BEYOND TOP SECRET - EYES ONLY

FROM: [Redacted]

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DATE: 12 January 20[Redacted]

BLACK, SEVEN

an espionage RPG

by Stew Wilson


BLACK SEVEN
An espionage RPG
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Zero Point Information: A web resource for Stew Wilson’s games.
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**Introduction**

BLACK SEVEN is an independent espionage organisation that undertakes deniable operations deemed too politically sensitive for governments, corporations, or private individuals.

Stripped of the marketing speak, BLACK SEVEN’s Agents break in to places, sneak around, steal data, beat up guards, hack computers, get into running gun battles, and occasionally assassinate people. Sometimes, they do this for Queen and Country. Sometimes, it’s for God, America, and Mom’s Apple Pie. And sometimes it’s because a nice lady with an indiscriminately European accent handed over a suitcase containing five million in non-sequential fifties as a downpayment.

It’s ten minutes into the future. You live a life of luxury, at least until you get the call from BLACK SEVEN. Then, you go to risk your life. Whether you do it for the money, for the safety of the free world, or to expand the definition of the “free world” is up to you. All Control cares about is that you get the job done.

BLACK SEVEN—the electronic file you’re reading now—is a roleplaying game. Most players take on the role of espionage agents: spies and assassins in the pay of a shadowy network of spies. One person doesn’t. That person is Control: the shadowy voice that hands out jobs, and who presents the facilities that agents must infiltrate.

Play in BLACK SEVEN is divided into phases. In the first phase, players generate their fictional super-spies while Control builds a number of missions that lead towards a final goal. Once that’s done, the characters try to make their way through the facilities, working towards the goal.

Each facility is built in abstract, with a number of guards and a range of features. Rather than using careful positioning and detailed cover, BLACK SEVEN divides each facility into discrete areas, with a number of guards who will react only if the characters are noticed or exposed, and features that the characters need to interact with. It’s up to the people around the table to fill in the details, describing the results of their actions.

To play BLACK SEVEN you need some friends, some paper and pencils or pens (or printouts of the Agent Record and Facility Record), about a dozen six-sided dice, optionally some poker chips, paperclips, or extra dice in another
colour. Agents always roll two dice and add the results together. Control rolls a handful of dice for sentries, and reads each one individually. Occasionally, Control will have to roll a die and halve the result. When doing this, always round up, to generate a result between 1 and 3.

The Example of Play starting on the next page should help clarify how BLACK SEVEN is played, as two Agents make their way through a small facility.
**Example of Play**

Agent Blackbird (ex-soldier turned assassin, played by Beth) and Agent Grimlock (infiltration and explosives expert, played by Penny) must break in to a U.S. Army computing facility and inject a virus into the supercomputer. Control (played by Andy) sets the scene.

**Andy:** Your helicopter stays well out of radar range, so as not to raise any suspicions. That does mean you have to glide to the top of the skyscraper by wingsuit.

**Penny:** Aw! Grim hates gliding.

**Beth:** Well she didn’t have any better ideas.

**Penny:** True. Right. I’m going to disable the door to get us in.

Since this is part of the setup for the facility, rather than an area, Andy doesn’t call for any kind of roll.

**Beth:** While Grim’s busy, Agent Blackbird unzips the bag she’s been carrying. She bolts together the Skyhook launcher, and secures it to the floor with a large caulk gun.

**Penny:** I’m glad Grim doesn’t know how she’s getting out yet. Eh. Blackbird’s got a plan, she won’t like it, but knowing Blackie she’ll live through it.

**Andy:** The Skyhook kit snaps together easily, and you’ve got it securely anchored to the pad. Meanwhile, Grim’s got the door open. It’s got a basic alarm, but nothing too complex. If they expected a rooftop infiltration, people would be shooting at you right now.

**Penny:** We slip inside and head to the data centre.

The data centre is the only area in the facility, and has the Same Team and Third Party features. Andy checks the facility record and notes that it’s got six guards and three researchers. The guards are fair game, but if any of the researchers die then the operation’s a wash—just a pity they’re happy to shoot back. The area also has two static targets, one a safe containing documents about what’s really going on, the other a computer terminal with video of unsavoury experiments.

At this stage, Andy doesn’t need to know where they are. It takes two positioning actions to get to a Static Target, so when Beth or Penny suggest that they’re looking for something, they’ll need to take two actions. At that point, he can add the targets easily.
Andy: Okay. This is the computing centre. A bunch of labs with glass walls ring a central area with a heavily-cooled supercomputer. You’ve made it as far as one of the labs. You can see guards patrolling, close to the computer, and some more scattered through the labs, maybe half a dozen. You’ve also got three lab-coated researchers working at terminals hooked directly to the core. The lights in the labs are off, so you’ve got lots of shadows.

As it’s an area, Penny and Beth take turns. Blackbird and Grimlock get one action per turn, with Control reflecting any changes in the situation after each has acted.

Penny: We probably need to get to one of those terminals to sabotage the cluster.

Beth: Preferably without people shooting us.

Andy: You’ve got one guard stood in the doorway to this lab, facing out. His body language is bored. There’s another door to the other side, through to the other lab. That one’s not guarded. Only a few of the labs have doors to the central area. They don’t know anyone’s here, so Threat is 3.

Penny: I’ll creep over to the guard, keeping a desk between me and him. She rolls two dice, and gets 8. Added to her Sneak of 4, that’s a 12—a success. He doesn’t know I’m there, he’s got his gun slung but his hands are nowhere near it because he’s stretching.

Beth: I’m going to head through to the next lab, I’m looking for some evidence of what’s going on here. I’ll pick the lock. She rolls a 12. Easy!

Andy: Beth, the door swings open quietly. One of the guards patrolling the centre rounds the corner, his torch shines through the window, but he doesn’t notice the open door. The computer in this lab is still powered up, but it’s at the other side of the lab and right next to the window into the core. Penny, your action.

Penny: I grab the guard from behind, pull him back, and apply a sleeper hold. She rolls 7, and adds her Ambush of 5. Twelve. Okay. He struggles a bit, but a swift kick to the back of the knee sends him falling down, and he’s out before he hits the ground. I hide him behind the wall, just in case anyone comes looking.

Beth: I keep low and make my way over to the computer. She rolls 11. The dice love me. I’m flat against the lower part of the lab wall, nobody can see me as I sidle over to the computer.
Andy: Sounds good. Penny, Agent Blackbird can see the next lab. It’s a long clean-room type affair with a door to the central area and a guard just outside the door. He sticks his head in and mutters “Lazy asshole” under his breath when he sees the other guard isn’t there.

Penny: Can I shoot him?

Andy: It’d be a Snipe action, unless you’re talking about walking out bold as brass and taking some hits. Unless you get behind some real cover, you’re also going to be Exposed.

Penny: Shit. Oh well, it only matters when people start shooting. I take the radio from the guard I downed and call in “Power’s out downstairs. Can you get my back.”

Andy: Going for a Scare, or Manipulate?

Penny: I’ll make it a Scare. Gets rid of the guard and opens things up. She rolls 11. He shakes his head, and takes off through the lab we were just in. Fortunately, he’s too pissed off about being called away to notice the crumpled body in the shadows. Penny marks the Exposed checkbox on Blackbird’s sheet.

Beth: I’m going to see if there’s anything incriminating on this computer. I plug my palmtop in. Rather than dictating whether she needs to beat the encryption, Beth rolls Retrieve early in her description to help her frame what happens. The dice come up a pair of twos. Ah, shit. It’s encrypted, so I can clone the drive, but I can’t get any data off it.

Andy: It’s Threat 3, so you might not be Noticed. Plugging in your palmtop made the screen power on and it’s like someone just hit a lightbulb. How do you Infiltrate your way out of that one?

Rolls required by Threat are all part of the same action.

Beth: I yank the monitor’s power cable. That good enough for a Crack roll?

Andy: Sure!

Beth: Rolls a 5. Right. That didn’t work. I guess it was another power cable.

Andy: One of the guards sees the light and gestures to the others. They’re closing in. You’re Noticed and that means the Threat is now 4.

Penny: How many guards are left?

Andy: Four. They’re moving towards a lab where a light’s just come on.

Penny: I comm Grimlock. “Think you can get them off your case?”

Beth: “I could, but it’s a good distraction for you. Plan B.”
**Penny:** I’m already Exposed, but nobody’s noticed me yet. So I’m going to dart through the lab and ninja two of those guards with my knives. She rolls 9, adds her Fight of 6 for 15. Done and done. Two of the guards collapse in pools of blood.

**Andy:** And now you’re Noticed.

**Penny:** It was worth it.

**Beth:** Threat’s not going to increase until after my action, right?

**Andy:** Right, the Threat doesn’t go up until Control’s next action.

**Beth:** Good. While they’re distracted by Agent Blackbird showing up, I’m going to punch out the window and drop a shock trap right next to the feet of the nearest one. She rolls 8 and adds her Trap Trait of 5. Got him!

**Andy:** He takes one step backwards under Blackbird’s assault, and gets a plentiful helping of electricity for his trouble. You’ve got one guard left, but the researchers have Noticed you too and they’ve got sidearms. Threat is now 5. They saw Grimlock first, but Blackbird’s the obvious threat. He rolls one die for the soldier, and three more for the researchers. They come up 4, 5, 6, 6. Sorry, Penny. Blackbird’s Exposed, so she takes four Hits, and that means two conditions.

**Penny:** I’ll use the Reinforced Ceramic Plates that I brought, so that four doesn’t hurt. Three still gives me a Condition, though. I’ll go for Dazed.

**Andy:** Right enough.

**Penny:** I’m going to keep running and go ninja on two of the researchers. Got to remember to be non-lethal. She rolls 12. They crumple like cheap sheets.

**Beth:** I hurl a gas bomb between the other researcher and the guard, hoping to catch both of them. Her dice show 7, just enough to succeed. They collapse as well.

**Andy:** You’re all alone on the floor, so it’s no longer a case for Threat.

**Penny:** Right. Time to inject the virus into this crate.

**Beth:** I’ll handle that. You see if you can find anything else.

Without opposition, Penny doesn’t need to worry about Positioning Actions to get to a static target.

**Andy:** Okay. Penny, make a Sneak roll. Beth, give me a Retrieve roll to inject the virus. This is your goal, so you’ve got a −2 modifier.

**Penny:** Nine, plus a sneak of four is a success.
Andy: Looks like one of the researchers was going to take some of his work home. You find a cache of documents branded “Beyond Top Secret” in a folder taped to the underside of a desk.

Beth: Seven and a Retrieve of six is thirteen. Even with the modifier it’s a success.

Andy: The progress bar for the viral load ticks slowly to the right. Once it’s done, you can yank the flash drive and leave. You’ve beat this Milestone, and it’s time to bug out.

Penny: Say, did Blackbird ever tell Grim how they’re getting out?

Beth: Grimlock’s going to stick a shock trap in her bed if she keeps making him hang in mid-air.
**Inspirations**

BLACK SEVEN takes most of its influence from stealth action games, and games that have learned from the stealth-action genre. Many are part of a series, and unless otherwise noted all games in the series are worth checking out.

**Core Inspiration**
- Deus Ex
- Alpha Protocol
- Thief
- Metal Gear Solid
- Splinter Cell

**Additional Gaming**
- Hitman (Silent Assassin/Blood Money)
- Rainbow Six
- Tenchu: Stealth Assassin
- No One Lives Forever
- System Shock
- Mass Effect
- Assassin’s Creed
Section 1: Agent Briefing

BLACK SEVEN organises agents in isolated cells. Each cell doesn’t know the details of any other cell, and all dealings with the wider organisation come via the anonymous network known as Control. A popular theory among the small part of the intelligence community that knows about BLACK SEVEN is that each cell acts as Control to one other cell; that way, the network resists any attacks on central structures. Control has safe-houses worldwide, and carefully-tamed computer “glitches” that allow cells to send physical evidence for analysis via normal mail companies.

If someone needs BLACK SEVEN, they get in touch with someone who knows someone who might just be able to put them in contact with Control. Control then hands their case to the cell best located to help them. Usually, Control will set up a meeting with the client, though sometimes all communication will be via anonymous email and chat sessions.

A BLACK SEVEN cell is entitled to keep fifty percent of any money it’s given. The remainder goes to Control, who uses it to set up safe-houses and equip cells. The cell doesn’t have to worry about hiring jets, finding a helicopter pilot who will forget their presence, or the current price of bullets. Control supplies all the necessary equipment, leaving agents free to spend their money on sports cars, jewellery, designer fashions, and the latest luxury gadgets—all through a network of fake identities.

An Agent is known to other agents only by his codename. Control wipes all records of the Agent’s past life upon joining BLACK SEVEN. The one identity that most people have is replaced with half a dozen fake names, backed up with passports, birth certificates, and swollen bank accounts. Recompense for walking away from everyone you know and love.

Agent Creation

Creating an Agent is a fun and fast process. Go through the following steps, with an index card or a copy of the Agent Record in front of you.
1. Choose a Codename

Each Agent has a codename that other Agents know her by. She’ll also have a raft of fake identities, but those come and go as needs require. A codename is for life. While Control issues codenames at random, you get to choose yours. You may choose a seemingly disingenuous one, like the assassin called Dandelion, or one that reflects what your character’s good at—the sneak-thief called Ghost. Or maybe you have a cool name in mind and don’t care how it relates to your character, like Grimlock and Blackbird in the example of play.

2. Note your History

What did your Agent do that brought her to the attention of BLACK SEVEN? Why’d they recruit her? Does she have previous experience in the intelligence community, or is she a paragon of her field, brought into the dangerous world of international espionage and left to sink or swim? You don’t need more than a few words, but note down some idea of what your character is about.

Is she “Ex-Special Forces”, “Bitter Old Spy”, “Prodigy Hacker”, “Sneak-Thief”, “Assassin with a heart”, or “Man of a Thousand Faces”?

3. Rate your Traits

Your Agent has three categories of Trait, based on the three things you’ll do most on missions. Pick one category to be primary, one to be secondary, and one to be tertiary. Traits in your primary category start out rated at 5. Secondary traits start out at 4. Tertiary traits start at 3.

4. Rate your Attributes

Each Trait has a linked Attribute: Body, Speed, Mind, Communication. Pick one that’s exceptional, and add one to each Trait linked to that Attribute. Pick one that’s merely average, and subtract one from each linked Trait.

It’s worth pointing out that your Attributes have no effect beyond altering your Traits, so select whatever feels right for the Agent.

5. Equipment

Every Agent starts out with an armoured, camouflaged suit, a secure communicator, and any equipment necessary to use her traits: lock-picks, a palmtop computer, voice scramblers, silencers, and so on. Now, you pick what weapons your Agent uses with Force and Mob Traits, and two pieces of mission-spec equipment. See the Equipment section for more details.
6. Options
If Control has activated one of the optional components (psychic talents or cybernetic enhancements), see that section to apply to your Agent. If you’re running without optional components, you don’t need to do anything.

7. Concept
Optionally, fill out some of the details around your character, expanding on the history noted in Step 2. Or wait until that sort of thing comes up naturally in the game.

Traits

All Agents have Traits that show how good they are at the tricky job of espionage. For ease of organisation, Traits are grouped into categories, then broken down by Attribute. Once you’re familiar with the category/attribute combinations, it’s very easy to fit an Agent’s character sheet on an index card.

Infiltration Traits
Infiltration Traits cover the broad range of getting in, getting the data, and getting out without anyone becoming alert to the situation.

Sneak (Body): The art of identifying hiding places, getting to hiding places, and working out where guards are looking so as to move without being seen.

Crack (Speed): Disabling devices less complex than a computer system, including all forms of lock-picking, safecracking, and rewiring electronic security panels.

Retrieve (Mind): Interfacing with computer systems to turn off cameras, add your bodysuit’s RFID tags to the IFF database, and stealing electronic information.

Manipulate (Communication): Talking to people so they tell you passwords, using stolen passwords, looking like you belong in any given location.

Force Traits
Force Traits cover situations when the shit has hit the fan and you need to take people out without them taking you out.

Fight (Body): Fighting close-up and dirty, including martial arts and the use of knives, swords, clubs, and improvised melee weapons
**Shoot (Speed):** Hitting opponents with any form of gun, from silenced pistols to heavy machine guns and anti-tank rockets.

**Throw (Mind):** Knowing how to throw grenades and traps to catch enemies behind cover, and the best places to deploy micro-turrets.

**Shout (Communication):** Adopting an intimidating or commanding presence, or hacking communications so opponents into walking into each other’s lines of fire.

**Mob Traits**

Mob Traits involve situations where you want to take someone out who hasn’t yet noticed you, and thus isn’t defending himself.

**Ambush (Body):** Mastery of martial arts and melee weapons to effect quick, silent takedowns of any foe, and dragging the bodies to a hidden location.

**Snipe (Speed):** Putting a bullet into people who don’t expect to have a bullet put into them, without anyone knowing where you are.

**Trap (Mind):** Affix grenades and traps with a range of timers, sensors, and remote triggers to shock or kill unsuspecting targets.

**Scare (Communication):** Hack into enemy communications and issue fake orders and requests for help to draw enemies away from the area.

**Actions and Rolls**

When you’re not at risk of discovery—Control hasn’t mentioned that you’re in a Facility, or he hasn’t mentioned that the area has a Threat rating—it doesn’t matter who does what when. If the scene doesn’t have Threat, you also don’t need to take actions or roll dice. Since you’re not at risk of discovery, you can take your time and succeed automatically.

When you’re in a facility, and the scene has a Threat rating, you need to keep track of who does what when. To keep things simple, everyone takes one action at a time, starting with the person to Control’s left, and continuing in a clockwise direction. Control always acts last. Since Control doesn’t use the same actions as others, his “action” is mostly taken up with describing the scene after all the Agents have acted, updating Threat, and potentially attacking Agents.

When you take an action, you state what you want to do (and thus what Trait you’re using), and make a roll. If you succeed, describe what happens. Your
description can be simple as “He’s down”, or linger on the details of the martial arts moves you use to take a guard out. If you don’t feel like describing, sit back and let Control or one of the other players pipe up. If it’s not your action but you have a great idea for describing the results of an action, wait. Only when you know that the player whose Agent is acting doesn’t want to describe the results do you get to chip in.

Naturally, any particularly outlandish descriptions can be vetoed by Control. If you’re all playing in the same genre, that shouldn’t happen too often.

**Rolling Dice**

When you perform an action, you need to roll dice. Sometimes, the Threat dictates that you need to make two rolls to complete one action, but they still count as just one action for timing purposes.

To make a roll, throw two six-sided dice, add them together, and add the related Trait. Apply any modifiers that Control tells you. If your total is 11 or more, you succeeded. If it’s 10 or less, you fail.

**Positioning**

Agents start out each area reasonably well hidden, but out of reach of their objectives. In order to get into position, they need to move. Since Facilities are abstract, rather than having precise maps and keeping track of who is where, Agents make positioning actions.

Positioning actions are any of: Sneak, covering moving behind guards and staying in cover; Crack, covering opening locked doors and crawling through vents, or Manipulate, covering radio distraction and pretending should be where you are.

Failing a positioning action means an agent is Noticed. She also doesn’t get closer to her target.

Normally, an agent must succeed at a positioning action before using a Mob action on an enemy—she observes her target, getting them right where she wants them before taking them out. If she doesn’t take a positioning action before a Mob action, she becomes Exposed. If the agent is already Exposed for any reason, she becomes Noticed.
If she’s moving to a Static Target—a point of interest in the area like a computer, safe, or exposed security terminal—that takes two positioning actions. If she’s rushing, your Agent can get there with one positioning action, but she’s Exposed. If she’s already Exposed, she needs to take the two actions; an agent can’t risk sentries spotting her when she’s about to spend a few vital seconds with her back to the world.

**Status**

In the course of breaking and entering high-security facilities, Agents may become Exposed or Noticed. The Agent Record has a section to mark which one applies at the moment. Either tick the applicable status (in pencil, as you’ll be changing a lot), or stick a paperclip on each status as and when it applies.

**Exposed**

An Exposed Agent hasn’t been seen by sentries or enemy units, but she’s not in or near cover. If your Agent is Exposed, sentries who shoot at her have an easier time scoring Hits.

**Noticed**

A Noticed Agent is still in or near cover, but has drawn the attention of enemies. She can’t use Mob actions. When Threat hits 5, any Noticed agent can be shot at—though Control decides who takes the priority of incoming fire.

**Removing Status**

If an Agent is Exposed or Noticed, she can remove that status by using a positioning action to get the hell back to cover. This action does not get you closer to any goal but it does get rid of one status; if you’re both Exposed and Noticed, you lose Exposed first.

**Interacting**

The time comes when sneaking around facilities and avoiding guards isn’t going to get you any further to completing your mission.

**Fighting**

Agents can take out sentries and guards in two ways:
As long as an Agent’s not Noticed, she can Mob a guard at any point, using any Mob Trait. If you succeed, she takes the guard out. If you fail, she takes the guard out but she’s Noticed.

At any time, an Agent can use a Force action to start killing people without regard for stealth. If she wasn’t already, she becomes Noticed. If you succeed, she takes out two guards. If you fail, she takes one out. Threat becomes 5 at the start of Control’s next action.

When an Agent takes an opponent out via non-lethal attacks, that opponent doesn’t fall over until the end of Control’s next action—giving them enough time to squeeze off one more shot if the Threat is 5.

When Threat hits 5, Agents start taking fire. Control rolls one die per guard, and decides who each is shooting at. Each die that shows 5 or above scores a Hit. If an Agent is Exposed, each die that shows a 4 or above scores a Hit.

**Hits**

When an Agent takes her second, fourth, and sixth Hit, she gains a Condition: Battered (-2 Body), Wrenched (-2 Speed), Dazed (-2 Mind), Scarred (-2 Communication). You can’t pick the same Condition twice. When you recover your Hits, you lose Conditions, newest first. At the end of each area, an agent recovers one Hit.

When she takes her eighth Hit, an Agent is Taken Out. If the Agents succeed at their Milestone, she’s fighting fit at the start of the next facility. If not, they must rescue her during the next facility. If the Agents are running a Goal mission, and fail the Goal, anyone who’s been Taken Out is dead.

**Static Targets**

Once an Agent’s at a Static Target, Control will tell you which kind of action she needs to use to overcome it. In most cases, it’s Retrieve or Crack, but could be any Trait depending on the nature of the target. This takes an action. If you succeed, she opens the lock, cracks the encryption, or otherwise wins out. If you fail, she becomes Noticed.

If you can explain how your Agent uses another Trait to beat a Static Target and Control agrees that it’s possible (using Snipe to shoot a lock off, or Trap to blow open a door, or Crack to rip the hard disk right out of a computer), make a roll using that Trait as your action. If you succeed, you succeed as normal. If you fail, it all goes wrong. Threat becomes 5.
Some Static Targets represent the reason that the Agents were employed in the first place. These are Milestone Targets. Before an Agent can overcome the Milestone Target, her team must have taken out half the guards present (round up), and have attempted at least one Static Target per area. Until that point, she’s not well-informed enough nor in a strong enough position to spend time on her mission’s main aim.

**Equipment**

Each Agent has the basic kit necessary to use all of her Traits: lockpicks, ranged and close-combat weapons, a voice scrambler, and so on. She also has an armoured, camouflaged bodysuit, and a secure communicator that works off subvocalisation—she can communicate with other Agents without guards hearing her.

For each Force or Mob Trait, choose whether your Agent deals Lethal or Non-Lethal damage. She carries appropriate weaponry to deal that damage. She also has a secondary weapon that deals the other type of damage, but only for her highest Force Trait. See the table below for examples, or come up with your own.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Trait</th>
<th>Non-Lethal</th>
<th>Lethal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fight/Ambush</td>
<td>Martial Arts/Baton</td>
<td>Sword/Tiger Claws</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shoot/Snipe</td>
<td>Tranq Pistol/Taser Rounds</td>
<td>SMG/Shotgun</td>
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<tr>
<td>Throw/Trap</td>
<td>Shock Trap/Gas Grenade</td>
<td>HiEx Charge/Frag Grenade</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shout/Scare</td>
<td>Scrambler/Noisemaker</td>
<td>Radio Hammer/Turret Hack</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Each Agent is assigned two items of mission-specific equipment from the following list. Each item can be used once per area. Each action can only benefit from one piece of equipment: you can’t use a Custom Rifle to make a Snipe action, then pull out the Sound Projector when you fail.

**Adaptive Camouflage:** Blends in directly with what’s behind the Agent. Treat one failed Sneak roll as a success.

**Command Frequency:** Broadcasts on the opponents’ command channel. As long as nobody’s currently Exposed and you aren’t Noticed, you can reduce Threat from 5 to 4 and remove any Noticed trait on your team.
**Custom Rifle:** Perfect alignment, flash suppressor, and multi-spectrum sights. You don't need to get into position before making a Snipe roll.

**Emergency Aid Kit:** Powerful analgesics and pressure-patches over most areas, worn under the Agent’s bodysuit. Takes one action to use, and removes 3 hits from yourself.

**Enemy Uniform:** Opponents think the character is one of their own. Treat one failed Manipulate roll as a success.

**Lock Gun:** Automatic device for breaching mechanical and electronic locks. Treat one failed Crack roll as a success.

**Reinforced Ceramic Plates:** Opponents subtract one from their rolls to hurt you (hits are only caused on a 6, or 5+ if Exposed). Choose whether to use it after seeing the enemy’s roll.

**Sound Projector:** Generates sound far away from the character. You aren't noticed with a failed Mob roll.
Section 2: Control Briefing

Control is the voice in the earpiece, the vast network that supplies Agents with their safe-houses and missions in exchange for money and data. As Control, it’s up to you to create a mission using the steps outlined in this section, and to adjudicate as the agents try to succeed.

While your guards, thugs, sentries, and other forces will try to kill the Agents, you’re not out to hurt them. You’re out to help them have fun engaging with a challenging game of espionage action.

Missions

Before anyone starts creating characters, quickly discuss what kind of flavour you want the game to have. Is it set the day after tomorrow, with cutting-edge (but existing) technology? Is it ten years from now, with concurrent advances in high-tech? Is the world much like that on the news, but with the presence of high-tech espionage agencies, or is it moving towards a dystopia as the divide between have and have-nots splits into an insurmountable barrier?

Just what feats do you see the Agents getting up to as part of their job? The Example of Play earlier sets out the default style, with Agents dropped from a helicopter only to wing-suit onto the roof of a skyscraper, and set up a Skyhook for an extraction flight. If you want to turn up the grit and tone down the extreme actions, that’s possible—but everyone needs to be on the same page so that the style of description doesn’t get too mixed up. Likewise, if you want to indulge every possible ludicrous excess seen the James Bond movies, make sure everyone agrees.

Setting out your terms of reference like that means that everyone’s at the same level. It also means that nobody should be surprised if you activate any Options.

Starting Out

BLACK SEVEN employs Agents to undertake missions. These are the jobs handed down by corporate paymaster, shadowy governmental agency, or someone who heard about what you do and happens to have a lot of liquid currency to hand. This person has asked Control to put them in touch with a cell
of BLACK SEVEN agents, on the understanding that either the Agents will do the job or die trying.

Gathering information and taking steps to achieve the Goal is what makes a mission. While the players come up with Agents, you come up with a list of Milestones that the contact—via Control—will feed the Agents as being essential to achieving the goal. The steps in the Starting Out section take you through building a mission, from choosing an end Goal to building the Facilities and Static Targets that Agents must interact with if they’re to save the free world and get paid.

**Milestone Creation**

When creating a mission, the first thing to do is set the Goal: what one thing must the Agents do in order to complete the job? Once you’ve set the Goal, you can set up the Milestones that characters need to achieve. Each Milestone is a concrete thing that the Agents attempt to bring them closer to their goal. Generally, you should create one Milestone per Agent, the last of which has the Agents succeeding or failing in their overall mission. Failing a Milestone doesn’t stop the Agents getting to their goal, but does make the next Milestone harder.

Each Milestone has a *method* and an *objective*. Do the Agents need to Kidnap the Scientist, Sabotage the Military Computer, or Trace the Warlord? Methods include:

- **Extract**
  This method involves removing the objective from a hostile facility, whether it wants to go or not. *Alternate Names: Kidnap, Recover, Steal*

- **Sabotage**
  Enter a hostile facility and modify or destroy something there, then get out. *Alternate Names: Assassinate, Infect, Redirect*

- **Trace**
  Gain information about the objective without arousing suspicion. It’s very rare for a final Goal to be a Trace objective. *Alternate Names: Hack, Locate, Shadow*

Objectives are people, items, or information:

- **People**
  Examples: Government Official, Mob Boss, Scientist, Specialist, Diplomat, Informant
Items
Examples: Weapons Stockpile, Communications Gear, Military Vehicles, Prototype Technology, Jewels, Experimental Bioweapon

Information
Examples: Encryption Keys, Personal Dossier, Financial Data, Troop Movements, Blueprints, Audio Recordings

If you can’t come up with anything, you can randomly generate a Milestone. Roll a die and halve it to select a method, then do so again to select an objective. Then roll a die and pick that entry from the list of example objectives. If you do that once per Agent, you’ll come up with a random mission that can challenge the Agents.

Take a large index card or Facility Record sheet. Write down the method and the objective. At this point, you should note which of the Milestones is the final Goal.

For each Milestone, you need to create a setting. For Extract and Sabotage Milestones, this is the Facility. For Locate Milestones, this is the area that the Agents will be in. Consider: what sort of area would provide an interesting backdrop to the action? Is it a skyscraper, a mansion, a mountain retreat, a desert proving ground, an airfield, a suburb, a dense urban area, a shanty-town, a dense cave system? If you want to go bigger, your background could be the Eiffel Tower or Liberty Island. Note down whatever you choose. The setting will help you describe how the Agents get to and from the Milestone, as well as giving you all a chance to add incidental details.

Take four poker chips per Agent. Add at least one chip to each Milestone. Trace Milestones must have two chips on them; the others can have as many or as few as you care to. The more chips are on each Milestone, the harder that Milestone will be.

Trace Objectives

Trace Objectives happen on the streets, with a Threat of 1-2. Think of them as the scenes in the source material where our protagonists meet informants, search through public records, or get tangled up in bar fights. Mostly the Agents will talk to third parties and search through records. Decide on the basic setup: the location and the objective, and note those down.
The Agents will probably need to find some restricted records, get into secure areas, or follow people without being seen. Roll for the number of people present in the scene; that’s the number who’ll respond if the Agents get violent. Twice in the scene, the Agents should have to do something that fits their role as spies—preferably different actions that help drive the scene towards its conclusion. Try to nudge the action towards these breakpoints if the Agents are floundering.

If the Agents succeed on the first roll, the Threat remains at 1, else it jumps to 2. If the Agents succeed at the second roll, they succeed at the Milestone. As they’re meant to be a change of pace, Trace Objectives need no more preparation on your part.

Agents start Trace objectives both Noticed and Exposed; it takes a Positioning Action to change that. Agents can take actions that aren’t needed to complete the objective, and if they come up with an interesting plan, let them get the same information as they would through other means.

Trace Objectives can have additional Features that come into play if the Agents failed the previous Milestone, but they’re normally limited to starting the scene at Threat 2.

**Facility Creation**

Extraction and Sabotage both take place in facilities with a Threat range of 3-5. A token represents an area of the facility where the Agents will face guards and encounter Static Targets. Two tokens could be a loading dock and a warehouse. Three tokens represent the narrow climb down a mountainside, a training camp, and an underground prison, or the two floors and the grounds of a Mob-Baron’s mansion.

As Control, you can discard a token in order to add a feature to one of the areas of that Facility. Those three tokens become one warehouse, but with a third-party launching an attack, and a time limit before the police show up. Note down a quick description of each area and its features on the Facility Record.

Each area of these Facilities starts at Threat 3. In order for the Agents to progress, they have to try to beat at least one of the Static Targets, and each must then make two positioning actions to move through to the next area.
Each area has a number of opponents, usually in the form of sentries. For each area, roll one die and add the number of Agents: that’s how many sentries are present. Once the characters have completed three Milestones, add another die of sentries. After six Milestones, add another extra die, and so on. When a Feature calls for the number on the die to be something other than sentries, only count the first die.

Features marked with an asterisk can benefit the Agents. The area will have one Static Target that can change the effects with the correct action. This is in place of one of the normal Static Targets.

Features

Barracks: An additional die of opponents show up as soon as Threat hits 5.

*Camera Network: Agents need to make twice as many positioning actions as normal. A successful Retrieve roll lets the characters tap the feeds, adding +2 to each Agent’s next Mob action.

*Drones: When rolling for opponents, the number on the die indicates the number of drones. Drones attack Noticed Agents when Threat is 4. A successful Crack roll turns the drones into Friendlies.

Friendlies: The area contains one die of Friendlies, guards who are on the same side as the Agents. When Threat hits 5, roll a die for each Friendly. On a 5+, they take out a guard. On a 1, they’re taken out. Repeat each round.

Gang Fight: The area contains one die of people who are not sentries. They attack Noticed Agents like sentries. If no Agents are Noticed, the gang attacks like Friendlies.

Heavy Patrols: Roll an extra die for opponents at the start of the area.

Indoctrination: All Social Actions have a -2 modifier to the roll. Using Manipulate as a positioning action prior to a Mob action means an agent is not Noticed if the Mob action fails.

Mechanised: The sentries are individual weak spots on an armoured vehicle. Each Agent must make a positioning action before each Shoot or Snipe action to grab a one-shot weapon big enough to do real damage. Throw and Trap actions work as normal. Fight and Ambush have no effect.

Superior Equipment: One skill is rolled at -2. Specify the equipment used by the opponents in question—thermal goggles for Sneak, computerised locks for Hack, body armour for Fight, or secured communications for Scare.
**The Same Team:** Opponents work for the same organisation/government as the players. Using a Lethal attack automatically loses the Milestone. Can be combined with Third Party to target one set of people.

**Third Party:** Each area contains one additional die of people who are not sentries. They attack like opponents when they notice players.

**Time Limit:** Roll a die. That many opponents show up on the sixth Control Action. A successful Manipulate action stops the alarm from sounding.

**Turrets:** When rolling for opponents, the number on the die indicates the number of turrets. Turrets add one to the die when rolling to cause Hits, and attack Noticed Agents when Threat is 4. A successful Crack roll turns the turrets into Friendlies.

**Wired to Blow:** The area’s littered with traps and explosives. Each failed positioning action sets one off, dealing 3 Hits. A successful Crack roll alters the fuses, taking out half of the remaining opponents (round up) as soon as the Threat hits 5.

Where features specify a random quantity of extra guards, turrets, and the like, generate them at the same time as rolling for the number of guards: when creating the Facility.

When creating a Facility, pick one Feature to apply to one area of the Facility. This is the enemy’s response to the Agents screwing up the previous Milestone and taking time to deploy sentry drones, or wire cars to explode.

**Static Targets**

Each area has two Static Targets. These are specific things that the Agents can interact with: computer terminals, safes, circuit bypass boards, alarm control units, turret controls, camera systems, guard posts, and so on.

If any of the Features in the area has an asterisk by their name, the area’s Static Targets include those appropriate for the Features. The area will always have at least one Static Target that isn’t involved with the area’s Features.

Unless already noted from a Feature, each static target has a specific action required to beat it, usually Retrieve, Manipulate, or Crack. Note which one when you create it, alongside the description. Try to include a range of Traits, rather than forcing the same Trait for each Static Target. That way, more of the Agents
stand a decent chance of interacting with them. Some Static Targets, such as people that the Agents must kidnap or assassinate, will require Mob or even Force actions to beat.

While many Static Targets require Infiltration actions, it’s quite feasible for Targets to call for Mob actions instead. Kidnapping a scientist requires a successful Ambush roll. Rigging an arms stockpile to blow is a successful Trap roll. Bringing down the circling helicopter is a successful Snipe roll—in the latter case, one of the positioning actions would have involved finding a weapon big enough to blow the helicopter. Despite interacting with Static Targets and thus needing two positioning actions to get into place, these still count as mob actions vis-à-vis modifiers from Threat.

The final area of each facility has one additional Static Target that represents the Milestone: this is the kidnapped scientist, the mob boss, or the secret computer records. The Agents need to take out half of the guards present (round up, and don’t include third party groups), and attempt to beat one Static Target per area of the facility before they can try to beat the Milestone Target. Whatever action is required to interact with it happens at a −2 modifier. If the characters succeed, they’ve succeeded at the Milestone.

If an Agent was taken out in the previous Facility, the first area will include one extra Static Target: the kidnapped Agent. One of the sentries is guarding the kidnapped Agent (and unless Threat hits 5, he’s not involved in patrols). Once that sentry is down, the kidnapped Agent can recover his equipment and be ready to take an action after Control’s next action.

In Play

The best part of being Control is taking the role of everyone who populates the world, and reacting to the Agent’s schemes. Since the Agents are the ones who get to take Actions, you’re forced into a reactive role. That fits with the genre—the Agents act, and people around them are forced onto the back foot.

Dealing with Agents
When the Agents start each Milestone, you need to introduce them to the area. Let them enter in a suitably dramatic fashion, and perform any prep that they feel is appropriate. It shouldn’t take long before the Agents enter an area.

Be sure to let them know when that happens. That’s a sign that they need to start acting in order and keeping track of their actions. When they get in, describe the general area, tell them roughly how many guards are in the area, and if there’s a prominent Static Target. Also describe any Features of the area.

Some Agents will take positioning actions, or just try Mob actions on a guard. Others will imply that they’re looking for a Static Target; feel free to describe it as being wherever makes sense. Likewise, if one of the Agents looks for a Static Target—say to turn off the cameras, or take over the turrets—let them know where it is, and what sort of positioning actions will be best.

When describing what actions the Agents will need to take, play to their strengths. If an Agent’s highest Infiltration Trait is Manipulation, let them tap into the enemy radio to distract the patrols so she can walk right up to her target. If she’s a Sneaky type, provide plenty of shadows and cover. Players want a chance for their Agents to show off, so give it to them.

Remember: As Control, you’re not playing against the players. You’re adjudicating what happens. You don’t want them to fail; you just don’t want them to have it too easy.

Once all the sentries are down, the Agents can hit Static Targets at their leisure. They no longer have to make positioning actions. Just let the players know which actions their Agents will need to make, and let them know of the results.

**Threat**

Each area has a Threat rating which affects what actions are available.

1: The characters are in public, or another place where they're reflexively suspicious but not assuming enemy action. Mob actions raise Threat to 2 on a failure. Force actions increase Threat to 5.

2: Still in public but people are suspicious and the wrong thing can set them off. Force actions increase Threat to 5. A character who is Noticed gets -2 on all
actions due to general suspicion. Successful Manipulate actions can lower Threat to 1.

3: The characters are in a hostile area and if found shit will happen. If a character would become Noticed, she can make an immediate Infiltration roll. If she succeeds, she’s not Noticed. If characters become Noticed, Threat goes to 4. If the characters use Force, Threat goes to 5.

4: The characters are in a hostile area, and people know that they're around somewhere. Mob actions are at −2. If anyone makes a Force action, or is Noticed at the beginning and end of their action, Threat goes to 5. If no Agents are Exposed or Noticed, a successful Infiltration action can reduce Threat to 3.

5: The characters are in a hostile area and the alarms are sounding. Infiltration rolls have a −2 modifier. To use a Mob action, the character must first succeed at a related Infiltration action. Threat can only be lowered by taking out anyone present (at which point Threat becomes 4).

**Fights**

When Threat hits 5, your sentries start shooting at any Agents who are Noticed. If they’ve got a choice, they aim at Agents who are Noticed and Exposed, then just Noticed. If they Take Out everyone who is Noticed, they turn fire on any Exposed Agents. If any Agent is neither Exposed nor Noticed, sentries can’t target them.

To repeat from the Fighting section in the Agent Briefing: Control rolls one die per guard, and decides who each is shooting at. Each die that shows 5 or above scores a Hit. If an Agent is Exposed, each die that shows a 4 or above scores a Hit.

If your guards are shooting at more than one Agent, use different colours of dice for each target—red dice for the guards shooting at Grimlock, white dice for those shooting at Blackbird.

**Results**

If the Agents succeeded at the Milestone Target, they’re so much closer to their goal. At the end of each Facility, check how many Static Targets the characters succeeded at. Freeing a captured Agent counts as a success even though it doesn’t require an action. If the Agents have missed any Static Targets, those count as failures. Don’t count the Milestone Target.
With less than half of the Static Targets succeeded, the operation was a rush-job and the Agents took operational losses. The Agents must give up one item of Equipment each when they hit the next Facility.

With over three quarters of the Static Targets, they’ve got lots of information available. Each Agent can bring one extra item of equipment to the next facility.

If the Agents fail a Milestone, add a Feature to the next facility. If the Agents are having no luck, consider adding Friendlies or features that the Agents can subvert.

Whatever the result, Agents can remove all Hits and Conditions at the end of a Facility.

After a Goal Facility, the results are a bit different. If the Agents succeeded, each one can add +1 to a Trait. Each Trait can be increased once. Once an Agent’s increased all of her traits, she doesn’t gain any more benefit from completing missions. A player may consider making a new Agent and holding the old one in reserve for particularly important missions.

If the Agents fail a Goal Facility, enemy forces kill anyone who is Taken Out. The remaining Agents make it out, but none of the Agents can increase any Traits. They get back to the safe-house, lick their wounds, meet any new Agents, and drown their sorrows through whatever vices come to mind.
Section 3: Options

BLACK SEVEN is, at base, grounded in the real world. Options allow you to branch out into other areas. Cybernetics and Psionics offer Agents who are that little bit more than human. The Shifting Control Option, on the other hand, presents an easy way to let everyone have an Agent, and design a mission for Agents to tackle. It even includes a way to pick a winner out of the group.

If you’re activating both the Cybernetics and Psionics Options, each player can choose which one his Agent benefits from.

Cybernetics

If you look two weeks from tomorrow instead of ten minutes, BLACK SEVEN can take on a look closer to that of Deus Ex and Metal Gear Solid. Agents aren’t just the peak of the espionage community, they’re enhanced with cybernetic additions—robotic limbs cast from polymer and plastic, sheathed beneath a thin sheen of fake skin or a pair of mirror-shades.

Activating the Cybernetics Option allows each Agent to select two Cybernetic Modifications when created. Each Modification enhances a specific Trait. When the Agent fails a roll using that Trait, she can spend a point of Power to immediately re-roll the dice. The results of the second roll stand.

Each Agent starts with three points of Power. A point of Power must be spent in order to use one implant. Power returns to full at the end of each facility. After succeeding at a Goal, an Agent can increase his Power by two instead of increasing a Trait.

Examples: Sound-Deadening Tread (Sneak), Implanted Knives (Ambush), Look-to-Kill (Snipe), Terahertz Radar (Crack), Implanted Computer (Retrieve), Chameleon Mesh (Scare), Cranial Van-Eck Rig (Shout), Wired Reflexes (Fight), Implanted Utility Launcher (Throw), EMP Drone (Trap), Voice Projector (Shout), Smartgun Link (Shoot).

Cybernetic enhancements don’t just affect the Agents. Control has some new Features that he can use to enhance his Facilities.

Bigger Guns: Sentries have bleeding-edge enhancements and weapons. When shooting at the Agents, each die that shows a 6 deals two Hits, rather than one.
**Biomagnetic Feedback Loop**: Agents who spend a point of Power also take a Hit.

**Full Borg**: Each “sentry” is one weak-point of a psychotic total conversion cyborg. When shooting at the agents, subtract one die for each *two* sentries taken out. The ‘borg only falls when all of the sentries are taken out.

**Ghost in the Machine**: The sentries are not living creatures, instead being defensive robots controlled by an upload or AI. Non-lethal attacks have no effect, and Mob actions suffer a −2 modifier.

**Security by Chrome™**: The sentries have sub-dermal armour and wired reflexes. Roll one die for each sentry who is taken out. On a 6, the sentry is fine.

**Psionics**

Both the CIA and the KGB had projects trying to harness the powers of the mind through remote viewing, mind-reading, and other psychic abilities. If anyone had succeeded, you can bet that BLACK SEVEN would have recruited some psychic agents—and “acquired” the research necessary to make more. Psychic powers move an agent right up to the bleeding edge.

Activating the Psionics Option allows each Agent to select a single Psi Power when created. Psi Powers allow an Agent to use an action that nobody else can. Using powers causes mental trauma; using a power causes the Agent to take a Hit.

**Cyberkinesis**: The Agent can jack in to electronic systems. Use this power in place of a Retrieve action. That action automatically succeeds.

**ESP**: The Agent ducks into cover at just the right second. Use this power as soon as your Agent is Noticed. As long as the Threat is not 5, you can immediately remove the Noticed state.

**Illusions**: The Agent can make the area seem more secure than it actually is. Use this power when Threat is 4 or 5. The Threat is immediately reduced to 3.

**Mindjack**: The Agent can control opponents’ minds. Use this power after successfully using an Ambush action. The enemy isn’t taken out; instead he becomes a Friendly (per the Feature). Once the area is clear, the enemy is left unconscious.
**Psychic Healing:** The Agent can knit flesh and mend bone. Use a positioning action to get next to another Agent, then use this power on your next action. The other Agent can remove up to four Hits and any Conditions.

**Pyrokinesis:** The Agent can start fires by concentrating. Use this power in place of a Snipe action. That action automatically succeeds.

**Remote Viewing:** The Agent can see the whole area from a number of perspectives. Use this power in place of a positioning action. That action automatically succeeds.

**Telekinesis:** The Agent can move small objects, like safety catches. Use this power when you’re going to be targeted by opponents. You don’t take any damage, beyond the Hit to activate this power.

**Telepathy:** The Agent can read the minds of opponents, and knows what they expect. Use this power in place of a Scare action. That action automatically succeeds.

The option of psychic spies opens up a whole realm of opportunity for Control to add new Features to an area.

**Mastermind:** The brain behind this facility can create illusions out of thin air. When a sentry is taken out, Control can declare it to be an illusion. The sentry is fine and another Agent takes one Hit. This ability can be used once, plus once more when Threat hits 5.

**Psi Dampeners:** Psionic abilities cost two Hits to use, rather than one.

**Puppetry:** The brain behind this facility takes over the minds of his men, using their bodies as his own. One time only, Control can re-roll all of the dice when sentries shoot at a character. The second roll counts, even if worse than the first. The dice so affected only include human opponents, not drones, turrets, or third parties.

**Shifting Control**

This Option allows everyone to take a turn as Control, while still getting to run their Agents through facilities. As with every Option, make sure that everyone’s aware that it’s in use before play begins.

Everyone present creates an Agent at the start. Once they’re done, everyone then creates mission—stepping through the stages in the Control Briefing to
create facilities, areas, and Static Targets. Once everyone playing has both an Agent and a mission, everyone agrees on who is to be Control first. That person’s Agent sits out the mission, while he acts as Control and runs the other Agents through his mission. Once the Agents complete the Goal, the job of Control moves one person to the left. Now that player’s Agent sits out, and she must be Control. Make a note of the order people are sitting, going clockwise from the first Control; the role of Control then moves along the list in order.

**Competition**

As an option on top of an option, you can turn being Control into a competition. Make a note of how many Static Targets the Agents complete in each Goal Mission, next to Control’s name. Also note down whether the Agents completed the Goal.

The winning Control is the person for whom the Agents succeeded at the least number of Static Targets, but completed the Goal.
Section 4: Operation: GREY UNICORN

Operation: GREY UNICORN is an introductory mission for BLACK SEVEN. It’s a complete mission, with pre-built facilities and four starting Agents suitable for getting a feel for the game, or running a demo at conventions. In addition to the area descriptions, it’s got my notes from creating the mission, and a full set of filled out record sheets for the facility and the Agents involved.

Facility Creation Example

Operation: GREY UNICORN is an introduction to BLACK SEVEN. The four pre-generated Agents each have their areas of expertise, and they’ve got to destroy a stockpile of stolen weapons.

First thing’s first: Milestones. I’m creating Operation: GREY UNICORN for four players, so I print off four copies of the Facility Record sheet. I have an idea in mind, something about high-tech weapons ending up in the hands of far-right extremists in the US mainland, but I’ll develop that as I go along. First off, I need to create the Milestones.

- The company that “lost” the weapons isn’t the one that hires BLACK SEVEN to retrieve them. The first thing the Agents have to do is find out where these weapons have gone, and that means an Extract/Shipment Info Milestone.
- That gets them a town and a contact name. The Agents then have to go see what they can find at a bar used by the extremist group.
- If they’re clued in (or happy to punch people), the Agents find out that not only do the terrorists have a stockpile of the weapons, they’re reverse-engineering a handful in an otherwise anonymous industrial unit. Destroy/Factory.
- Finally, the Agents track the terrorists to the abandoned shipyard they’re using as a base, where they can tag the weapons stockpile for destruction. Sabotage/Weapons Stockpile.

I write the locations and method/objective pairs on each sheet, and reach for a stack of poker chips. Four Agents means sixteen chips.

The Trace Objective costs me two chips. I splash three on the Skyscraper, five on the Industrial Park, and six on the Shipyard.

Area 2
Rather than taking things in order, I look first at the Trace objective in the bar. In effect, it has one area: the bar. I roll a die in case things get violent: five. Plus the number of Agents, that makes nine people who will respond if the Agents break out the guns. The Agents first need to make a Manipulate action so it looks like they share the terrorists’ sympathies. After that, they know who to talk to: a non-lethal Ambush action will give them plenty of time to ask questions.

If the Agents took their time getting to the town because they failed the first Milestone, the terrorist group will stir up suspicion against newcomers, especially in their hangouts. That means the scene starts at Threat 2.

**Area 1**

I move back to the first Facility, in the skyscraper. Since the company is under enhanced scrutiny, they’re also using heavy-duty camera networks: a chip for the Camera Network feature. Killing the guards would be a really bad idea, as they’re normal corporate security. I spend a chip for The Same Team. The only area I’m interested in is the offices where the Agents can find the shipping details for the sale, and it’s got five guards.

I know that one of the Static Targets will be the camera controls, accessible with a Retrieve action. The other is an unlocked computer running logged in to the accounting software, again accessible with a Retrieve roll. The Static Target representing the Facility’s goal is a printout of the shipping manifest, stored in a safe below the manager’s desk. This one calls for a Crack roll to open. The shipping manifest points to a large town called Burnside, which will be the setting for all the other Facilities.

**Area 3**

On to the weapons factory. Five chips would mean five areas. I have an idea about the terrorist group having bought out all the vacant units, and having guards throughout the site. The Agents would thus have to go through the outside before they could take on the factory. That’s two areas in my mind. For the parking lot and outside area, I want more guards to pour in as soon as things get hairy: I drop a chip for Barracks, and the die for the additional sentries comes up 5.

The Static Targets in this area include one of the trucks, which has a false panel hiding a large stash of drugs, and a partial blueprint for GREY UNICORN, stashed in the panniers of a motorcycle with the Pure Fist logo.
If the Agents screwed up the second Milestone, the terrorists know that someone’s coming. The first area gets the Wired to Blow Feature for free (and the control panel’s added as an extra Static Target).

Inside the factory, I blow chips for the Indoctrination Feature—I figure that the only people working on reverse-engineering will be very highly trusted. They’ve also got an additional patrol going around all the buildings, for the Time Limit Feature. The die there only shows 2. Oh well. I know that one of the Static Targets has to be the communication panel for Time Limit, the other is another set of notes on GREY UNICORN. Finally, the Agents will need to take out the equipment itself.

**Area 4**

With six chips left for the Shipyard, it’s time to work out what happens there. I keep three chips back for areas. It’s worth noting that each one gets two dice of sentries rather than one, as this is our fourth Milestone.

Two chips buy the Shipyard Entrance the Time Limit and Gang Fight Features. I combine the two: on the sixth Control action, a rival gang who has heard about Pure Fist’s grab launches a raid to get the weapons for themselves. Two dice give me nine sentries, and another die tells me that there’s four members of the other gang. A tame guard in one of the security offices can tell the Agents more details on Pure Fist’s use of the shipyard, and stashed just inside the gate in case of an invasion is a large cache of automatic weapons.

I don’t spend any chips on the next area, a maze of storage containers. Two dice give me 10 guards in total. One of the storage crates was shipped out of Iraq after the first Gulf War, but the paperwork was lost. It’s got a stash of artefacts worth several million dollars inside. The security’s cheap—just a couple of webcams hooked up to a laptop, and hacking that gives a wealth of files on Pure Fist. If the Agents failed the earlier Milestone, this area has an additional 2 Turrets (per the Feature).

The final area is the dockside where Pure Fist members are loading the GREY UNICORN weapons onto ships. I spend the last chip on Heavy Patrols, which gives me 12 sentries patrolling. Paperwork left lying around where anyone could make a Sneak action to grab it shows the cover for each shipment, and contact details for the Pure Fist couriers who would pick it up. Security’s via hard-wired
cameras, usable with a Crack action to record what’s going on. Finally, the Weapon Cache itself is the final Milestone.

**Background**

Dacre-Morgan manufactures cutting-edge military technology, which it then sells around the world to America’s allies. The latest development is codenamed GREY UNICORN, and is an easy-to-reproduce weapons system that gives any SUV or pickup truck the firepower of a main battle tank. The system mounts a 60mm cannon fitted with ultra-high-tech recoil compensators, so firing one from a civilian vehicle won’t cause it to flip. Each unit can mount one optional extra: currently, the choice is for a pair of .50 calibre machine guns, a flamethrower, or an anti-aircraft missile rack.

The weapons aren’t the important thing: the fittings and materials are. Four dozen of these units can be mounted to large cars or trucks in war-torn areas, suddenly giving one side a massive increase in firepower. Enhancing civilian vehicles makes mechanised fire support a valid tactic in urban areas. And the easy construction offers a parallel to the easy-to-replace base platform. At least, that’s what the Powerpoint slides suggest.

Dacre-Morgan doesn’t want to admit it, but a shipment of prototype weapons has gone missing. It’s reported this as a theft, but the records show the truth: Stel Pulman, a financial analyst working on the costings of GREY UNICORN, is also a member of the far-right extremist group Pure Fist, an alignment that he’s kept quiet from his employer for the past ten years. He’s arranged sale of fifteen units of GREY UNICORN to fellow members of Pure Fist in Burnside. Dacre-Morgan has reported it as theft to the proper authorities, but are dragging their heels in complying with the law, because they don’t want the FBI trawling through their inventory and discovering just how many of the guns used to shoot and kill American soldiers in the Middle East and Africa have come from Dacre-Morgan factories.

Jenna Carlton, working on the FBI investigation, knows that something’s wrong. Six hours ago, she opened a discretionary line of credit and got in touch with BLACK SEVEN, telling Control everything she knows.
Extract Sales Data

Dacre-Morgan has offices in pretty much every major urban area in the United States. If you want to find out what happened to some of their prototype weapons, their Manhattan HQ is the place to look—at least, that’s where the Fed who called Control suggested BLACK SEVEN should start.

The finance department is on the seventeenth floor. How the Agents get in is up to them, though walking in in broad daylight is a professionally bad idea. The Agents are on a fishing expedition, hoping to find something useful.

The area is secured with motion-linked cameras, and the security guards are ex-police with orders to shoot anyone in the building. They’re packing nine-millimetre Glocks and radio headsets, but aren’t prepared for a real fight.

Camera Controls (Retrieve): Hacking the camera controls gives the Agents a great level of situational awareness, so they know just where to set traps and when to shoot. If successfully hacked, each Agent’s next Mob roll gets a +2 modifier.

Financial Software (Retrieve): One of the accountants hasn’t logged out of the financial software suite. While it’s not imperative for the mission, it does give the Agents a chance to skim some extra cash from Dacre-Morgan.

Hidden Safe (Crack): Stel Pulman’s safe contains the purchase records and shipping manifests for the shipment of GREY UNICORN that he dispatched to a shipyard in Burnside.

Once Control knows who sent the weapons, it can advise the Agents that Stel is a member of Pure Fist, a neo-Nazi terror group, and that several intelligence agencies have been keeping a lazy eye on a cell of Pure Fist in Burnside. Add in the sudden presence of deadly weapons, and it’s clear where the Agents have to go next.

Trace weapons Stockpile

The Bronco is an old bar off one of the rural routes that crosses close to Burnside. It’s a rough place: two windows have metal shutters drawn because the glass has been smashed out, and not one of the neon signs has more than half of its letters working. Out front are maybe a dozen motorcycles, several with the Norse-rune-meets-lightning-bolt of Pure Fist.
Not everyone inside is a member of Pure Fist—the bar used to be a Hells Angels hangout before the Burnside chapter folded as members got locked up or shot. The old timers make sure that Pure Fist members can’t be too open about what they’re up to, but after several beers that rule falls by the wayside.

The owner of the Bronco has seen it all, and he keeps a sawn-off shotgun in plain sight behind the bar. He’ll serve anyone, but if the Agents look or act really out of place he’ll suggest they finish their drinks and get out—for their own safety, of course.

**Shared Sympathies (Manipulate):** The Agents say the right things and buy the right people beer, and the atmosphere relaxes. If they fail, everyone in the bar turns against them (Threat goes to 2).

**Grab the Mouth (Ambush):** One of the Pure Fist bikers is talking a big game without any specifics, like he knows he’s not supposed to say anything and that’s killing him. When he heads out to get something from his bike, the Agents can grab him and interrogate him at their leisure.

The “Big Dog”, as he claims to be called, knows that Pure Fist have got their hands on “something that’ll make the filthy nigger-lovers sit up and listen. The weapons are out at the shipyard that the gang uses as a base, but that’s not the clever part: a couple of the group’s better engineers rented a factory unit fifty miles up the Interstate from Burnside, and they’re working out how to make even more of them. He hasn’t got more to say. Control suggests that the Agents need to take out this reverse-engineering facility first.

**Destroy Factory**

Fifty miles up the Interstate from Burnside is the Cameron Industrial Park, a faceless site full of pre-fab factory units and warehouses. The car park is full of SUVs and pickup trucks, along with a couple of station wagons. Outside the factory that Pure Fist are using, a half-dozen domestic cars. People come and go at all hours, and the unit’s windows have all been boarded up on the inside.

The parking lot is crawling with Pure Fist goons, packing shotguns and a couple of M4s, illegally altered for automatic fire. They’re dressed in jeans and t-shirts, a step up from the goons in the biker bar. If the Agents were late, they’ve had a chance to wire up explosives throughout the parking lot. More Pure Fist
goons cross between the various industrial units; if a firefight starts, they’ll come running.

**Drug-Dealer’s Truck (Crack):** One of the trucks in the parking lot is used by a Pure Fist member with a side-line in dealing cocaine and methamphetamine. The drugs he’s got will carry a high reward when Control hands them over to the authorities, or sells them on the side.

**Partial Blueprint (Sneak):** A motorcycle with Pure Fist logos on the panniers conceals a set of blueprints for half of the GREY UNICORN weapon.

Inside the factory unit, the Pure Fist members working on reverse-engineering GREY UNICORN have surrounded themselves with guards loyal to their cause, and have a radio link to a dedicated second set of guards. The engineers have pistols, and fight alongside other members of their group. The factory itself has a lot of heavy equipment that offers plenty of places to hide.

**Comms Panel (Manipulate):** The Agent can call off the patrols who would otherwise bring reinforcements.

**Engineer’s Notes (Sneak):** A set of notes and diagrams from one of the engineers, stashed in a messenger bag.

**GREY UNICORN Prototype (Trap):** The prototype weapon that Pure Fist engineers have been trying to reproduce. The best way to stop their efforts is to rig it to blow.

Once the Agents have shut down the attempt to make more GREY UNICORN (only temporarily, if they fail), Control’s found the abandoned shipyard that Pure Fist have been using as a base, and where they’ve stashed the weapons. The bad news? They’re shipping the weapons to three other cells, including one in Washington D.C., with a co-ordinated time for blowing the hell out of urban areas.

**Sabotage Weapon Stockpile**

One of Burnside’s main industries used to be shipbuilding, until that dried up and blew away fifteen years ago. Nobody’s worked out what to do with the shipyards, and most people just forget they’re still around. A lot of the containers stored in the shipyards were written off years ago. It’s big and still fairly secure, so it’s a prime site for a group like Pure Fist to move in and set up a base.
The outskirts have a single security office with a contracted night watchman. He runs off to call the cops as soon as anyone starts shooting. In the meantime, he knows more than he lets on about the comings and goings of Pure Fist members. Shortly after the Agents arrive, members of a rival gang launch a full on attack. Both sides have assault rifles and shotguns.

**Tame Guard (Manipulate):** The Agent can get details on the comings and goings of Pure Fist members from the security guard.

**Weapon Cache (Trap):** Spare guns, used by other gang members who will show up in reaction to the gang fight; booby-trapping them will take out a number of terrorists.

The storage containers form a maze of passageways with little cover and lots of nice straight lines. The gang fight at the front gate has some of the guards on edge, but they hold position to deal with anyone who breaks through the front line. The security’s weak, just a couple of webcams hooked up to an old laptop. If the Agents spooked the terrorists by fouling up at the weapon factory, Pure Fist have hooked up two motion-activated turrets.

**Pure Fist Files (Hack):** Files on Pure Fist, including membership, locations, and plans stored on the laptop hooked up to the webcams.

**Stolen Artefacts (Crack):** The manifest on one of the shipping containers indicates it’s carrying very valuable artefacts from the first Iraq war.

The dockside has two mid-sized ships starting to dock, and a set of crates containing GREY UNICORN. Guards from each of the ships have already made it to the dock and are on high alert given the firefight at the entrance to the shipyard.

**Shipping Manifest (Sneak):** Lying on one of the crates is the paperwork for the shipment, with the list of people who will receive the deliveries, and the cover for each shipment.

**Camera Splice (Crack):** The Agent can hook a recording device in to the surveillance system to record the shipment.

**GREY UNICORN (Trap):** The Agents can find enough explosives nearby to rig a blast that can be seen from space.

Once the GREY UNICORN weapons have been primed for destruction, the Agents can exfiltrate safe in the knowledge of a job well done.
Appendix: Record Sheets

Agent Records

[Diagram of Agent Record form with fields for various attributes and skills]
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