

PROJECT PHAETON

Project Phaeton is the Interplanetary Alliance's first attempt at an interstellar colony. The closest, best candidate for colonization is the fourth planet orbiting Epsilon Eridani. Epsilon Eridani is 10 light years away, so the voyage takes a little over forty years. (The Phaeton was expected to top out at approximately one half the speed of light.)

Due to the tremendous distance, costs and difficulties involved, the voyage would be strictly one way. The crew will travel to Epsilon Eridani, establish a colony there and reestablish contact with the Interplanetary Alliance's science platform orbiting Jupiter.

A system of Von Neumann auxon replicators should have the colony's biodome ready and waiting for when the ship gets there.

The crew is only 16 live human astronauts and a few dozen guinea pigs. (A study showed that guinea pigs have more edible meat per kilogram than any other animal, so they were the chosen food animal). The crew of volunteers will spend the voyage asleep in cryogenic stasis, to minimize the life support systems needed for the journey. The crew will be woken from cryosleep only once the ship is nearing Epsilon Eridani or in the case of an emergency while in-flight. As a safety precaution, the crew was divided into two banks of cryopods, so that if anything happened to one the other team could handle the situation. The mission commander would lead Red Team, and the assistant mission commander would lead Blue Team.

There's a bank of additional "colonists": a sperm bank and system of frozen embryos. Transporting embryos is easier than transporting full humans in cryosleep. One on Epsilon Eridani, some of the female crew members will act as surrogate mothers of the colony's second generation and thereby make the colony into a large enough population to survive.

That was the plan, anyway. Something went wrong, and Blue Team has been woken from cryogenic stasis early. Or is it early? The crew will have to investigate to figure out what is exactly going wrong. Once the damage has been assessed, they'll need to figure out how to save themselves.

IN THE VOID

If the ship continues on this course, it enter the Eridanus Supervoid, the largest empty space in the universe. The Supervoid is billions of lightyears across, so no help will ever reach the ship if it keeps going that direction.

RAMJET SCOOP

Due to the thruster misfire, a section of ramjet scoop has been blown off. The ramjet scoop was needed to provide an electromagnetic shield for the entire ship, preventing harmful cosmic rays from interfering with the ship's computer systems. The ramjet scoop also collects interstellar hydrogen to act as supplementary material for the ship's fusion reactors.

GYROSCOPIC STABILIZER

Stabilizers aren't rotating, meaning the ship has lost gravity and might be drifting off-course.

STEERING THRUSTERS

During course correction, a thruster misfired, causing an explosion that damaged the ramjet scoop, the mainframe housing and the gyroscopic stabilizers.

COMPUTER MAINFRAME

Lost shielding in the explosion. Cannot boot up.

SENSOR ARRAY

Radios not working until ramjet scoop shields it once more.

OXYGEN RECLAMATION

Lost a lot of O2 in accident, can only sustain crew for a few hours.

EXTERNAL AIRLOCK

Only two functional vacuum suits remain.

RED WING

Lost pressure, vacuum inside. 4 of 8 cryopods still functional.

BLUE WING

Some of the pods were knocked loose and the inhabitants didn't survive.

YELLOW WING

The guinea pigs that act as food and drug supply have escaped.

THERMAL CONTROL

Membranes offline. Until working, heat on the ship will continue to rise to dangerous levels.

LANDING MODULE

All systems go.

BARYOGENIC INVERTER

Lacking hydrogen to run until ramjet is fixed.

NUCLEAR PULSE CORE

Radiation shields damaged. Leaking radiation. Unstable if activated.