the Rust Society to the attention of the entire empire, with soldiers returning home looking to join or establish chapters in their own systems. The Rust Society waived the initiation and first year's membership fee for veterans and instituted special work and mentorship programs. These initiatives returned millions of vets to the workforce.

As Rust Society membership swelled, chairperson Gordon Disalvo saw an opportunity to benefit independent contractors across the empire. The group spent significant credits to lobby for new laws that pushed tax breaks and less regulation for independent operators. By the late 27th century, Rust Society membership dipped for the first time. Their engagement with political figures forced many to leave due to the association with the oppressive Messer government. Meanwhile, a growing coalition wanted to ban members from taking government contracts, which angered those relying on them for their livelihood.

In their eyes, the Rust Society was about expanding options for independent contractors, not restricting them. This created a huge rift within the organization between pro and anti-Messer contingents.

A riot during the group's 2692 conference forced Rust Society officials into action. They stopped lobbying and instituted a policy that political matters would be handled by local chapters. Empire-wide lobby efforts would only occur if approved by 2/3rds of the chapters. Ever since, the Rust Society has remained a mainly local organization and left policy to the politicians.

UNSUNG HEROES

For over five centuries, the Rust Society has made life better for its members and the UEE. This shifting collective of haulers and salvagers share valuable insider information on systems, such as profitable trading routes and dangerous areas. It allows members to support themselves and provide services to locations ignored by corporations or deemed too dangerous or unprofitable. Members often sport armor, outfits, and gear decked out in red and tan to symbolize their affiliation. Alone, each member is an independent contractor, but together their vast network of knowledge and expertise makes Rust Society members so much more.

SHOW YOUR TRUE COLORS



ROBERTS SPACE INDUSTRIES
RUST SOCIETY VENTURE HELMET

NOW AVAILABLE FOR RUST SOCIETY MEMBERS

