

Joint Fleets Strategic Commission

Headquarters: Paris, France

Mission Statement: Strategically coordinate human space military operations in the face of shared threats

Products/services: Planning for the unthinkable, military cooperation

Languages: French and English

Culture: Secretive, ruthlessly realistic, bureaucratic

Staff Levels: 120 directly employed, including 50 analysts and experts.

Scope of Operation: Earth

Member states: France, England, Germany, United States, Australia, Japan, Manchuria, Argentina, Brazil



The JFSC is one of the less well-known military organisations, but possibly the most far-reaching. Formed as a response to the Kafer war its purpose is to coordinate the human space fleets in the face of shared threats. Originally only intended to act as a think-tank giving strategic guidance to the Kafer crisis and helping coordinate strategic planning, the JFSC has quietly expanded its ambitions. Today it looks at all major threats and ways of handling them. The existence and overall goals of JFSC are not secret, but most people and likely many governments would be horrified of just how far ahead it is thinking.

Much of JFSC work consists of compiling, analysing and recommending. National representatives are briefed on various developments in regular seminars, getting information to be delivered to their superiors. The heart of JFSC is the commission meetings, where high-ranking representatives of member state militaries meet to decide joint policy. The diplomatic section organises various meetings when needed among members to help facilitate agreements.

Most of JFSC planning deals with how to “deal with” other species. It was involved in the Pentapod’s Revenge against the Kafers and is actively covering it up, as well as doing extensive planning for how to try to break the news to mankind. The Kafer issue remains the mainstay and is the part of its activity that is most visible. About 75% of its activity deals with the Kafer situation.

JFSC is also responsible for the blockade of the Bayern corridor keeping curious humans away from AGRA. In the process of setting it up the organisation learned how to get governments and military forces to implement plans they did not fully know the rationale for. Analysts have developed an extensive dossier of possible approaches to the AGRA problem (“Blue Mist”), but it is generally acknowledged that for the moment it is nothing but speculation. JFSC is content to wait and occasionally call together a new analyst brainstorm to deal with the super-aliens.

Contingency Héloïse, is a study developed by JFSC strategists that is far closer to home. It deals with what to do if the Pentapods ever turn out to be hostile or dangerous. The analysts realized DM +43 1953 is relatively easy to attack: a heavily armed human fleet could likely invade Pentapod space and then perform orbital bombardment on Haven, killing the Gods. Nuclear detonations at the Pentapod enclaves on Beta Canum, Nibelungen and Mars would finish the rest. Given the slowness of Pentapod ships and their relative defencelessness, at present a sudden attack would have very good chances at succeeding. But that might change

if Pentapods develop better space weapons. Worse, the analysts were not convinced at all that Haven is the only Pentapod world. A nightmare scenario might involve unknown worlds with now hostile gods striking against humanity. Overall, the existence of Contingency Héloïse is something JFSC wants to keep very quiet about.

Contingency Barbara deals with the Sung. This is far more straightforward since the Sung lack any sizeable space fleet and could relatively easily be forced into submission. There are some concerns about sabotage or guerrilla activities, but a relatively unified human fleet could take them out. Similarly Contingency Cameron (Xiang), Maxine (Eber) and Dai (Klaxun) are very simple. Contingency Dai is mostly about how to *protect* the Klaxun if it ever became expedient. Contingency Kuan, dealing with the Ylii, is under development. Here the presence of human soldiers in a peaceful society makes things much easier, but the loyalty of the Ylii-hired mercenaries might not be total. Hence it recommends infiltrating them with more motivated units before any attempts at takeover.

Contingency Matabo deals with attack from an unknown external force, like the Aquilians or something unexpected. Largely developed by FFB consultants it suggests methods of coordinating defences, figuring out enemy strengths and methods of developing countermeasures against unexpected weapons.

Finally Contingency Zuwanie deals with escape from imminent, overpowering threats. At present it consists of an evacuation plan of select government and military groups from the Core to various outposts. More ambitious plans involve deep-space stations that are impossible to find unless they are known to be there, and even how to quickly construct an "Ark Fleet" from requisitioned cargo, civilian and military ships to escape from Human space. It seems quite possible to save a sizeable number of people and key resources, but it would require losing infinitely much more.

Most of the representatives on JFSC have little interest in ever implementing any of these contingencies. But a small group of analysts and officers have begun to argue that it might be necessary for humanity to be proactive. The Pentapod's Revenge showed the way: now humans have a decent chance of blocking Kafers. But the Ylii are too valuable as allies to be allowed to fall if some Kafer fleet invaded their systems, and they seem unable to grasp the need for a strong defence. Maybe humans need to take charge in Ylii space. In the face of growing discontent in many colonies humanity might *need* external enemies. So far these hardliners are content to make suggestions (which are usually quickly shot down by the rest), but even mere suggestions from the JFSC might have profound impact when heard by some military groups.

JFSC often makes use of the analysts of FFB and other non-classified organisations, often distributing a project into pieces that are individually innocuous but when put together in the right way becomes highly sensitive. It has strong connections to the various military high commands and through them influence in many governments. OQC is another organisation JFSC often deals with, mainly in joint scenario planning exercises to deal with biological contamination. Some of the anti-Pentapod paranoia might come from OQC.

The main weakness of JFSC is the national rivalries. As long as issues are purely a matter of theory there is no problem of getting French and Manchurian representatives to get along. As soon as practical recommendations become relevant the board bogs down into rivalries.

Adventure possibilities

A copy of one of the contingency plans has been lost – either due to an officer’s carelessness or deliberate theft. If the contents become public they could mean a terrible PR crisis and possibly disrupt relations to one or more alien species. The PCs are sent by their superiors to find the plans and return them to JFSC – or give them to the superiors for possible blackmail material. Conversely, various groups like the Sung, Provolution, NARL, PAX, anti-militarists and political enemies of JFSC would be willing to pay anything for this material.

Know your enemy: JFSC is very interested in finding out if there are other Pentapod worlds out there. They may support survey missions into suspected Pentapod space in order to get a better idea of where the Pentapods are.