

PHOENIX

Beyond the Stellar Empire

Politics and Affiliations Manual

v1.0

Affiliations

An affiliation is a recognized faction. It consists of any number of positions that generally work together to achieve a common goal. An affiliation may be an empire, possibly part of an empire, or even just a close association of individuals that have grouped together for mutual benefit.

Each affiliation has a name from which a three-letter identity is produced. This affiliation code is used purely for ease of reference, e.g. the Detinus Republic has the affiliation code DTR.

All affiliations have a political structure. This structure allows for any form of government within the affiliation, from dictatorship through to democracy.

The structure is represented by political positions and the abilities given to each political position.

Along with political positions and their abilities, each affiliation has code of conduct that is a role-playing feature. This code of conduct is known as an affiliation profile. It describes how the affiliation and its members will conduct itself under normal circumstances. While there is no mechanism within the game to prevent an affiliation from deviating from their self-defined profile there are in-game ramifications of actions. If for example an affiliation describes itself as honourable but fails to be so in the game, then it will lose face with not only other affiliations, but also with referee controlled factions.

Having a profile that basically does not rule out any behaviour will obviously result in an affiliation being regarded as untrustworthy - and in-game factions will treat the affiliation as such. **It is therefore strongly recommended that players only design profiles that they can stick to and remove players from their affiliation that do not adhere to the affiliation profile.**

Phoenix is a game where reputations are important and memories are long. It is often the case that a stigma will last much longer than the players responsible for its acquisition.

Leaving an Affiliation

All members of the affiliation normally fly the colours of the affiliation, i.e. any other positions that spot them will know which affiliation they belong to. A position can be owned by the affiliation, or by the player who runs it. Only player-owned positions can leave the affiliation. If a player controls multiple positions he or she will only take with them positions that they own when they leave.

In order to own a position, a player needs to purchase it from an affiliation. This is done through issues (see later). By the use of issues, it means that a position cannot buy a position without the support of votes from other politicals in the affiliation.

A position that has been bought from the affiliation still flies the affiliation banner but this can be re-flagged as a pirate from that point forward.

A pirate-flagged position is not considered to be in any affiliation (as opposed to independent). This is the only case where a player can own a position that is not registered as part of the same affiliation as their political position.

Affiliations in Phoenix

Association of Free Traders AFT 54
Ant Nation ANT 23
Architects ARC 50
Brotherhood BHD 63
Confederate Intelligence Agency CIA 64
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Democratic Naplian Alliance DNA 66
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Extra-galactic Economic Monopoly EEM 18
Falconian Empire FCN 70
Felini Tyranny FEL 49
Frontier Exploration & Trade FET 56
Flagritz Republic FGZ 26
Flagritz Empire FLZ 47
Galactic Trade & Transport GTT 52
House Hayduk HDK 43
House LiQuan HLQ 41
House Porter HPT 45
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Independent IND 14
Yank Kastorians KAS 33
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Raiders of the Interstellar Peripheries RIP 17
Radiation Victims RNV 59
Stellar Mining & Smelting SMS 53
Terran Colony Annihilators TCA 20
Wimbles WMB 25

Why can't a player be in more than one affiliation?

An affiliation can be considered an entity. Dedicated players that monitor both its activities as well as its assets spend a lot of effort ensuring it runs efficiently. Allowing players to run positions in more than one affiliation will cause conflicts of interest and ultimately undermine the affiliation. Some may argue that this will not be the case (and in a few certain circumstances have a very strong case). The problem lies in drawing the line.

The game has been coded to prevent a player controlling positions in multiple factions, in order to ensure that they do not have dual loyalty. While we cannot prevent players from creating a second account with a second political position in another affiliation we cannot condone it - but ultimately it is down to the other members of the affiliation to issue the 'remove from affiliation' issue against the dubious player.

Independent (IND)

Upon leaving an affiliation, the political position and all positions owned by the player (as opposed to the affiliation) will be flagged as Independent (IND). This is not a true affiliation, as there is no political structure to it and as such all ranks will be removed from all positions that become IND, i.e. ships will be reduced to captain status. Many affiliations have a natural suspicion of IND positions mainly because there is no authority governing them, and as such nowhere to take grievances concerning the transgressions made by IND positions.

Joining a New Affiliation

A player can join a new affiliation only if they are currently Independent. This means that they cannot move directly from one affiliation but must first become IND. As IND, due to the lack of ship rank, ships cannot make use of any enemy lists beyond adding pirates to the enemy list.

Politicians

Every player in Phoenix is entitled to run a single political position. The position represents somebody with power and a measure of autonomy. All positions run by the player will be tied to this political position. As such there are a number of restraints. Primarily this means that each player is either tied to one affiliation or is independent. A player cannot be in more than one affiliation. This does not stop a player using one affiliation's assets to aid another although this is generally only undertaken with the affiliation's blessing. The only exception to the single affiliation limit is the control of pirates (see section on pirates)

Owning Positions

Each player account may have only 1 political. All of the player's positions are listed as being linked to this political position. These non-political positions can either be affiliation owned or player owned. Player owned positions may be flagged as pirates.

Central Banking

The political position holds the joint stellar wealth of all the positions under the player's control. These stellars are used in all transactions, which means that the loss of any positions does not lose any stellars.

Each week, all positions draw wages from the central political fund. This is automatic and cannot be avoided. If wages cannot be met there is a chance that positions will rebel and leave the political position. Where a position is listed as an affiliation asset, the rest of the affiliation will be notified prior to rebellion. This will give sufficient time for the affiliation to strip affiliation assets from the bankrupt political position – or to take action to aid the political position to meet its wage bill. Privately owned positions will be taken by the EEM. In this case the EEM will take control of the minimum number of positions necessary to counter the debt.

Private Data

Along with stellars, the political position is also privy to secret information known as data. This list of data appears on the weekly printout for the political position (see affiliation data).

Pirates

Under normal circumstances, a position will fly the colours of the affiliation, i.e. be recognizable as belonging to a specific affiliation or be registered as independent. As such, any actions by the position will have ramifications for the affiliation.

Independents are basically positions that are currently between affiliations. Being independent means that the positions have no allegiances to any affiliation and as such cannot perform diplomatic actions as recognized by other governments. In game terms they cannot have officer ranks, nor can they carry active combat lists such as support, defend or enemy. This makes independents very vulnerable which is the way it should be. Phoenix is a game about alliances and political power struggles with little room for individuals.

There is however room for those that for one reason or another desire to be completely outside the political structure. These are positions that for one reason or another are flagged as pirates.

A pirate is the classification for an unidentifiable position. It does not mean that the position will attack everything in sight, nor does it mean that it cannot interact peacefully with other positions. All positions that do not have an affiliation debt, i.e. are not affiliation assets, can be declared as pirates. To avoid abuse in-game a position, once declared as a pirate, will NEVER have the pirate flag removed. Being flagged as a pirate allows the ship to behave in any manner it so chooses. It can attack, defend and support whatever it desires.

Most affiliations make use of pirates, as it allows them to perform operations against rival factions without them being able to identify who is responsible. This said, if a fleet of pirate ships appeared and had exactly the same ship configuration as a standard war fleet for a specific affiliation then people would start putting two and two together and getting four! If certain ships are also scanned in specific areas of space and later turn up as pirates then questions will also be asked. Phoenix is a game where wars are fought based on little more than circumstantial evidence. There is however nothing to prevent players taking advantage of this by designing pirate ships to resemble warships of a third party. There is nothing more satisfying than attacking one faction and then sitting back, watching as they launch a retaliatory attack against another of your rivals. There is nothing to prevent you attacking other positions in your own affiliation if you so desire. This may be the only way of removing a damaging influence within the affiliation without alerting the player to the motive behind the attack.

Being a pirate however has its drawbacks. Primarily, by not declaring for any faction it inherently infers that the ship is up to no good. As such, any position can open fire on pirates without the necessity of having to post them or be of sufficient political rank.

Transponder Code

Most affiliations will make use of pirate flagged ships but at the same time desire to protect themselves from 'enemy' pirate ships by having pirates on the enemy lists of their own positions. This would normally lead to them opening fire on their own positions. To prevent this, a position can also register friendly transponder codes. These secret codes are carried by pirate ships (or in fact any ship) and prevent the normal attack going ahead.

Pirate Flag

Any ship can be flagged as a pirate but to prevent abuse once flagged there is no going back. The pirate flag merely indicates that the ship has no official alliance to any faction and (unlike an independent position) may be hostile. The ship must be player owned to become a pirate. A special action will strip it from the affiliation and flag it as pirate. Even if the action is sanctioned by an affiliation, it can never publicly admit it - so the onus is on out of game methods for players to track pirate activities, i.e. the affiliation has to trust the pirate's owner

Reasons for pirate flag

An affiliation profile normally limits an affiliation from undertaking unsavoury actions. To circumvent this, pirates are often employed. As they have no official ties to the affiliation, they can perform these tasks without fear of reprisals against the affiliation.

Abilities

Pirates have the same powers as an admiral, but are not politically sanctioned. This means that they can add anyone to their enemy, defend and support lists.

Wages

While wages are still paid from the political central account (presuming the player has a political position), no tax is paid on these wages. If there are insufficient funds to pay wages, there is a good chance that the crew will rebel and the ship will be removed from player control.

Transponder Code

Each ship can have a single transponder code. Positions can be set not to attack ships using this encrypted code. As such pirates working for the affiliation can enter and leave territory normally hostile to pirates.

Primary Drawback

Any ship can attack a pirate on sight, whether or not the ship has been posted. This makes them very vulnerable. Combined with not being able to remove the pirate flag, it is only a matter of time before the ship is destroyed.

Other Pirate Positions

Starbases and outposts can be flagged as pirates. In this case, they can remove the pirate flag, but only by becoming public. Both turning pirate and reverting back is done as a special action as there may be other ramifications on populated planets. Ground parties are especially favoured as pirates, as it easily allows attacks of impunity. There is normally a hefty fee involved as part of the special action to become pirates. Further, as most pirate ground parties know that they are almost certainly going into the thick of things with little or no backup they will demand anything up to ten times the normal salary - and who says that piracy does not pay!

Running an Affiliation

All affiliations are run in the same manner, this is based on the proposing of issues and then voting on them. Obviously, if there is only one position with voting power, then there will be a dictatorship as even if issues are put forward by another politician, only the voting member can cause them to be passed. Issued can only be raised by political positions with the power to do so.

Raising Issues

Only political positions that have the right to raise a specific issue may do so. At the creation of an affiliation, only the leader has any rights. He can grant them to other political positions. Once granted they cannot be rescinded without removing the political position from the affiliation. Once a political position has a right to raise an issue, they can give this right to any other political position in the same affiliation.

Discretionary Powers

Under normal circumstances, an issue is raised and then voted on. In desperate times however it may not be possible to get a majority vote due to poor representation, especially true in a democracy. Where speed is of the essence, a four-week delay could be disastrous. As such there exist discretionary powers. These are very powerful, as any political position with a discretionary power can pass the particular issue without the requirement of voting.

Affiliation Data

New players within an affiliation will suddenly require access to a mass of data such as the location of secret systems, information regarding unusual technology and even some information regarding position names and their locations. Much of this data however is quite sensitive and as such the affiliation goes to great lengths to protect it. Systems that are off limits to non-affiliates can be reached if access to affiliation data provides the system name. It is still up to other affiliation members to provide information regarding which system the restricted access can be reached from.

Tech Manuals

These detail a specific item, indicating how it functions and its technical statistics. A tech manual is given upon request if the item is classed as being common knowledge, or the item exists on either the political data list or the affiliation data list.

Starting Rights

The affiliation leader starts with all rights to raise issues. He is the only position to start with any. Once the leader gives another position a right however, he cannot remove it without removing the political from the affiliation. Further, the political gaining the right has the ability to give this right to any other political position.

Discretionary Powers

No position starts with discretionary powers. They are only given through the raising of an issue. They are so powerful that a political position with discretionary powers can effectively dictate to the entire affiliation on a specific issue. A position can be stripped of discretionary powers through the raising of an issue.

System Data

One of the closest guarded secrets for any affiliation is the navigation route to a secret system. By the same token however, they may want new players to use the system, possibly as a (relatively) safe training ground. As such the system is placed on the affiliation data list. In the case of the system, the ship uses subspace communication via the political position in order to give the pin-point location of the ship and various other protocols such as local subatomic flux and subspace variables. The affiliation central command then uses this data to give the exact and unique navigation co-ordinates for a safe jump to the restricted system. The data they provide is only of use for the specified ship performing the jump at the instant the data is transferred and can never be used again. This is why system navigation gained through stellar cartography research is such a prized possession.

Celestial Body Data

A list of secret locations such as asteroids may appear on the affiliation data list. This data will allow the ship to automatically enter orbit of the celestial body even if it has never detected it. Without access to these, even if the system and orbital quadrant is known, a ship will not be able to enter orbit until it has personally scanned them.

When a ship has made use of the affiliation celestial body data, i.e. entered orbit, then it will automatically update the personal data list of the controlling political to include the data.

Leaving an Affiliation

Leaving an affiliation will remove any access to affiliation data. However, during the course of time, most data (except systems), that have been actually made use of will have been transferred to the political private data list. **Warning** – be careful of a player that suddenly starts visiting all celestial bodies and handling items that are on the restricted list and certainly do not let them get their hands on stellar cartography tech which lists a restricted system.

Reports

Reports are generated each week for every political position. Each report is designed to give information regarding a specific topic.

Political Report

A political report gives an update of the current status of all positions controlled by the player. This is not a detailed report but should be sufficient to indicate if a position has a low integrity, or if agent actions have been noted in an outpost. It is also useful to keep tabs on positions that are run infrequently such as warships or outposts.

The wage report is very useful for keeping track of wages and stellar accounting. It shows exactly where stellars are coming from and going to. It quickly becomes obvious to a player which positions are a drain on the economy.

Affiliation Reports

Along with a report on all the assets owned by a political position there are a number of affiliation reports. These cover various issues being voted on, affiliation assets and such. While any position can be given a weekly report through a successful issue, these have to be paid for by the affiliation.

Affiliation Funds and Tax

Each affiliation has a stellar account. This is used to pay for reports, ranks on ships and various other fees. If the affiliation does not have money to cover this, shortfalls result in reports not being generated or ranks not being maintained. In order to fill the affiliation coffers, an affiliation can impose a tax on affiliation positions. This tax is paid for by the political position controlling the positions. The tax is a percentage of the standard weekly wages. This tax is paid on top of the wages and goes directly to the affiliation funds, e.g. if the tax rate was set to 10% and a wage bill was 100 stellars, the political would be charged 110 stellars of which 10 stellars would go to the affiliation account. Tax is not paid on player owned positions.

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