

# Wing Commander 5

## Game Design Document

### Game Overview

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#### General Goals

- Wing Commander 5 is designed to continue the success of the Wing Commander series while providing the fictional foundation for a sustainable expanded product line. The universe is a big place... Soon, we'll realize all previous Wing Commanders took place in just a small corner of the galaxy. The Wing Commander 5 story will be the basis for an expanded fictional universe full of potential. Including a sustainable core product line (Wing Commander 6, 7...) as well as an extended product line (Privateer: The Darkening, and any other action oriented game we can fit into the fiction).
- Wing Commander 5 will take the Wing Commander series to its next level. Wing Commander 4 was the best interactive movie in the gaming industry. WC 5 will be known as both the best interactive movie and the best space combat game in the universe.

#### General Gameplay

At the simplest level, the game will be about the player character's success, and the Confederation's success in the overall war effort.

##### *Player Success*

- The player will be rewarded for his successes. Since the player starts the game as a lowly rookie pilot, on one level the game can be described as the story of the main characters' successes and promotions through the course of the war. One of the main offerings of the game will be the player character's chance for success. Each battle victory will be a personal triumph as well as a strategic war victory. The more battle victories the player achieves, the cooler ships he'll get to fly, the better missions he'll get assigned, and generally the cooler experience he'll enjoy. This will have a huge addictive appeal to the gaming audience. This is the same 'can't sleep 'till I get to the next level' appeal that will keep our customers dedicated. We want our customers glowing about the best gaming experience ever, not just the best interactive movie experience. Wing 3 and Wing 4 couldn't offer this sort of game experience, because the main character, Blair, was already a colonel.
- The player will be assigned to progressively more reputable Squadrons. Of course, the most reputable squadrons have the coolest ships. The player will eagerly anticipate being transferred to the next squadron. This will be more tangible than any promotion or medal. Once the player proves himself, he gets to play with the best hardware, spaceships. All the more motivation to excel in this game. Additionally, each squadron will have a personality (the Wing Commander), represented by a plot character. These characters will go through the same dynamic character development as the main character. Essentially, the player begins in the infantry division and ends the game as an elite member of the Seal division.

##### *Confederation Success*

- WC5 will proceed geographically, towards the enemy front line. The front line of the war is ever changing, through the progression of a war. WC5 is no different. As the player gets promoted to more reputable squadrons, he also moves closer to the enemy front line. The player will be fully aware of the universe map. In between missions he will watch the progression of warfront on the sector map.



## Gameflow

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*Fewer rooms to navigate, more interactivity in each.* Clicking around gameflow rooms looking for something to do is not interactivity. We'll minimize the rooms the player can navigate to two (we'll add a third room, the Commander's Club, well into the game as an extension of the Recreation Room). There will always be something to do in one of these two rooms. We will maintain the feeling of a large ship by showing extra rooms/sets in cut scenes.

*If the player knows what he wants to do, he should know where he needs to go to do it.* Each room has a theme. If the player wants character interaction, he knows to go to the Recreation Room. If the player wants to check on his personal stats (kill score, rank, or the ship he's flying) or move on to the next mission, the player knows to go to the Ready Room. If there is anything else to do in the rest of the ship, the 'Flick Click' door will be open. Clicking here automatically takes the player where he needs to go for conversation and returns him to the Recreation Room when he's finished.

*Two clicks away from the action and anything the player needs to do.* Options screens (game control, save games, etc.) should be no more than two layers deep. The design should make the most common activity (save game / load game) the easiest to access.

*Interact with the world not option screens.* Real world representation for player activities wherever possible (kill board, simulator, object viewer, universe map, Quick save & Quick load, view stats).

### Doors

If the player can travel to another room, that choice should be represented on the screen with a door. Each option should be visually represented on the screen. There should be no hunting the screen with the mouse to find out the choices. This includes having to move a mouse over a door to find out if it opens. If it's important that the player pass through a door it should be open to give the player a visual clue.

Open door: Sends the message 'There is something to do through here'.

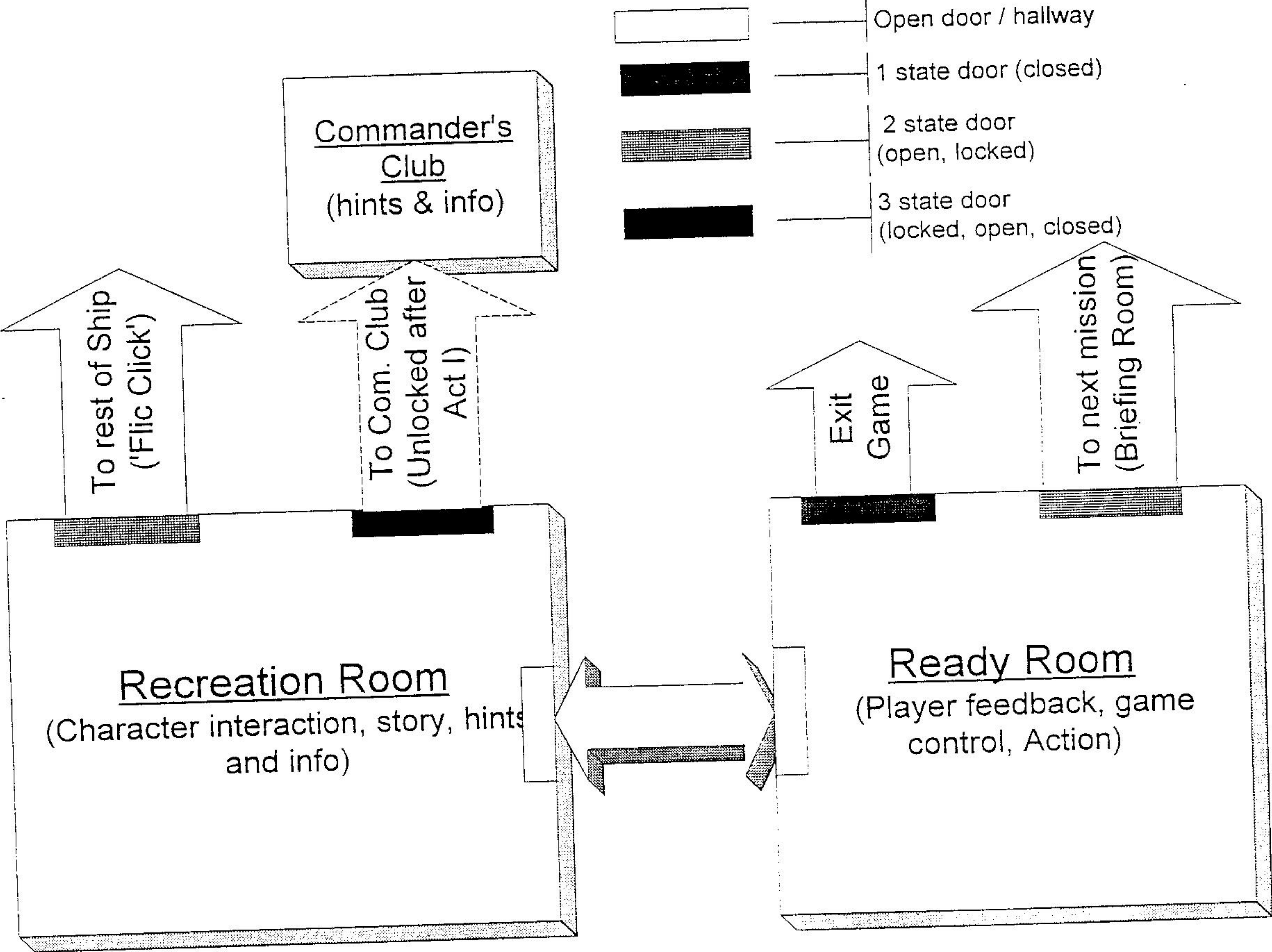
Locked door: 'This way is not an option'. Does not open with mouse over it.

Closed door: Used only for Commander's club, simulator, and Escape hatch. Opens when mouse is over it. Sends message: 'You're allowed in here, but there's nothing critical to do'.

Example: When the player enters gameflow. The briefing room door will be locked until the player has all plot critical conversations. Then it opens, letting the player know he can fly his next mission now.



WC5 Gameflow Diagram





## **Interactive Sets and their elements**

These are the rooms that are navigable by the player. These are not the only rooms on the ship.

### *Carrier - Recreation Room*

This is where the player goes to interact with other characters. Spacious room.

#### Flick Click door

This is where the player clicks to access the rest of the ship. If there is a conversation outside of the two main rooms, this door will be open. Clicking here will automatically take the player where he needs to go. If there are no conversations outside of the Recreation Room, these doors will be locked.

#### Commander's Club door

Click here to enter the elite officer's club. Comparatively lavish room where the player can engage in conversations with superior officers and a bartender (to get combat tips and feedback).

#### Ready Room door

Click here to get back into the action, or to get player feedback.

#### Kill board

List of pilots and their kills. Player gets to see where he stands compared to the rest of the flight crew.

#### Simulator

Practice flying the ships you see in the object viewer. Wave after wave of enemy ships. Compete for high score with your ship mates.

Should have some way to access the object viewer (see Ready Room). As a ship becomes available in the object viewer, it becomes available in the simulator for flight testing.

(Note: The simulator could have a vital role in future spin-off products. Such as, a scenario add-on package. A multi-player add-on (ala net-mechWarrior)).

#### Interaction Area #1 (suggestion: table 1)

Location for animating video sprite. Player clicks on sprite to initiate conversation. Area must be large enough so that the animating sprite doesn't overlap any other animations in the room.

#### Interaction Area #2 (suggestion: table 2)

Location for animating video sprite. Player clicks on sprite to initiate conversation. Area must be large enough so that the animating sprite doesn't overlap any other animations in the room.

#### Interaction Area #3 (suggestion: ??)

Area large enough to accommodate 3-4 people. Location for animating video sprite. Player clicks on sprite to initiate conversation. Area must be large enough so that the animating sprite doesn't overlap any other animations in the room.

### *Carrier - Ready Room*

This is where the player goes to get ready for his next mission (save game and other game controls), view his personal stats, and view the stats of various ships he has encountered.

#### Door to Turbo Lift - Briefing Room or Flight Deck (for scrambles)

Click here for action. Clicking here will begin the transition to spaceflight. The player will travel with his fellow pilots to the Briefing Room on the Lift (Location for pre-flight conversations, pilot banter, Maniac craziness - skip if lift scene if no relevant conversations). The player will get



his mission briefing (in the briefing room), automatically view his new ship, and then be launched into spaceflight. Door will be locked until player has completed all mission critical conversations, then the door will open.

### Recreation Room door

Click here for character interaction. Door is always open.

### Escape Hatch door (exit game)

Door remains closed until the mouse is placed over it. Then the door animates to open and the player is prompted 'Quit Game?'.

### Object Viewer

Rotating 3D object viewer. Graphical database for the player to view all ships and weapons he has encountered. Complete with a statistical description - text and/or speech. This can be accessed from different areas: simulator, personal computer, and this dedicated location. Must have arrows to control rotation and navigate menus.

### Universe Map

The map of WC5. Could be part of object viewer? Maybe near the Kill board and Simulator in the Recreation Room.

### Quick Save

Save a game with one click. Analogous to the bunk beds in WC I.

### Quick Load

Load up your Quick Save game with one click. Image should be consistent with the Quick Save image.

### Terminal Monitor

- Save games - Choose from list of autosave and manually saved games.
- Game control (options and preferences: vid-mode, sound, etc.)

### Personal artifacts

Here's where the player views his military rank, medals, and other rewards. Analogous to lockers in WC I, II, IV.

### Live action Area #1 (suggestion: center of room)

Location for live action. Area must be large enough to accommodate multiple actors. Any scenes in this room will run automatically when the player enters the room.

### Live action Area #2 (suggestion: ready area)

Location for live action. Area must be large enough to accommodate multiple actors. Any scenes in this room will run automatically when the player enters the room.

### Live action Area #3 (suggestion: near exit to rec. room)

Location for live action. Area must be large enough to accommodate multiple actors. Any scenes in this room will run automatically when the player enters the room.

### *Carrier - Commander's Club*

Small lounge area. The player earns entrance to this elite bar through promotion and kill score somewhere in during Act II. This may be the only location where the player can talk to certain officers.

### Recreation Room door

The only entrance into the room, always open. Click here to return to the Recreation Room.



### Live action Area #1 (suggestion: bar)

Location for animating video sprite. Player clicks on sprite to initiate conversation. Area must be large enough so that the animating sprite doesn't overlap any other animations in the room.

### Live action Area #2 (suggestion: table)

Location for animating video sprite. Player clicks on sprite to initiate conversation. Area must be large enough so that the animating sprite doesn't overlap any other animations in the room.

### *Relay Station - main hall*

Similar in function to the asteroid base in WC3. A large hangar with a place for the player to save his games. And an simple way for the player to know how to fly the next mission (i.e. sprite of his ship).

#### Terminal Monitor

- Save games - Choose from list of autosave and manually saved games.
- Game control (options and preferences: vid-mode, sound, etc.)

#### Live action Area

Location for animating video sprite. Player clicks on sprite to initiate conversation. Area must be large enough so that the animating sprite doesn't overlap any other animations in the room.

#### Closed Door / Hallway to Relay Station - Control room

Leads to room where pilot gets abducted in cut scene. Nothing to do in other room (that's why door is closed). If you choose to click on the door, you get a Control room scene with Dekker telling you to get back out in space.

#### Shot of player's ship - says to player 'click here to fly'

Player's ship may be too difficult to do with damage level / squadron markings. On the other hand. We will be scripting which ship the player has on the Relay station missions.

## **Locations and elements**

These are rooms that are not navigable by the player, but are shown in cut scenes. The player may still have interactive conversation choices in these rooms, just not the freedom to move around the room.

### *Carrier - Turbo Lift to Briefing Room / Flight deck (from Ready Room)*

This will provide a location for some asides prior to mission briefings or scrambles. Turbo lift can also be used for transition from Recreation Room to Rest of Ship.

### *Carrier - Briefing Room*

This is where the player and the rest of the flight crew get their mission debriefing. A large meeting hall. Might have a separate area for the Squadron leaders to sit.

#### Live action area

Where the commander stands to give orders. There will be a green screen behind the commander we can use to show different images, such as the mission map (the same image will be projected to all the desk monitors, too - see below).

#### Seats for flight crew with built in monitors

Analogous to elementary school desks. The monitors will show the navigation map, and the object viewer. This will help illustrate the map and ship loadout for the mission.

### *Carrier - Debriefing Area*

Could be a hallway off of the flight deck. We don't want to build a set for the flight deck, but we can suggest it's close by.



### *Carrier - Engineer room*

Two level set. Scene with player overhearing conversation through the floor grating overhead.

### *Carrier - Holding Room*

Scene with captured aliens getting 'off'ed by Warlord alien.

### *Carrier - Other location?*

Bunk room? Engine room?

### *Kilrathi Derelict interior - Marine Remote Cam*

### *Kilrathi Reservation Planet - Background for Comm. Transmission*

### *Relay Station - Control Room*

Scene where pilot gets abducted. Dekker and the engineers work here to get the Station back on-line.

### *Alien Outpost*

Scene with captive pilot and Warlord Alien

### *Wormhole Gate - Command Center*

Scene with Blair and Best Friend viewing monitor showing hordes of aliens about to jump through the gate. Blair and Best Friend deactivate shields.

### *Wormhole Gate - Hallway to Flight Deck*

Where Blair gets jumped by Alien Warlord

### *Flight Deck ? (CG??)*

Maybe this should only be seen as displayed by the game engine when you're landing.

## **Walkthrough**

1. Player would 'CLICK' on the entrance to 'Briefing Room'.
2. *Mission briefing.* Movie- Player in Briefing Room with Commander in charge saying " blah blah hello..." Built into each pilot's desk is a small view screen. Then it would zoom into the view screen. The 3D version of Nav map (or ¾ Isometric view) would show the mission being run similar to a board game with ships moving to intercept each other, etc.. ( This would use the data in mission editor to script objects movement, etc.. ) There would also be a voice over either by Colonel or the ever so popular Female Voiced Computer. (The computer voice would be preferable because we could change briefings easily if a mission needs to be changed. Also, the player could replay the mission briefing from his cockpit (from the Nav Map) using the same computer voice over.) The view screen will also access the 'Object Viewer' database which will display the player's ship and loadout for the mission. The player will not get to change these settings.
3. Movie-Player would be show player hopping into flight suit and into fighter or being lowered into fighter similar to SPACE: Above and Beyond.
4. *Launch.* Instead of having a flick play to show fighters launching we could show the 3D Engine from a outside camera angle. Maybe outside the launch tube looking into it. We could then script ship movement to fly through and out of tube & past camera. This would be extremely cool with dynamic lighting... maybe there is a spotlights or tubeway? (runway) lights that light ship as it comes out.
5. *Mission.* PLAYER FLIES MISSION : )
6. End of Mission- Player Confirms landing (automatically by default), engages the automatic landing sequence, then reads stats of his performance from a cockpit VDU (stats like weapon effectiveness, kills, friendlies killed, ship damage). The game takes control of the player's ship, and we cut to an outside camera on the landing bay. We script the ship flying into the bay and it lands. Once again we are in the 3D Engine and all the damage from battle, etc.. should be shown on the fighter. Stats would



be kept in medal place (Ready Room locker) in player's flight log (this could be used to describe an autosaved game)...

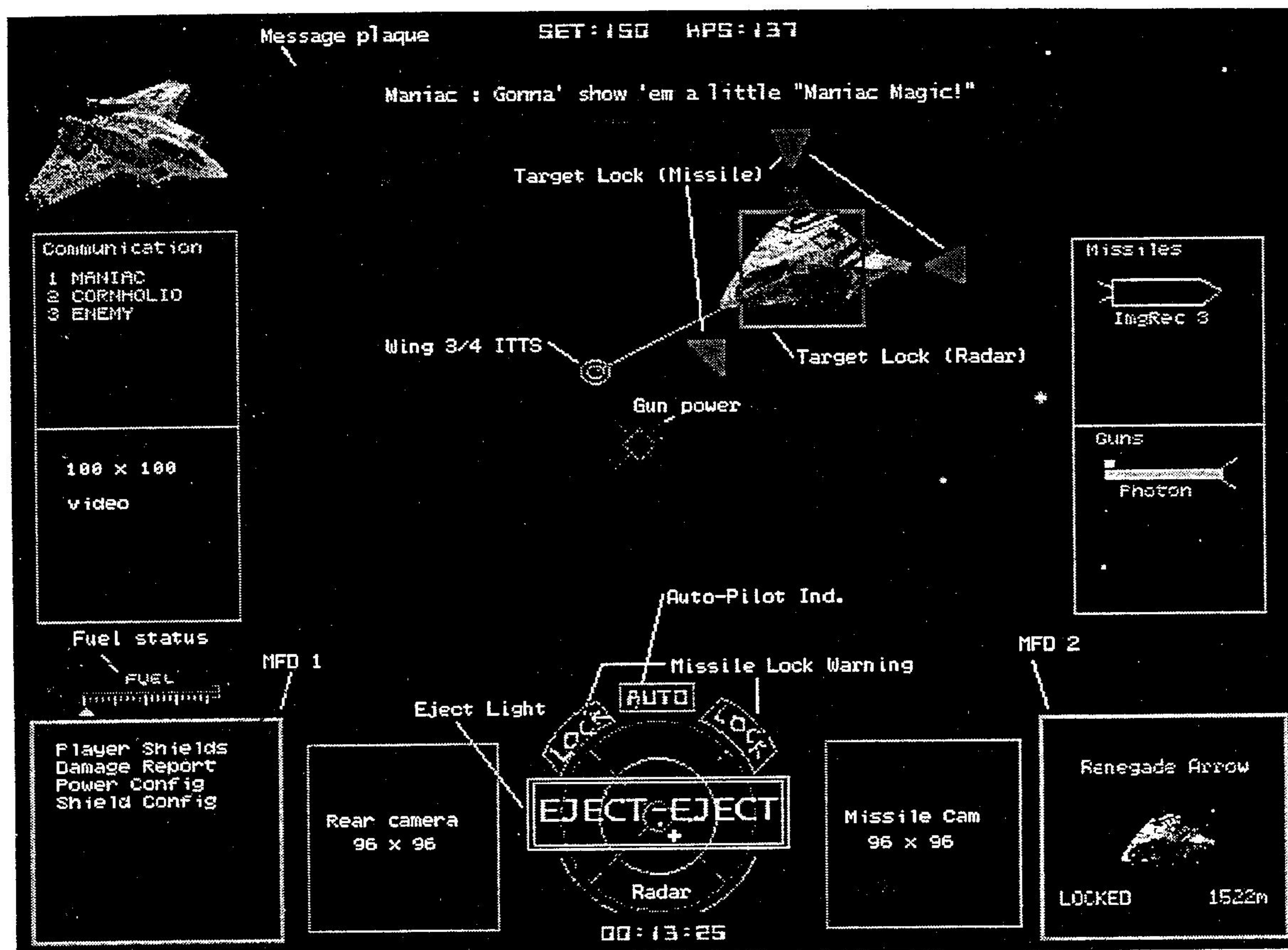
7. Player is then shown walking from landing bay with mechanic or other crew member saying "You might try flying your ship next time... or good job..."
8. [OPTIONAL] *Debriefing*. Movie- Player is in debriefing and he is told how he did in the mission...says " way to take out that ace pilot, now we have a chance at getting to that enemy carrier." for plot specific debriefings.
9. [OPTIONAL] *Plot Specific Movies*. Movie-player automatically runs any scenes that are critical to advancing the plot that take place outside of the main two room.
10. Player ends mission and appears in MAIN AREA ('Ready Room' -where player can save, view medals, and continue onto next mission OR 'Recreation Room' - where player can engage in conversations before continuing on to next mission.)



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## Spaceflight

### Cockpit



### HUD VDUs

#### MFD 1

Located in the lower left corner of the cockpit display.

**Shield and Armor Indicator** - A simple wire mesh representation of the player's ship will show the Front, rear and side armor. This will be surrounded the front and rear shield indicator.

**Power Configuration**- Window which can be brought up to adjust energy levels in areas including but possibly not limited to engines, radar, shields and guns.

**Shield Configuration**- Window which can be brought up to redistribute power to shields. Fore, aft, port, starboard.

**Damage Report**- Window which can be brought up to redistribute power to shields. Fore, aft, port, starboard.

#### MFD 2

Located in the lower right corner of the cockpit display.



**Target Display** - A 3-D image showing the *ship name* (or 'Ace Name'), *range* (displayed in text), and *orientation* (relative to the player's ship) of the targeted ship. Also, there way of telling (color - coding) whether the targeted ship is a friend or foe.

There will be two modes to display the target.

1. 3D colored Wire Mesh - When the targeted ship's armor is damaged, the appropriate area of the wire mesh will change color (green - fine; yellow- damaged; red - critical). The wire mesh will be surrounded by shield indicator (front shield; back shield; right shield; left shield).
2. Zoom Camera - fully lit and textured 3D object (as shown)

### MFD 3

Located on left side of cockpit display, halfway down.

**Communications Display** - Shows player his communication choices, and displays videos of NPC pilots' communications.

There will be two modes to display the target.

1. Comm Choices - Text choices for communicating with other pilots.
2. Comm Video - Beta-Videos of NPC in-flight communication.

### MFD 4

Located on right side of cockpit display, halfway down.

**Weapons Display** - Shows current guns and missiles that are armed.

There will be two modes to display the target.

1. Gun Display - Shows player which guns are armed
2. Missile Display - Shows player which missiles are armed.

### Miscellaneous

**Radar Display** - Should be able to detect hostile targets without the ability to identify or lock onto them at ranges longer than standard radar. Once closer to the target, the radar will act as in previous Wing Commanders.

**Gun Energy Indicator** - Shows the current gun energy available. Will lower as guns are fired and rise back to maximum when the guns are being rested.

**Mission Clock** - Starts a zero and counts off seconds, minutes and hours as soon as the mission starts. Players will be able to compare mission times in discussions on the Internet. Some missions may end of being very time oriented and a constant visible clock in the cockpit could aid a player in making strategic decisions.

**Electronic Counter Measure Indicator** - A light marked ECM or a flashing ECM LED readout possibly accompanied by a sound effect to show the player that his ECM is active.

**Speed Indicator** - Shows current set speed and actual speed numerically and bar diagram.

**Fuel Status** - Shows the amount of afterburner fuel left.



*Navigation Map*

## **Ships**

*Player Confed Ships*

*Confed Ships*

*Alien Ships*

Probe

Automated Turrets

*Alien Missile Cruiser*

*Alien Dreadnought*

## **Weapons**

## **Deaths**

*Player's Fighter*

Tractored in by Alien ship

Explosion

*Midway*

Gutted

Shredded

*At the gate*

Huge waves of Aliens transport through

If you fail the escorting the Marines to the base

Player teleports to the other side

Where waves and waves of alien fighters await him.

Carrier commits suicide?

After the player begins the last mission. Once they know the Armada is coming.



## **Objects**

*Wormhole gate*

*Spy Satellite(formerly known as 'ELINT')*

*Alien Auto-turrets*

*Jumpgate, Jump Buoy*

*Reservation Planet*

## **Walkthrough**



## Cast

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### Confederation

*Player (Cadet)*

*Best Friend (Cadet)*

*Foil Girl (Cadet)*

*Blair*

*Maniac*

*Dekker*

*Captain*

*Cadet 1*

*Cadet 2*

*Cadet 3*

*Science Officer*

*Engineer / Pliers-like character*

### Carrier

### Aliens

*Warlord*

*Warrior*

- Ace Warrior
- Captured Warriors

### Kilrathi

- Planetside Cat - Reservation Planet
- Comm Cats



## Game Control

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Install

Game Options

Spaceflight Options

Interface (past and future)

| FUNCTION                     | WC5        |
|------------------------------|------------|
| <b>KEYBOARD: SPACEFLIGHT</b> |            |
|                              |            |
| Increase Throttle            | +          |
| Decrease Throttle            | -          |
| Set Throttle to Zero         | Backspace  |
| Set Throttle to Max          | \          |
| Afterburner                  | TAB (hold) |
| Autopilot                    | A          |
| Pause                        | CTRL + P   |
| Eject                        | CTRL + E   |
| Calibrate Joystick           | CTRL + C   |
|                              |            |
| <b>KEYBOARD: COMBAT</b>      |            |
| Select Target or Next        | T          |
| Target Object under Reticule | R          |
| Lock Target (toggle)         | L          |
|                              |            |
| Switch Gun(s)                | G          |
| Select Full Guns             | F          |
| Configure Missile Array      | M          |
|                              |            |
| Fire gun(s)                  | SPACEBAR   |
| Fire Missile                 | ENTER      |
|                              |            |

| FUNCTION                 | WC3 KEY |
|--------------------------|---------|
| <b>KEYBOARD: NAV MAP</b> |         |
| Display map              | N       |
| Toggle Navpoint          | N       |
| Change viewpoint         | arrows  |
| Zoom out/in              | ] & [   |
| Center view              | C       |
| Cycle through targets    | T       |



|   |           |
|---|-----------|
| Starfield (toggle)                      | S         |
| Grid (toggle)                           | G         |
| Background (toggle)                     | B         |
|   |           |
| <b>KEYBOARD: VDU</b>                    |           |
| Cycle through displays                  | 0 (zero)  |
| Shields VDU                             | S         |
| Communications VDU                      | C         |
| Damage VDU/toggle text & icon           | D         |
| Weapon VDU (w/ cockpit active)          | W         |
| Power VDU/change system                 | P         |
|   |           |
| <b>KEYBOARD: CAMERA VIEWS</b>           |           |
| Front view; invisible cockpit           | F1        |
| Left, right & rear turret view          | F2,F3,F4  |
| Rear turret view in left VDU            | CTRL + F4 |
| Chase Camera                            | F5        |
| Object Camera                           | F6        |
| Missile Camera                          | F8        |
| Victim Camera                           | F9        |
| Track Camera                            | F10       |
| Disable flight controls in Camera Views | CTRL + L  |
| Zoom out/in                             | ] & [     |
|   |           |

| FUNCTION  | WC3 KEY                         |
|---|---------------------------------|
| <b>KEYBOARD: ON CARRIER</b>                               |                                 |
| Move cursor over person/object to display hotspot actions |                                 |
| Click left MB or press trigger to use objects & buttons   |                                 |
| Cancel/skip scene   | ESCAPE                          |
| Cycle through hotspots                                    | TAB/SHIFT+TAB/RMB               |
| Talk  | Click on character              |
| Use   | Click on terminal/door          |
| Select Reply  | Move cursor up/down, then click |
| Option screen   | Click main terminal             |
|   |                                 |
| <b>KEYBOARD: GAME INTERFACE</b>                           |                                 |
| Exit game   | CTRL + X                        |
| VGA mode (normal)   | CTRL + 1                        |
| VGA mode (triple buffer)                                  | CTRL + 2                        |
| SVGA mode (normal)  | CTRL + 3                        |
| SVGA mode (triple buffer)                                 | CTRL + 4                        |
| Calibrate joystick  | CTRL + J                        |
| Music (toggle)  | CTRL + M                        |
| Sound (toggle; on carrier)                                | CTRL + O                        |
| Scene transitions (toggle)                                | CTRL + K                        |
| Change music volume                                       | SHIFT + up/down arrows          |



|                         |                          |
|-------------------------|--------------------------|
| Change sound volume     | CTRL + up/down arrows    |
| Change gamma correction | CTRL + left/right arrows |
|                         |                          |
|                         |                          |
|                         |                          |