BLACK METRO

The Board Game

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CREDITS

To be written.

OVERVIEW

Welcome to Black Metro, a dystopian and chaotic city! Black Metro is a competitive area control game.

You have been chosen as a potential candidate to become the next ruler of the dark city through a succession tournament!

Using your personnel, acquire resources to research technologies, build fortifications and promote your personnel - all with the aim of acquiring the most power to claim the title deed to Black Metro. However, your competitors share the same goal!

Only one can occupy the throne. Will it be you?

USING THIS BOOKLET

This booklet is written as an introduction to Black Metro for new players. It should be used as a guide while learning the game.

It is assumed that players have a basic working knowledge of Tabletop Playground to play the game.

We recommend that new players learn the fundamentals of the game by reading through this booklet and playing a game using the introductory set-up.

REQUIREMENTS

- Players: 1-4
- Time: 30 mins per player
- Ages: 14+

COMPONENTS

Below is a list of all components supplied in Black Metro.

MAIN COMPONENTS

- Game board

- 4 player mats (in each of 4 colours)
- Starter guide

CARDS

- 6 candidates
- 1 opponent
- 49 technologies (12 in each of 4 colours + 1 additional red technology.)
- 55 fortunes (custom deck of playing cards)
- 26 missions
- 12 scientific levels (3 in each of 4 colours)
- 12 syndicates

DICE

- 4 six-sided dice (in each of 4 colours)

MINIATURES

- 40 personnel (10 in each of 4 colours)
- 12 blockades (3 in each of 4 colours)
- 4 support bases (in each of 4 colours)
- 1 relic

TILES

- 3 double-sided tiles

CUBES

- 4 power trackers (in each of 4 colours)
- 1 round tracker

TRACKERS

- 4 gold (yellow)
- 4 intel (blue)
- 4 drakownium (black)
- 4 strain (purple)

Sample of components

HOW TO WIN

Black Metro is played over the course of 8 game rounds. The player with the most power at the end of the final round is the winner.

GAME SET-UP

This section details the set-up of the main playing board and each player's play area.

MAIN BOARD: The main board consists of the various districts comprising Black Metro.

A track along the outside edge is used to track players' scores. A track at the top of the game board marks the passage of rounds.

PLAY AREA: Each player's play area consists of 4 resource trackers, 3 scientific level cards and a help sheet with a central area for a player's technology deck, and edges for a player's hideout, backup, overwhelmed and scientific level cards.

HIDEOUT: Each player's hideout contains their available personnel.

BACKUP: Each player's backup consists of 2 bags. One contains the supply of available

subordinates and the other the supply of available fortifications. Together, these form a player's backup and contain all units available to a player.

OVERWHELMED: Each player places any of their overwhelmed personnel into their overwhelmed bag.

SCIENTIFIC LEVEL CARDS: Contains the 3 scientific level cards that a player can advance by spending the resources listed on each card.

KEY CONCEPT: UNITS

Each player's units are represented by wooden pieces. There are two types of units in Black Metro: personnel and fortifications.

PERSONNEL: Personnel are assigned to districts each round to vie for asserting dominance and resolving districts' effects.

FORTIFICATIONS: Fortifications are military installations built to support a candidate's war effort.

Unit	Name	Strength
♟ : ♟	Subordinate	1
♟ : ♟♟♟ : ♟	Paragon	2
♟ : ♟♟♟ : ♟	Doom mechasuit	4*

🏰 : 🟥		Blockade	0*
🏰 : 🏭		Support base	X*

* Unit has special abilities detailed later on.

KEY CONCEPT: DISTRICTS

Black Metro is a dark city comprising of 12 districts. Each district is listed below with a general explanation of why a player would want to assign their personnel there.

01 SHADOWFORGE FACTORY

- Get 1 ▭
- Inflict 3 🐱 ⇨ get 1 ▭

A player would want to assign personnel here to get drakownium which is a mysterious technology metal that is monopolised in Black Metro. It can be used to research technologies at **08 Oakland Laboratory** and turn syndicates at **11 Astral Tower**.

02 SWISS CASINO

- Roll ▦
- Draw 1 🄵

A player would want to assign personnel here to draw fortunes which yield powerful one-time abilities that have the potential to favourably tip the scales of fate (*appendix 06*).

03 GILDED BANK

- Get 3 🪙
- Inflict 3 🐱 ⇨ get 3 🪙

A player would want to assign personnel here to get gold which is required to promote subordinates at **10 Crossfire Armoury** and to build fortifications at **09 Broadswade Construction**.

04 CHRONICLE ARCHIVES

- Get 2 🛈

- Inflict 3 🐱 ⇨ get 2 🛈

A player would want to assign personnel here to get intel which is needed to heal strain at **07 Highfield Hospital** and research technologies at **08 Oakland Laboratory**.

05 LAUGHING TAVERN

- Get 2 🪙 and 1 🛈
- Recall 3 👤 to recruit 1 ♟

A player would want to assign personnel here to get resource and increase the total number of personnel they have.

06 ANCIENT SHRINE

- Heal 3 🐱
- Draw 1 🄵

A player would want to assign personnel here to heal a small amount of strain and draw a fortune.

07 HIGHFIELD HOSPITAL

- Spend 2 🛈 ⇨ Heal half 🐱
- Recover 1 👤

A player would want to assign personnel here to heal a large amount of strain, which players accumulate throughout the game when losing district dominances.

If a player would inflict strain beyond 15, they lose 1 power for each excess strain they would have inflicted.

08 OAKLAND LABORATORY

- Spend X ⇨ advance 🧪
- Get 2 🛈

A player would want to assign personnel here to advance their scientific level which grants access to superior units and technologies.

The requirements to advance each scientific level are written on the corresponding cards in each player's play area (appendix 05).

09 BROADSWADE CONSTRUCTION

- Spend 1 💰 ➡ build 1 🏰
- Spend 1 💰 ➡ move 1 🏰

A player would want to assign personnel here to build and move fortifications which hinder other players at the districts where they are positioned (*appendix 03*).

10 CROSSFIRE ARMOURY

- Spend 3 💰 ➡ promote 1 ♟
- Roll 🎲

A player would want to assign personnel here to promote one of their subordinates to specialised personnel which can help assert dominance in future game rounds (*appendix 02*).

11 ASTRAL TOWER

- Spend 1 ▭ ➡ Turn 1 👥
- Draw 1 📕

A player would want to assign personnel here to turn syndicates and draw missions, both of which can help a player acquire more power (*appendix 09* and *appendix 10*).

12 COMBAT ZONE

- The ✊ player ➡ acquires 1 🏆
- The ✊ 🏛 player ➡ acquires 2 🏆

A player would want to assign personnel here in an attempt to acquire power while denying other players the opportunity.

STARTING THE GAME

This section describes how to set up a game of Black Metro and gives recommendations for the first game.

1. GATHER STARTING COMPONENTS: Each player chooses a colour and takes their appropriate seat.

2. DETERMINE FIRST PLAYER: Randomly determine which player will start first and give them the relic.

3. SHUFFLE DECKS: Shuffle the fortune, syndicate and mission decks.

4. REVEAL SYNDICATES: Reveal syndicates from the top of the deck equal to the number of players +1.

5. DRAW MISSIONS: Each player draws 2 missions, and then returns 1 mission back to the bottom of the mission deck.

6. CHOOSE CANDIDATES: For the first game, we recommend playing without candidates and instead each player follows the below set-up instructions.

- Recruit 2 subordinates
- Get 3 gold
- Get 2 intel
- Inflict 3 strain

Example play area set-up for the first game.

Starting with the first player and moving clockwise, each player chooses a candidate for the game, then each player follows the set-up instructions sequentially, and then each player charges their chosen candidate.

Charging a candidate

PHASES

Black Metro is played over a series of 8 game rounds, each of which contain the following 4 phases that players navigate sequentially.

1. **ASSIGNMENT PHASE:** Players assign personnel to districts where they intend to resolve those districts' abilities during the resolution phase.

2. **DOMINANCE PHASE:** Players assert dominance at districts to acquire power and potentially overwhelm other player's personnel to deny those players from resolving districts during the resolution phase.

3. **RESOLUTION PHASE:** Players resolve districts wherever they have personnel that survived the dominance phase.

4. **STANDBY PHASE:** Players perform admin steps in preparation for the next game round.

These phases repeat in successive game rounds. Each phase is described in detail below.

ASSIGNMENT PHASE

Starting with the relic player and proceeding clockwise, each player takes turns assigning 1 or more personnel from their hideout to a single district.

A player may assign as many personnel from their hideout to a single district as they wish, provided that player does not already have personnel at that district.

Once a player's hideout is empty, they can no longer take turns during the assignment phase, and play skips to the next player in order with personnel remaining. Once all hideouts are empty, the assignment phase ends.

DOMINANCE PHASE

Each district has an initiative number on the top left corner which denotes the order in which each district is contested for dominance.

Starting from the lowest initiative district with personnel, contest district dominance by comparing total strength among all players. The player with the greatest strength is the dominating player and asserts dominance (district dominance).

District dominance is carried out until dominance has been completed for the highest initiative district with personnel.

At the end of the final district dominance, the player who asserted dominance over the most districts **takes** the relic. If the player happens to be the relic player, they **retain** the relic. In the event of a tie, the relic player chooses another tied player and **gives** them the relic.

RESOLUTION PHASE

Each district has an initiative number on the top left corner. This denotes the order in which each district is resolved.

Starting from the lowest initiative district with personnel, each player with personnel at this district may use that district's effects (starting with the relic player and proceeding clockwise).

The district resolution step is carried out until resolution has been completed for the highest initiative district with personnel.

STANDBY PHASE

The standby phase consists of necessary admin duties to prepare for the next game round. Starting with the relic player and proceeding clockwise, players follow the steps below.

1. RECALL PERSONNEL: Each player recalls all personnel on the playing area to their respective hideouts and then recruits 1 subordinate.

This can be done by having any player press the Recall Personnel button once only.

Each player may also recover their overwhelmed personnel, inflicting strain equal to the strength of recovered personnel.

Overwhelmed personnel bring back their negativity to the hideout, which has a detrimental impact on overall morale.

2. CHARGE CARDS: Each player charges all of their downed cards.

3. FULFIL MISSIONS: Each player may fulfil one standby mission (*appendix 09*).

4. SYNDICATE BACKINGS: Each player may receive backing from 1 unturned syndicate if they fulfil the specified criteria (*appendix 10*).

This is an opportunity for candidates to curry favour with the various syndicates which hold political influence over Black Metro.

5. DRAW FORTUNES: Each player draws 1 fortune from the top of the fortune deck.

A fateful encounter approaches!

6. ROLL DICE: The player who currently has the most strain rolls the penalty dice. In the event of a tie no penalty dice is rolled.

The overlord subjects the most strained candidate to a penalty game.

The relic player then rolls the event dice (*appendix 07*).

An event is triggered, impacting the dark city. The relic player has complete authority on how to respond to the triggered event.

In a 1-2 player game, after the event dice is rolled, trigger the first bullet point of event 1.

7. ADVANCED ROUND: Advance the round track token to the next round.

FINAL SCORING

The following table details how each player acquires power at the end of the game.

Criteria	Result
Each unfulfilled 🟥	2 🐱
Every 2 🐱	-1 🏆
Total strength	X 🏆
Each charged ⛩	1 🏆

Every 3 💰	1 🏆
Every 2 🔵	1 🏆
Every 🔲	1 🏆
Candidate 🏳	3 🏆

In the event of a tie, a winner is determined as soon as a single tied player meets one of the following criteria.

1. Tied player with the fewest strain
2. Tied player with the most fulfilled missions
3. Tied player with the most technology
4. Tied player with the most drakownium
5. Tied player with the most intel
6. Tied player with the most gold
7. Tied player with the most fortunes

DISTRICT DOMINANCE

This section goes into detail on district dominances. Each time a player asserts dominance at a district, they follow the steps below.

1. ACQUIRE POWER: They acquire 1 power.

2. INFLICT STRAIN: They inflict 1 strain to other players.

3. FORTUITIOUS SUPPORT: They may play 1 dominance fortune to support their attack against another player (*appendix 06*).

4. OVERWHELM PERSONNEL: They overwhelm other players' personnel if the difference in strength between their forces is 3 (or more). They acquire 1 power if they overwhelm at least 1 player's personnel.

5. DESTROY FORTIFICATIONS: They destroy any fortifications owned by other players that do not have any personnel.

In the event of a tie, no dominance is asserted and no one acquires power. Other players with personnel at this district with fewer strength than tied players are not inflicted

with any strain. Other players with personnel at this district which would be overwhelmed are not overwhelmed.

APPENDIX

The appendix goes into greater detail on aspects of the game and should be consulted as required.

APPENDIX 01: SYMBOLS

There are many symbolic references used in Black Metro. This section lists them all.

💰 Gold

🔵 Intel

🔲 Drakownium

❎ Substituted resources

🟦 Strain

🧍 Personnel

🚶 Subordinate

👥 Specialised personnel

🏃 Paragon

🤖 Doom mechasuit

🏯 Fortification

🟥 Blockade

🏭 Support base

🟥 Fortification zone

🎲 Fortune dice

🎲 Supply dice

🎲 Penalty dice

🎲 Event dice

🔴 Assert dominance

⚠️ Overwhelm

🏆 Power

🏛️ Relic

⚗️ Scientific level

🇫 Fortune

🇹 Technology

🅼 Mission

👥 Syndicate

⏩ Separator

APPENDIX 02: RELIC

The relic is an ancient and powerful antiquity that symbolises military might and the capacity for leadership.

The player whose personnel asserted dominance over the most districts each round, takes the relic.

If the player happens to be the relic player, they retain the relic. In the event of a tie, the relic is given to another tied player.

Certain game effects may also allow a player to take the relic.

Whenever a player **takes** the relic, they acquire 1 power.

The relic player acts first during most game phases and has agency over the event dice.

APPENDIX 03: FORTIFICATIONS

09 Broadswade Construction allows players to build fortifications at districts. When a fortification is built, a player takes the appropriate fortification from their fortification bag in their backup, and places it on any unoccupied fortification zone found to the right of the district where they wish to build it.

Each district can contain a maximum of 3 fortifications.

BLOCKADES: A player must discard 1 fortune for each blockade owned by other players' at a district where they wish to play an equivalent numbered assignment fortune (*appendix 06*).

A player also requires 1 additional strength among their personnel assigned to a district for each blockade owned by other players' at that district, or else that player inflicts strain equal to twice the strength difference.

An example table is listed below, detailing the strain inflicted when certain strength is assigned to a district containing a certain number of blockades owned by other players, as well as the number of fortunes required to be discarded to play an assignment fortune.

Number of Blockades built at district	Total strength when assigning personnel	Fortunes discarded when playing assignment fortunes	Strain inflicted as a result of previous two columns
1	1	0	2
1	2	1	0
2	1	0	4
2	2	1	2
2	3	2	0
3	1	0	6
3	2	1	4
3	3	2	2
3	4	3	0

APPENDIX 04: SCIENCE

There are 3 scientific levels that players may progress. Each level unlocks a unique ability. Scientific level I allows players to research technologies at **08 Oakland Laboratory**. There are 4 types of technologies that can be researched, and each type has 3 levels.

1. **NEURO TECHNOLOGY (GREEN):** Supports strain reduction.
2. **LOGISTIC TECHNOLOGY (BLUE):** Supports unit positioning.
3. **BATTLE TECHNOLOGY (RED):** Supports asserting dominance.
4. **RESOURCE TECHNOLOGY (YELLOW):** Supports resource acquisition.

Researched technologies are downed (placed face down) and kept hidden from other players until they are charged during the standby phase. Therefore, technologies cannot be used on the turn they are researched, after which their abilities remain active for the remainder of the game.

A player may only research a technology if they satisfy the scientific level requirements by having a scientific level equal to or fewer than the level of the technology they wish to research.

[Image of technology and scientific level with arrow pointing to matching levels]

APPENDIX 05: FORTUNES

Fortunes represent fateful encounters candidates have with various citizens of Black Metro, who can provide one-off support.

Players can accumulate fortunes by resolving **02 Swiss Casino** or **06 Ancient Shrine**. Players can use fortunes to resolve the **first effect of facilities**, attack other players or discard them to reroll their dice once, applying the new result instead of the original.

Fortunes are represented by a custom deck of playing cards.

Players can hold a maximum of 5 fortunes. If a player would exceed this limit, they select and discard cards until they have 5.

Players are not permitted to look through the fortune discard pile.

Each fortune indicates when it can be used at the top of the card. If a fortune contains the keyword **assignment**, it can only be played during the assignment phase. If a mission contains the keyword **dominance,** it can only be played during the dominance phase.

In addition, after **any** fortune is resolved, the player gets 1 of the resource depicted on the card.

Heal 1 strain for cards that have the strain icon. Jokers are wild cards and can provide any 1 of the icon benefits.

Each type of fortune is detailed below.

ASSIGNMENT FORTUNES: *Ordinary citizens who have familiarity with a specific district, that are able to pass undetected by opposing personnel. They will either scout opposing personnel or make use of facility abilities for their supporting candidate.*

[Image of assignment fortune]

Represented by the cards; ace to 10. The player resolves 1 of the following effects on the corresponding numbered facility, which does not contain another player's blockades (aces are treated as either 01 or 11).

1. Resolve the first effect
2. Attack another player

If an attack is initiated, the defending player may counter by playing an equivalent or higher assignment fortune. The attacking player can then counter the counter and so forth until a winner is determined. Then, resolve the effects of the last played card.

DOMINANCE FORTUNES: *Upper class citizens who are specialists in their chosen crafts. Each possesses unique abilities to aid their supporting candidate.*

[Image of dominance fortune]

Represented by the cards; jack, queen, king and joker. These can only be played during the dominance phase by a player who asserts dominance at a district containing another player's personnel who they wish to attack.

The defending player may counter by playing an equivalent or higher dominance fortune (jack ≤ queen ≤ king ≤ joker). The attacking player can then counter the counter and so forth until a winner is determined. Then, resolve the effects of the last played card, in relation to the position that the player was in.

APPENDIX 06: DICE

Dice are used to resolve certain abilities. A player may discard a fortune to reroll their dice once, applying the new result instead of the original.

The following tables list the type of dice that can be rolled with their related results.

FORTUNE DICE

Result	Effect	Lore
1	Suffer 2	**High stakes gamble:** You lose a high stakes bet. Your personnel are overworked to compensate!
2	Suffer 1	**Sensible bet:** You lose a sensible bet. Your personnel are overworked to compensate!
3	Draw 1	**Mystery roulette:** You spin the wheel . . . and win a mystery prize!
4	Get 2	**Sensible bet:** You make a sensible bet . . . and win!
5	Get 1	**Intel wager:** You wager for intel . . . and succeed!
6	Get 1	**High stakes gamble:** You make a high stakes bet . . . congratulations, you hit the jackpot!

SUPPLY DICE

Result	Effect	Lore
1	Take the top	**Lucky device:** You

	from the discard	procure a strange device and hope it will prove useful.
2	Heal 3 and recover 1 , if able	**Med kit:** You procure an emergency first aid kit and distribute the contents amongst your personnel.
3	Get 2 and 2	**Crate of goods:** You procure resources to put to good use.
4	Research 1 and then you may spend the necessary resources to advance	**Scientific apparatus:** You procure scientific equipment and begin to experiment with it.
5	Promote 1 and build 1 at the same district, if able	**Arms stash:** You procure a stash of weaponry and distribute them accordingly.
6	Get 1 , draw 1 , and then you may return up to 2 back to the bottom of the deck, if able.	**Valuable artefact:** You procure a valuable artefact which you exchange with one of the Astral Cabinet ministers for drakownium and a political favour.

PENALTY DICE

Result	Effect	Lore
1	Suffer 2	**Enlisted services:** Your personnel are overworked due to the penalty game!
2	Lose 1	**Confiscation:** You relinquish drakownium due to the penalty game!
3	Lose 1	**Information extraction:** You hand over intel due to the penalty game!
4	Lose 1	**Taxation:** You pay for city damages due to the penalty game!
5	Discard 1	**Occult seal:** Your ability to dictate fate has weakened due to the penalty game!
6	Reveal 1 unfulfilled	**Expose secrets:** You are forced to reveal secrets due to the penalty game!

EVENT DICE 🎲

Result	Effect	Lore
1	Discard the top 🟪 from the 🟪 deck, destroy all 🏰 at the equivalent numbered district and then choose 1: • Place the massive explosion tile on that district • Place the trading market tile on that district • Place the gladiator arena tile on that district	**Massive explosion:** It resounds throughout the dark city. From your hideout, you can see trailing smoke rising in the distance from one of the city districts. An effort is being made by local tradesmen and entertainers to contain the situation. Will their efforts receive additional assistance or will they be ignored?
2	Choose 1: • Each player discards all of their 🟪 • Each player draws 1 🟪	**Chaotic winds:** Winds of change blow throughout the city. Do they bring good tidings or ill bodings?
3	Choose 1: • Each player halves their 🪙, 🔵, ▬ • Each player gets 3 🪙, 2 🔵, 1 ▬	**Assistance request:** A call for resources transmits throughout the dark city. Will the call be heeded or will personal greed triumph?
4	Choose 1: • Each player downs all of their 🔷 • Each player researches 1 🔷 and charges it	**Lightning storm:** It strikes the dark city. Will it trigger an EMP or provide the energy and unique conditions for researching technology at breakneck pace?
5	Choose 1: • Each player ⚠️ all but 2 of their paragons • Each player promotes 1 of their ♟	**Arms reallocation:** An order is issued to redistribute special forces to deal with an attack from the IDF. Will the order be obeyed or is the priority to strengthen personal defences instead?
6	Choose 1: • Each player return 1 unfulfilled 🟥 back to the bottom of the 🟥 deck, if able • Each player draws 1 🟥	**Project distribution:** Astral Cabinet ministers are working their way through the many tasks required to keep Black Metro functioning. Will the ministers receive assistance or hindrance?

Result 1: The relic player chooses a district corresponding to the discarded fortune, detailed in the table below.

Fortune	District
2-10	Equivalent number
Ace	01 or 11
Jack, queen or king	12
Joker	Any

APPENDIX 07: TILES

Certain effects can cause tiles to be placed over districts temporarily.

[Image of tiles.]

Fortifications cannot be built on a district which has a tile placed.

At the start of the dominance and standby phases, remove all placed tiles from the game board.

In addition, 1 and 2 player games also have a district explosion tile placed at the end of each standby phase.

APPENDIX 08: MISSIONS

Missions are personalised tasks assigned to candidates by the Astral Cabinet and present an opportunity for candidates to acquire massive power.

Players can draw missions by resolving **11 Astral Tower**. They can be fulfilled to acquire power.

Each mission indicates when it can be used at the top of the card. If a mission contains the keyword **standby**, it can only be scored during the standby phase. If a mission contains the keyword **dominance,** it can only be scored during the dominance phase, either during a district dominance or at the end of the dominance phase; as specified on the card's text.

[Image of standby and dominance missions]

Each time a player fulfils the requirements of a mission, they place the card face-up in their play area, selects 1 of the 3 listed options on the card and acquires power as stated.

At the end of the game, a player inflicts 2 strain for each unfulfilled mission they have.

The overlord reprimands candidates for failed missions.

APPENDIX 09: SYNDICATES

Syndicates represent the political parties comprising Black Metro. Candidates have the opportunity to acquire power from syndicates if they prove they excel in the syndicate's field of preference.

Syndicates allow players to acquire power during each standby phase, if they fulfil the requirements stated on an unturned syndicate. Syndicates are revealed at the beginning of the game equal to the number of players +1, in an unturned state.

Syndicates can be turned by resolving **11 Astral Tower**. Turning an already turned syndicate, reverts it back to an unturned state.

Example of turning syndicates

Bribing a syndicate with the rare and potent drakownium tech metal allows candidates to control which syndicates are present at the Astral Tower to grant them their backing.

APPENDIX 10: CANDIDATES

Candidates provide an asymmetrical start to the game as well as provide each player unique abilities to use throughout gameplay. At the start of the game, players follow the set-up rules on their chosen candidates sequentially, and then charge their chosen candidates.

Each candidate has 2 abilities; 1 of which is related to a specific district, and the other more generalised.

Each candidate is represented by a specific dominance fortune as depicted on each candidate, known as a candidate fortune. At the end of the game, a player acquires 3 power if they have their candidate fortune in hand.

[Labelled diagram of front and back candidate, showing abilities, and candidate fortune]

ADVANCED CONCEPTS

This section contains general rules that players should learn once they have familiarised themselves with the basic game concepts.

GOLDEN RULES: The golden rules are fundamental game concepts on which all other game rules are built.

ABILITIES: If an ability contradicts information in this booklet, the ability has precedence. If both the ability and the rules can be followed at the same time, they should be.

If an ability uses the word **cannot**, it is absolute and cannot be overridden by other abilities.

Abilities are optional unless otherwise explicitly stated with the word **must**.

When using an ability it must be resolved completely otherwise the ability cannot be used at all, unless it contains the words **you may**, in which case it is possible to resolve an ability partially. Alternatively, if any of the following exceptions apply, **then resolve as much of the ability as possible**.

EXCEPTIONS
If the ability has the words **if able** written.
OR
The ability requires a player to get **X** which would push them beyond the maximum limit.
OR
The ability requires a player to get **X** but there is not enough **X** available.
OR
The ability requires a player to lose **X**, but they do not have enough **X** to lose.

X refers to resources, fortunes, missions, fortifications, technologies and personnel.

If the ability chooses another player, then the ability must be resolved by choosing a player where the ability can be resolved as much as possible.

TIMING: During the dominance and resolution phases when determining the first player always start from the player with personnel who is closest clockwise to the relic player (including the relic player), and then proceed clockwise.

If there are multiple abilities that players wish to resolve at the same time, starting with the relic player and proceeding clockwise, each player resolves all of their chosen abilities. Technologies are resolved in ascending order of level.

During the assignment and standby phases the relic player is the first player.

TROUBLESHOOTING

The following clarifications address frequently asked questions and unusual scenarios which may come up in a game.

CARDS
If a player would draw a card from an empty deck, shuffle the associated discard to form a new deck (excepting missions which are never replenished).

Players cannot voluntarily reveal their missions, fortunes or researched technologies.

CANDIDATES: During the resolution phase, a player may use the district related ability of their candidate even if they do not use any effects of the corresponding district. A player only needs to have personnel at the corresponding district to resolve it.

THE COLONEL: Following the set-up rules, the specialised personnel is placed in your hideout.

THE GAMBLER: Dice can only be rerolled once. Whenever a player rolls a dice, it is the active player who has the first opportunity to discard a fortune to reroll their dice. After which The Gambler has the opportunity to use their sneaky sabotage ability (as long as the active player did not reroll already).

THE TECHNOLOGIST: If a player does not have a technology of equal level from the frequency jammer ability, they down 1 technology with a lower level instead, if able.

FORTUNES

ASSIGNMENT FORTUNES: A player may only play 1 assignment fortune during each assign personnel step, even if they have multiple fortunes with the same value.

If the turn player loses an assignment fortune attack, they must still proceed to step 2 and assign personnel to a district. It is therefore possible for the turn player to be forced to assign personnel to 2 districts in 1 turn.

DOMINANCE FORTUNES: Only the first dominance fortune played during each attack is treated as an attack. Subsequent dominance fortunes are counters. Countering a dominance fortune is not the same as attacking with a dominance fortune, even if the player who initiated the attack later counters with a separate dominance fortune.

MISSIONS: If a mission specifies a player to have **X**, treat the wording as **at least / at most**, as appropriate.

X refers to resources, fortunes, missions, fortifications, technologies, and personnel.

If a mission specifies a player to assert dominance against another player with a specific criteria, but there are multiple players who fulfil that criteria, the mission **cannot** be fulfilled.

A player may only fulfil a maximum of 1 dominance mission and 1 standby mission each round, regardless of the timing windows used to fulfil dominance missions.

The mission deck is never replenished. If the deck runs out of missions, no more can be drawn.

SYNDICATES: A player cannot receive backing from a syndicate if they are tied for the specified criteria. A player can only receive backing from 1 unturned syndicate during each standby phase, even if they satisfy the criteria for multiple unturned syndicates.

Syndicates can only be turned through game effects. They do not reset each round.

TECHNOLOGIES: When players research technology they must satisfy scientific level requirements, by having a scientific level equal to or fewer than the level of the technology to be researched.

EXPIDITRY MATRIX: A player's candidate ability constituting to the resolution of a district may only be used during the resolution phase.

VOLTAIC EDGE: A player may use this technology in a district which contains both of their fortifications and specialised personnel.

DISTRICTS

There are two types of districts which are facilities and battlefields.

Facilities encompass the numbered spaces 01 to 11. Any player with personnel on a facility during the resolution phase may use the effects of that facility.

District 12 is a battlefield. Unlike facilities where multiple players can use their effects, only the dominating player triumphs and earns the right to acquire power through dominating the battlefield.

05 LAUGHING TAVERN: The recalled personnel must be from 05 Laughing Tavern, and they are returned to the player's hideout. The recruited subordinate is placed at 05 Laughing Tavern.

07 HIGHFIELD HOSPITAL: Recovering personnel allows a player to move their personnel from their overwhelmed bag to their hideout.

10 CROSSFIRE ARMOURY: The subordinate to be promoted must be at 10 Crossfire Armoury.

FINAL SCORING

A support base contributes power towards final scoring based on its strength at the end of the game.

GAIN

Some abilities use the term gain instead of the usual associated terminology. When X is gained, it bypasses all game rules that would ordinarily prevent X from being played, but X is gained in ascending order of superiority.

For example, when gaining a technology, the lowest level technology in a specific colour of the player's choosing, must be gained first. Gained technologies are downed.

PHASES

RESOLUTION PHASE: Players are free to choose which effects they wish to resolve, but effects must be resolved in list order. A player may choose to resolve a district without using any of that district's effects.

POWER TRACKER

If a player's power moves 'backwards' beyond the starting space, their current power becomes the negative value equal to the number of spaces beyond the starting space their power moved backwards by. If a player would then acquire power which would push them past the starting space, their power reverts to the corresponding value in accordance to the track design.

If a player's power laps the board, then continue to increase their power. Their power does not reset to the original values as implied by the track design.

RESOURCES

A player cannot get more than 15 of any resource. Whenever a player would inflict excess strain beyond 15, they lose 1 power for each strain that would have been inflicted.

ROUNDING

Some abilities require resources or strain to be rounded. Always round the tracker number down; so rounding in favour when healing strain, but not in favour when losing resources.

UNITS

Players are limited to using only the game components provided.

FORTIFICATIONS: If a player builds a fortification but has none left in their backup, they may move an equivalent number of their fortifications instead.

A player cannot move another player's support base as long as it is accompanied by another fortification built by the same player who built the support base.

PERSONNEL: A player may only have a maximum of 5 paragons and 1 doom mechasuit in their hideout. A player may only have a maximum of 10 personnel in their hideout. Any excess personnel are returned to the backup and the player acquires 1 power for each personnel returned.

If an ability requires a player to recruit any subordinates from their backup but none remain, or promote any subordinates but all of their corresponding specialised personnel are

in play, **they may instead take those personnel from their overwhelmed bag**.

EXAMPLE GAME ROUND

This section contains an example game round and covers many of the core gameplay mechanics and should be used as a reference to illustrate what a game round may look like.

ASSIGNMENT PHASE

Red has the relic, so he chooses to assign one of his subordinates to **11 The Astral Tower**, and inflicts 4 strain because Blue has built 2 blockades there (3 strength required - 1 strength assigned = 4 strain inflicted).

Green assigns two of her subordinates to **03 The Gilded Bank** where she has already built a blockade, and then she plays the 3 of diamonds, allowing her to get 4 gold (3 from resolving the first effect of **03 The Gilded Bank** and 1 for playing a diamond suited fortune).

Blue assigns one subordinate to **08 The Oakland Laboratory**.

Red assigns two paragons and a subordinate to **03 The Gilded Bank**.

Green assigns two paragons to **11 The Astral Tower**. Blue also assigns two paragons to occupy **11 The Astral Tower** and defend his blockades.

As the other two players' hideouts are empty, play returns to Blue and he assigns 1 paragon and 1 subordinate to **03 The Gilded Bank** before passing, which concludes the assignment phase.

DOMINANCE PHASE

DISTRICT DOMINANCE: At **03 The Gilded Bank** Red has 2 paragons and 1 subordinate giving him a total of 5 strength. Blue has 1 paragon and 1 subordinate, giving him 3 strength, and Green has 2 subordinates, giving her 2 strength. Red therefore asserts dominance and follows the steps for district dominance.

1.1 Red acquires 1 power.

1.2 Red then chooses to attack Green with the jack of hearts, but Green counters with the queen of spades. Red counters with the queen of diamonds. Green counters again with the king of clubs. As Red is unable to (or does not want to) counter the king of clubs, the exchange is ended. Red inflicts 2 strain and Green gets 1 intel for playing a clubs suited fortune.

1.3 Blue and Green each inflict 1 strain.

1.4 Because the difference in strength between Red and Green is 3 or more (5 - 2 = 3), Green's personnel are overwhelmed and are placed in her overwhelmed bag, and then Red acquires 1 power.

1.5 Red destroys Green's blockade as it is now without corresponding personnel. Green returns it to her backup.

1.6 Red fulfils his dominance mission, secure the district, so he acquires 1 power because he has 5 strength at this district.

At **08 The Oakland Laboratory**, Blue's single subordinate asserts dominance uncontested and he acquires 1 power.

At **11 The Astral Tower**, both Green and Blue each have two paragons giving both players 4 strength, while Red has a single subordinate giving him 1 strength. Because there is a tie for greatest strength, no one can assert dominance so neither Green nor Blue acquire any power. Due to the tie, Red does not inflict any strain for having less strength nor is his subordinate overwhelmed due to the strength difference.

CITY DOMINANCE: In total, Red and Blue each asserted dominance at 1 district (**03 The Gilded Bank** and **08 The Oakland Laboratory** respectively), whereas Green was unable to assert dominance in any districts. Therefore city dominance ends in a tie and as a result Red passes the relic to another tied player, his only option being Blue in this instance.

FULFIL DOMINANCE MISSION: Blue is able to fulfil his dominance mission, defend strategic positions to acquire 1 power as he has personnel at **11 The Astral Tower** which also contains his blockade.

RESOLUTION PHASE

Blue resolves **03 The Gilded Bank** and gets 3 gold. Red then resolves **03 The Gilded Bank** and chooses to resolve both effects, getting 6 gold and inflicting 3 strain.

Blue resolves **08 The Oakland Laboratory** by spending 3 intel and 1 drakownium to research a technology (as he has already unlocked scientific level I) and getting 2 intel.

Blue resolves **11 The Astral Tower**, choosing only to draw 1 mission. Red does the same. Finally Green resolves **11 The Astral Tower**, but she chooses to use both effects, so she spends 1 drakownium to turn the fortitude trainers syndicate, and then draws 1 mission.

STANDBY PHASE

RECALL PERSONNEL: All players return their personnel on the playing area back to their respective hideouts. Green chooses to recover her overwhelmed subordinates placing them back in her hideout by inflicting 2 strain (total strength of personnel recovered).

CHARGE CARDS: Blue charges his researched technology, Trading Platform.

FULFIL STANDBY MISSION: Green fulfils her standby mission believe in destiny by discarding 3 fortunes to acquire 2 power.

RECEIVE SYNDICATE BACKING: Green receives backing from the fortitude trainers syndicate as she currently has the most strain, and so she acquires 2 power.

ADVANCE ROUND: Blue advances the round track token to round 4.

SOLO CHALLENGE

This section details the scenario for a single player playing Black Metro. The solo challenge has been designed for experienced players to attempt.

HOW TO WIN

Overwhelm all of the overlord's personnel within 8 game rounds and acquire 70 power. The player **immediately** loses if:

1. The overlord still has personnel in his hideout at the end of 8 game rounds. You failed to subdue all of the opposing forces.
2. You acquired fewer than 70 power. You were unable to achieve a satisfactory rank.

3. You would ever inflict strain beyond 15. Your personnel yield due to being overstrained.
4. The overlord acquires 40 power. The city has been dominated by the opposing forces.

SET-UP

Follow the instructions below for starting the solo challenge.

1. GATHER STARTING COMPONENTS: Choose colours for yourself and the opposition.

2. DETERMINE FIRST PLAYER: Give the relic to the opposition.

3. SHUFFLE DECKS: Shuffle the fortune and mission decks.

4. REVEAL SYNDICATES: Find and reveal builders union, armed patrollers and researchers study syndicates.

5. DRAW MISSIONS: You draw 2 missions, and then return 1 mission back to the bottom of the mission deck.

6. CHOOSE CANDIDATE: Follow the set-up instructions and then charge your chosen candidate.

If the technologist or the colonel is chosen, in addition to their set-up instructions, inflict 2 strain and overwhelm 1 subordinate.

7. PREPARE OPPONENT: Choose an opponent for the game, follow the set-up instructions and then charge the opponent.

ADDITIONAL RULES

ASSIGN PERSONNEL: When determining where the overlord assigns his personnel, discard the top fortune from the fortune deck

and assign 1 personnel to the corresponding district, following standard rules.

Fortune	District
2-10	Equivalent number
Ace	01 or 11
Jack, queen or king	12
Joker	Any

When there is a choice of multiple districts, assign the personnel to the lowest initiative district which meets none or more of the priority listed criteria.

1. Contains the player's personnel with fewest strength.
2. Contains the player's support base.
3. Contains the player's fortifications.

Exception: The overlord will not assign personnel to a district if it would cause him to inflict strain onto himself; either through dominance or due to the player's blockades at that district.

If the overlord will not assign personnel to a district, discard another fortune and repeat the process until a valid district is chosen.

DISTRICT RESOLUTION: The overlord's personnel do not resolve **facilities**.

ACQUIRING POWER: The overlord acquires power through district dominances, resolving battlefields and syndicate backing.

DOMINANCE FORTUNES: Most dominance fortunes have alterations in their behaviour for the solo challenge. These are listed below.

QUEEN: Place the top card of the fortune discard on top of the fortune deck instead.

KING: Overwhelm the specialised personnel instead.

JOKER: In the solo variant, jokers represent the overlord's counterattacks against the player.

The nature of the counterattack is dependent upon the manner in which the joker is discarded. In addition to the effects of the counterattacks listed below, the overlord also subjects the player to a penalty game.

Counterintelligence: Whenever the player draws a joker, they immediately discard all of their fortunes.

Counteroffensive: Whenever a joker is discarded due to assigning personnel, assign the personnel and gain a fortification at the lowest initiative district which meets none or more of the priority listed criteria.

1. Contains the player's personnel with fewest strength.
2. Contains the player's support base.
3. Contains the player's fortifications.

Counterforce: Whenever a joker is discarded due to triggering event 1, the first effect is triggered at the lowest initiative district which meets none or more of the priority listed criteria.

1. Contains the player's personnel with fewest strength.
2. Contains the player's support base
3. Contains the player's fortifications

OVERLORD CLARIFICATIONS

This section clarifies some of the terminology and abilities for the overlord.

GAIN: Some of the overlord's set-up and abilities use the term gain instead of the usual associated terminology. When X is gained, it bypasses all game rules that would ordinarily prevent X from being played, but X is gained in ascending order of superiority. For example, the support base will not be gained unless all other fortifications have already been gained.

If no more fortifications can be gained, move the support base to the chosen district, if able.

Gained personnel are assigned in ascending order of strength.

Gained technologies are downed.

FORCED: This applies to all personnel regardless of who controls them.

OVERLORD: Result 1 does not affect any players directly, and therefore the overlord's personnel are still affected by tiles.

BRIEFING

SPOILER WARNING: The briefing includes major plot spoilers to the novella, Black Metro – The Successor. The briefing is not required to play the solo variant and is only provided to give a written context to the solo variant. You know everything required to play the solo variant. Skip to the evaluation once you have finished playing if you do not wish to be spoiled.

It was nearing a month since the coronation ceremony. Danielle, in a rare display of laziness had intended to sleep in and have a relaxed day. She could still hardly believe the unexpected turn of events that had taken place at the ceremony. Soon after, the colonel had called Danielle over to the Crossfire Armoury for some additional training, even going so far as to arrange special training sessions with some of Black Metro's most elite personnel.

The training was gruelling and had taken its toll on her. She had around a week left to get her affairs in order and finalise her preparations to leave Black Metro behind once and for all, and journey with the rest of the strike team towards the empire, where she hoped to reunite with her family. That could be placed on hold for a single day right?

As if on cue to thwart her, a sudden knock on the door rattled Danielle back to reality.

Startled, she quickly wrapped herself in a dressing gown, stifling a yawn as she opened the door. She frowned. There was not a soul in sight. Her eyes dropped downwards, noticing an envelope by her feet. She squatted to pick it up, closed the door and retreated to her couch. Danielle peeled the seal off the envelope, retrieved the letter and began reading. Her eyes widened as she read through the contents, suddenly springing to action and getting changed to head out.

***

"Responding to my summons on such short notice is appreciated Danielle," Drakow said while seated in his custom battle station chair. Danielle sat opposite. She recalled the last time she was in Drakow's battle station room and shuddered slightly at the memory.

"Shouldn't this be Emily's room now?"

"In due course," Drakow said with a slight tilt of his head. *"It has not even been a month since Emily became Black Metro's new ruler. These things take time."*

"Well anyway, what was the reason for my summons?"

"The elite IDF soldiers controlled by the empire shall not be nearly as merciful as the candidates you recently finished competing against, nor the special training sessions colonel Sam put you through, no. Although I suppose you need not be reminded of the brutality of the IDF as you have previously encountered them ..."

Danielle rubbed her face as she was brought back to the time when the empire attacked the Oakland Laboratory. She had been taken hostage by several IDF soldiers and indeed they had not been particularly gentle with her.

Drakow straightened himself in his chair. "Therefore, I have arranged a final

examination to aid your preparations for what lies ahead. Think of it as extra credit. You will participate in a simulation against a pseudo invading force – IDF or otherwise – against Black Metro. We will emulate the Black Metro tournament but condense the action to four days. It is your objective to incapacitate all of the opposing forces within that time frame. Merely securing districts will not be enough. You must fight with the intent to kill, for your opposition has been instructed likewise."

Danielle was about to raise an objection but stiffened her upper lip, having learned that Drakow tended to react aggressively to disobedience.

"You need not concern yourself, however. The forces you will be facing against are Black Metro's most elite soldiers. If by some strange phenomenon you actually manage to kill any of them, that simply means they were not strong enough to survive."

Danielle gulped and nodded, not trusting herself to speak. She realised his proposition worked both ways. Should she succumb to some grievous wound during this final test, she would unlikely recover in time to join the strike team and leave Black Metro. Just when she thought she was finally in the clear!

"You will begin this final test from as close to the starting position as possible as you had the Black Metro tournament. The opposing forces will initiate the attack and strike the city districts at random, as it is assumed they do not have knowledge of the city layout. Do you have any enquiries?"

A silence filled the air. Danielle took a deep breath before responding.

 "Well, I'm not exactly on the best of terms with some of my former team members after what happened at the ceremony, so I guess starting from the beginning might be easier to achieve than expected," Danielle said while nodding to herself. *"I guess there's no getting out of this, so . . . I basically need to subdue all of the enemies within four days? Who is leading the opposing forces?*

Drakow rested his gauntlets against the table and interlocked his fingers together, creating a metallic screeching sound due to the friction of metal against metal, which caused Danielle to flinch. He separated his hands, planted them on the desk and rose out of his seat to tower over the girl.

"This time Danielle, your opponent is me."

BEGINNING OF ROUND 6

It was halfway through the third day of the final test. Drakow surveyed the dark city from the Astral Tower rooftop, examining the battles that were being waged throughout the districts. His cape billowed in the swirling gusts. He flexed the fingers in each of his gauntlets and stomped the ground with his sabatons.

"My body seems to be behaving itself, for the time being at least," Drakow said out loud to himself. *"Watching all of these battles has ignited my fighting spirit! All will be well as long as Emily does not catch wind of what is about to transpire …"*

He reached outward with his right gauntleted hand and made a clenched fist. *"Danielle, I wish to confront your efforts personally. I will descend upon the battlefield myself!"*

EVALUATION

Follow the [final scoring](#) as per standard rules, then use the below table to determine your evaluation in the final examination!

Score	Rank	Evaluation
>99	S	"Superb! Truly you have surpassed my greatest expectations. Highest

		congratulations to you!"
90-99	A	"Excellent work! You have outdone yourself to achieve this outcome. Well done!
80-89	B	"A good effort. You performed better than I anticipated. You have my acknowledgments.
70-79	C	"An acceptable result. It is about as I expected."
<70	F	"Unacceptable! I am most disappointed. You have failed!"

QUICK REFERENCE

These instructions summarise a game round.

ASSIGNMENT PHASE: Starting with the relic player and proceeding clockwise, players take turns following the steps below.

1. ASSIGN PERSONNEL: The turn player assigns 1 or more personnel from their hideout to a single district.

2. PLAY COMMON FORTUNE: The turn player may play a common fortune.

DOMINANCE PHASE: Each district has an initiative number on the top left corner. This denotes the order in which each district dominance is contested.

1. DISTRICT DOMINANCE: The player with the greatest strength asserts dominance.

1.1 The dominating player acquires 1 power.

1.2 The dominating player may play 1 elite fortune.

1.3 Other players with personnel at this district inflict 1 strain.

1.4 If the difference in strength between the dominating player and another player with personnel at this district is 3, that player's personnel are overwhelmed and placed in their overwhelmed area. The dominating

player acquires 1 power if they overwhelm at least 1 player's personnel.

1.5 The dominating player destroys any fortifications owned by other players that do not have any personnel at this district.

1.6 The dominating player may fulfil 1 dominance mission with the timing **after you assert dominance**, if they have not already fulfilled a dominance mission.

2. CITY DOMINANCE: The player whose personnel asserted dominance over the most districts takes the relic. If the player happens to be the relic player, they retain the relic. In the event of a tie, the relic player chooses another tied player and gives them the relic.

3. FULFIL DOMINANCE MISSION: Starting with the relic player, each player may fulfil 1 dominance mission with the timing **at the end of the dominance phase** if they have not already fulfilled a dominance mission.

RESOLUTION PHASE: Each district has an initiative number on the top left corner. This denotes the order of district resolution.

1. DISTRICT RESOLUTION: Starting from the lowest initiative district with personnel, each player with personnel at this district may use that district's effects (starting with the relic player and proceeding clockwise).

STANDBY PHASE: Starting with the relic player and proceeding clockwise, players take turns following the steps below.

1. RECALL PERSONNEL: Any player presses the **Recall Personnel** button once. Each player may also recall their overwhelmed personnel, inflicting strain equal to the strength of recalled personnel.

2. DRAW FORTUNE: Draw 1 fortune.

3. CHARGE CARDS: Charge all downed cards.

4. FULFIL STANDBY MISSION: Fulfil one standby mission.

5. RECEIVE SYNDICATE BACKING: Each player may receive backing from 1 syndicate.

6. ROLL DICE: The player who currently has the most strain rolls the penalty dice. Then the relic player rolls the event dice.

7. ADVANCED ROUND: Advance the round track token to the next round.