

Star System Reference: F-0803-12

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Eternal Knot Games

History

Discovery

F-0803-12 was buzzed by a robotic scout and the system number was filed as an unremarkable distant binary star system. It remained unclaimed until Highton Interstellar Ship Building Consortium claimed its nearest neighbour and all the systems around, or near, that neighbour, including F-0803-12. The neighbouring system became the testing grounds for Highton Interstellar's advanced designs and was imaginatively called Testing Grounds.

Early Years

During the early years of Testing Grounds F-0803-12 was used as part of a sensor ring that surrounded Testing Grounds to make sure other companies could not spy on the Testing Grounds. As the nearest neighbour to the Testing Grounds F-0803-12 was used as a jump location for the first jumps of many of the new designs and the sensor base was updated with more detailed scientific instruments to record the jumps. Not long after this a small observation spaceplatform was constructed so that prospective buyers could observe their goods away from the high security Testing Grounds.

Around this time Highton moved into high specification spacecraft, and also into the military spacecraft market. After much searching they decided that the remote location of F-0803-12, along with the infrastructure already in place, would make it the ideal place for a top secret testing base.

During the first few years Highton Interstellar made a name for themselves as innovators in

the field of ship design, especially in the field as Zubrin Hyperjump Drive (ZHjD) engine optimizers.

War

Jealous of their neighbours' successes a rival planet decided to attack the home planet of Highton. To defend their homeworld Highton Interstellar focused on risky schemes, most of which failed, instead of innovating previously tried and tested technology. During this war other major ship builders and designers caught up and some surpassed Highton Interstellar's technology.

Aftermath of the War

After the war ended, in the favour of Highton due to their advanced technology, Highton Interstellar had to cut back on staff across the whole workforce, weakening an already weak company. The government of Highton supported Highton Interstellar by providing them a grant. With the help of the grant Highton Interstellar successfully relaunched themselves as Highton Interstellar Warship Building Consortium, a military ship builder that used the lessons they learnt during the war to produce quality warcraft.

The few rumours about F-0803-12 that had been circulating were closed when counter rumours were released that the base had been closed, or destroyed, during the war.

At the Testing Grounds the workforce was decreased to half it was before the war broke out while out in F-0803-12 the operation was cut down by over three quarters of peacetime level to a workforce of just over four

hundred engineers, scientists, designers, technicians, test pilots, and builders. They carried on working on a couple of promising projects that had been started during the war.

Highton Interstellar's Second Rise to Power

Over the next few years Highton Interstellar invested in the technology around the Testing Grounds paying special attention to the system of F-0803-12 including upgrading the spaceplatform and its sensor suite.

With a strong marketing campaign and allowing small groups as well as larger planetary forces to buy their spacecraft, and planetary equipment, Highton Interstellar grew in power to rival long established military spacecraft manufactures. On F-0803-12 their mission parameters were increased to allow them to create and test land, space, or combined technology.

Planetary Data

Physical

Distance: 3,183,394,807 km
Radius: 12,700 km
Density: 1.1
Gravity: 2.19G
Sidereal Period: 103.7 years
Rotation: 14 hrs
Mean Temp: 73K
Atmosphere: 167.72 atm
(H₂ 69%, He 16%, N₂ 9%,
CO₂ 5%)
Water/Ice Index: 50.94

Political

Population: 413
Law Level: Normal
Progress Level: Very high

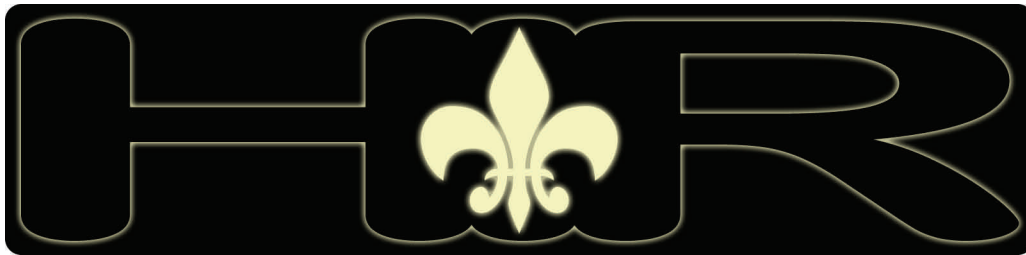
Cities

Base: 413

Description

Most of the planet is covered by undulating ice fields. There are few features that reach over half a mile off the surface or are cliff like.

The atmosphere is clear and crisp and bluish in tint but even a mild breeze is strong enough to knock a man off their feet.



Badge used by all employees of Highton Interstellar Research including those working in F-0803-12

Social Information

Government

The head of the research base is directly appointed by the CEO of Highton Interstellar and other than budget restraints and a lax timetable he is not accountable to anyone. Below him the rest of the staff who are roughly split into four equal groups - these are the red, blue, green, and yellow groups. The four groups are appointed tasks to complete by the head of the base.

In each group there is one group leader who has a panel of around ten team leaders, each team is numbered one through ten; these team leaders report to the group leader on their progress, and then discuss between themselves what the next best step for their group would be, the group leader then assigns tasks to meet the targets set by the head of the base whereas each team is free to get on with their assigned task.

Extra-planetary Relations

As a top secret base F-0803-12 does not have links to any planets other than Highton, all supplies are sent by robotic drones with ZHjD - they are a by-product from the war, but one that is not available on the open market. When they find out a vessel from the Testing Grounds is on its way they close down all extra-base activities; this is one of the reasons why the sensors in the system are amongst the best there are, not just for the test jump reasons. The spaceplatform is another problem, one which they just accept as part of the undercover reasoning; not only is it used by those who look at the ships from the neighbouring system, it is also used as a popular private zone for the people from the base.

Crimes

F-0803-12 is a very tight knit community and crime is virtually unknown, but if a crime is committed the head of the research base decides the penalty. The punishment for major crimes is normally exile from the base and punishment on Highton, for other crimes removal of entertainment permits and docking of pay are the normal punishments handed out.

Pleasure

Although they earn wages the staff of the base are also given an allowance of pleasure tokens.

The spaceplatform is only one of the relaxation zones; there are also a few training simulators that are programmed for non-suited simulations; a large gym - left over from the old days of the base and can support over one thousand people - which is popular with the health conscious staff.

A large plaza holds the mess, two bars, and the music room, all of which are robot operated; a few of the staff members work alongside the robots to give a human face to the servers, unwind, and earn more pleasure tokens. Music concerts are held in the music room but happen rarely, when they do occur they are well attended and enjoyed. Some musicians gather in the plaza for small concerts from time to time.

Transport

The base is spread out so a mini sit on tram is used to convey people from one part of the base to another; large items are moved by an underground tram.

For inter-system transport modified, but basic, stealth shuttlecraft are used, unless a ship is being tested when stealth science and transport craft take the experimental craft to the designated testing area.

Extra-system transports jump in the shadow of planets so that their wake will not be detected by watchers in the neighbouring system; even though in practice and theory jump wakes cannot be spotted from the distance between the two systems.

Economics

Although all the staff members are paid in regular currency all are given an allowance of pleasure tokens each week. These tokens are used as currency on the base. Extra tokens can be awarded for doing extra work on the base, spending longer than a certain time on base; they are also given as rewards for completing dangerous or unpleasant jobs on or around the base; or even as prizes for competitions that are commonly held.

Tokens can be swapped, or gambled, amongst staff but they cannot be brought or sold amongst the staff. Recently the head of the base allowed for pleasure tokens to be swapped for goods as well as the tokens themselves.

Large amount of tokens can be swapped to allow for extra holiday, time off, or time off base to be gained.