

Equipment

Vehicles

UT-47 Kodiak “Drop Shuttle”

The Systems Alliance UT-47 drop-shuttle landing craft holds 12 soldiers in a cramped, uncomfortable cargo bay and two more in the cockpit. Officially named the Kodiak, the drop-shuttle is better known to Alliance marines as the "combat cockroach" due to its appearance and durability.

The vehicle's robust environmental sealant technology exposes few vulnerable parts to the elements. First tested in the sulfuric acid clouds and extreme temperatures of Venus, the Kodiak can land in hard vacuum, high pressure, and temperatures from near-absolute zero to over 900 degrees Celsius.

A true contragravitic vehicle, the Kodiak's substantial element zero core allows flight by entirely countering the vehicle's mass. Its small thrusters are for directional control only, so if the mass effect field fails, the vehicle becomes a proverbial "three-million-credit coffin." The unarmed shuttle forgoes weaponry-space for active masking, electronic countermeasures, and a robust kinetic barrier system. It is ideal for dropping troops undetected or stealth reconnaissance.

The Kodiak also features an FTL drive and can be used to shuttle personnel from planet to planet.

Originally created to covertly insert Alliance marines into hostile environments, the UT-47 shuttle has since been sold to allies, recovered by enemies, and had its specifications stolen by spies. In one form or another, this durable transport is now used in all corners of the galaxy and is the primary means of transportation for almost all humanity.

A-model variant Kodiaks feature a front-mounted mass-accelerator cannon that can be used in an antivehicular role. Since the shuttle lacks proper gun ports, soldiers often open the side hatch to fire on enemies. This is discouraged in Alliance manuals, since it exposes the interior to return fire.

Flying the 47A during atmospheric combat requires considerable skill. The pilot must reduce the vehicle's mass for speed and handling, while maintaining enough mass to resist recoil, incoming fire, and inclement weather. More than one pilot has overstressed the Kodiak's field generator and ended up on the battlefield instead of above it.

M29 Grizzly IFV

The M29 "Grizzly" Infantry Fighting Vehicle (IFV) was the standard "battle taxi" of Systems Alliance Marines for nearly thirty years. However, while excellent in long-term planetary campaigns, the Grizzly's bulk and weight made it unsuitable for rapid deployment across the Alliance's expanding sphere of influence.

Grizzlies are several meters longer than the Mako; however, when stripped of its antenna and turret, they are roughly the same height. With these optional features, the Grizzlies are taller than a Mako. Six people, including the driver, can fit inside the vehicle. The Grizzlies are compartmentalized into a driver/antenna/engine compartment and a passenger/turret compartment. There is a crew hatch in the driver/engine compartment. The vehicle's power cells are located in the front of this compartment. These cells power the systems aboard the vehicle and provide propulsion power to the wheels located on either side of the passenger/turret compartment. All six wheels of the vehicle are protected by wheel covers.

The military-grade Grizzly can be equipped with either an antenna/turret package, or an antenna, minus turret, package. With the success of the Grizzlies, the civilian-grade VT7 was introduced minus the antenna and turret. The VT7s were painted brown with orange highlights. The Grizzly can be maintained by one of two methods. The easiest approach is for the vehicle to be parked over a trench. Another approach is to raise the vehicle. With this approach, the vehicle is supported by gantries holding the first and rearmost tires. Either method allows mechanics access to the underside for maintenance.

M35 Mako IFV

The M35 Mako Infantry Fighting Vehicle was designed for the Systems Alliance's frigates. It is designed to fulfill the role of rapid deployment that its predecessor, the M29 Grizzly, fell short of accomplishing. Though the interior is cramped, an M35 is small enough to be carried in the cargo bay and easily deployed on virtually any world.

With its turreted 155mm mass accelerator cannon and coaxial-mounted machine gun, the Mako can provide a fireteam with weapon support as well as mobility. Since Alliance marines may be required to fight on any world in a variety of planetary environments, the Mako is environmentally sealed and powered by a hydrogen-oxygen fuel cell.

The vehicle's armor is tough enough to withstand high drops, extreme heat and cold and rough terrain. The Mako's suspension and propulsion system allow the vehicle to adapt to various terrain, as well as enabling the vehicle to change direction quickly via independently reversible wheels (similar to a tank).

For deployment on low-gravity planetoids, it is equipped with micro-thrusters and a small element zero core, which can be used to increase mass and provide greater traction. While not large enough to nullify the vehicle's mass, the core can reduce it enough to be safely air-dropped (a maneuver normally requiring a minimum of 100m of open terrain). This allows frigates to deploy their shore parties while limiting the ship's exposure to defensive anti-aircraft artillery. When used in conjunction with thrusters, it also allows the Mako to extricate itself from difficult terrain.

The Mako's hull is covered with laser detection arrays, which forewarn the crew of enemy laser-guided ordnance. Ground-penetrating radar allows detection of anti-vehicle mines and other subsurface anomalies. These will be brought to the attention of the crew by the vehicle's micro-frame computer system.

Several combat support vehicles using the Mako's basic chassis are manufactured for Alliance surface garrisons. These include a recon drone controller, a mobile air defense platform, and the M38 military ambulance nicknamed "Moby" because it is painted white during peacekeeping operations. Shipboard Marines exclusively use the tactically flexible and heavily armed base model.

M-44 Hammerhead MBT Prototype

The M-44 Hammerhead is a Main Battle Tank (MBT) that hovers over the battlefield at up to 120 kilometers an hour. The Hammerhead can seat at least three crew members at a time. It incorporates an onboard VI system that monitors the environment for dangers and alerts the crew. An integrated mineral collection system allows the Hammerhead to retrieve any resources it finds during a mission. Like the Mako, it is capable of being air-dropped from a frigate and of propelling itself vertically to scale obstacles by means of hoverjets. But continuous exertion of the Hammerhead's hoverjets will overheat them, rendering them useful only for short hops. The Hammerhead also incorporates a boost feature that allows the vehicle to move quickly across the battlefield. If the boost and hoverjets are used simultaneously, the hoverjets will overheat quicker and not cool until the boost is released.

The Hammerhead is armed with a single gun which can swivel vertically, but it compensates for this by boasting a fairly high rate of fire and a guided missile system that ensures accuracy even during aggressive maneuvering. Despite its formidable weaponry and design, the vehicle lacks onboard kinetic barriers, making it vulnerable to sustained enemy fire. This problem is somewhat mitigated by the Hammerhead's sophisticated repair system which automatically restores the vehicle's integrity over time. Nevertheless, the Hammerhead's vulnerability forces its driver to maneuver constantly out of the line of fire in order to prevent major damage.

Triton ADS

The Triton Active Defense System (ADS) is a large mechanical walker piloted by one person. An element zero core allows the Triton to be air-dropped onto a battlefield with minimal impact damage. Its thick armor includes a robust transparent canopy made from a polycrystalline composite, a synthetic sapphire composed with interlayers to resist cracking and thermal damage. Although the Triton is somewhat unwieldy in the field, its anti personnel machine guns and ability to shrug off damage from anything short of a heavy weapon makes it a fearsome opponent. Heavy loss of life is to be expected in any unprepared encounter with this unit.

The Triton is equipped with a powerful rocket launcher and a high-power mass accelerator cannon. At close-range, it can attack with its claw arm. Defensively, in addition to armor plating and kinetic barriers, Tritons have smoke grenade launchers to conceal their location.

Some models are equipped for underwater exploration, an optional booster pack installed to allow ascent from ocean floors.

F-61 Trident Fighter

A mainstay of the Alliance Navy, deployed in deep space engagements from carriers. Highly maneuverable in low atmosphere conditions. Fighters can be flown in atmosphere as well. They are are lightly shielded with kinetic barriers and feature two forward facing mass accelerator cannons, as well as a loadout of various missiles or torpedoes. They feature proton thrusters for fast acceleration and deceleration, but do not have an FTL drive and thus are reliant on carriers to move any long distance.