

THE SIREN CALL: CHARACTER ROLES

AEON HORROR 2020 EVENT

INTRODUCTION

Below you can find information on the character roles that are available for *The SIREn Call* in May, 2020.

Please note that although this document offers a strong idea of what you can expect, some elements - Skills for example - are indicative and may change depending on character background and group make up. There will be no significant changes to character types and what players may experience during the game. Also of note: OOC references are there to help build a mental picture, but we're not implying you will be playing *that* specific character's personality.

HOW IT WORKS

Shortly after you have paid your deposit you will be sent a link for a Character Concept form which will ask you to specify:

- The first-choice role you would most like to play;
- the second-choice role you would most like to play;
- and which role you would *not* like to play.

If you do not respond to this form before the given deadline, then we will place you in a role that we think you will enjoy.

We have not specified the number of each role available as we would like to gauge Player interest beforehand. If any roles are oversubscribed and your first choice is affected, then we will attempt to place you in your second choice. If that's not possible, then we may ask if you would consider a third option. If you are not happy with the compromise offered, then we would be happy to refund your deposit.

As with all Aeon events, you are not expected to be a real-life expert in your character's field! Players in more 'academic' roles should have the confidence to blag their way through terminology, with metaphorical points scored for the most convincing lines of bullshit. This may impact on what sort of role you might like to play, so please keep this in mind when submitting your decisions. You will not be expected to understand extensive tracts of theoretical mathematics or complicated electrical engineering diagrams. Hurdles such as rewriting code will be phys-repped by using puzzles whose difficulty will be scaled depending on character ability.

CLOSER TO THE EVENT

Players will be given more role-specific briefs about what their character knows in advance of the event. This will include information about the Operation and its purpose, operational instructions (i.e., how your job will work), with additional information about how your character fits into things. Players should give their position brief a thorough read through before the event to ensure they know where they fit into the Operation and what their character does to facilitate it.

This will not be your character's first rodeo, so it's important to the game that you familiarise yourself with your character's position and skills. This will include some reading around the information we provide - for example: If you are playing a character with an Army rank, we would expect you to understand the chain of command.

THE ROLES

Job name: Major.....	2
Job name: Lieutenant.....	3
Job name: Staff Sgt.....	4
Job name: Corporal.....	4
Job name: Intelligence Lead.....	5
Job name: Intelligence Officer.....	5
Job name: Doctor (MD), Captain.....	3
Job name: Theoretician.....	6
Job name: Engineer.....	6
Job name: Communications Specialist.....	7
Job name: Operator.....	7
Job name: Arcane Specialist.....	8

JOB NAME: MAJOR

Indicative Skills: Knowledge: British Army, I Know A Man

Affiliation: Army

Job descriptor: As the highest ranked member of the team, the Major is responsible for the Strathbrerachan site in terms of its successful running and results. They answer to a higher authority off site and have access to privileged information regarding how the Operation fits into wider strategy. The Major achieves their role by ensuring they have the best possible people working under them to handle security, intelligence, wellbeing, and of course all that science stuff. Decision-making is not a democratic process: Regardless of whether individuals are civilian or ranked, everyone must fall in line when the Major issues a command. The only fly in the ointment comes from the presence of MI personnel in the team whose connections to the Secret Intelligence Service and Foreign Office gives them the authority to pull rank on concerns of national security.

Role descriptor: A player playing the Major should be prepared to delegate readily and effectively and trust in the information that is relayed back to them. It is not their responsibility to pursue or hoard information at the expense of advancing the event, so much as to be a nexus point and control it in such a way that key personnel know what they need to know to do their job.

They must be prepared to make Big Decisions and answer to any consequences. As an individual with access to information regarding the site and its ultimate purpose, the player must be prepared to defend themselves in the face of criticism and dissent should it arise.

This is likely to be a non-combative role, although it's probable that the Major will have experienced direct combat at some point over their career. If this role is played by an able-bodied person, they may choose - should the need arise - to step in directly. This role could also suit a player with physical restrictions who chooses to take a less active role. Either way, the Major will be one of the senior figures on site and will not be called upon lightly to actively engage with events as they occur.

OOC reference: Any *Star Trek* Starfleet Captain, General Hammond - *Stargate:SG-1*, Brigadier Lethbridge-Stewart - *Doctor Who*, Commander William Adama - *Battlestar Galactica* (2004)

JOB NAME: LIEUTENANT

Indicative Skills: Knowledge: British Army

Affiliation: Army, reporting to the Major

Job descriptor: *Secretary/second in command to the Major.* Every person in power benefits having a trusted second who they know can handle things in their absence. In the case of the Major, this is the Lieutenant. As much as they might like to think otherwise, the Major is only human and will need to rest and sleep as much as the next squaddie. This is where the Lieutenant shines. The Lieutenant may be required to make difficult decisions in the Major's absence and undertake duties above their rank with proper delegation. The Lieutenant collates information and acts as a runner for the Major; in the Major's absence, all personnel will report to the Lieutenant.

Role descriptor: Although the Lieutenant occupies a senior role, the player playing this character should be prepared to be more active than - for example - the Major. The Lieutenant will often be the Major's eyes and ears on the ground and should subsequently be prepared to keep accurate and extensive notes in one form or another. As any good PA knows, their role is often undervalued and written off, but the whole system would fall apart without their organised mind and dedication to duty.

OOC reference: Captain Darling - *Blackadder Goes Forth*, Colonel Saul Tigh - *Battlestar Galactica* (2004), Any *Star Trek* Second in Command

JOB NAME: DOCTOR (MD), CAPTAIN

Indicative Skills: First Aid, Medicine, Surgery, Academics: Psychiatry, Mother's Instinct.

Affiliation: Army, reporting to the Major

Job descriptor: The site Doctor is a ranked member of the army and, as such, is expected to fall in with the command structure when the need arises. Above and beyond that their priority is the physical and mental wellbeing of all personnel at Strathbrerachan regardless of their standing. They keep the living alive and may be called upon at any time to administer the sick or wounded. The doctor knows that any significant hospitals are too far to be of help in a dangerous situation, so it's up to them to keep a level head and do whatever they can with whatever resources are at their disposal. Given the somewhat unusual nature of the Operation and its reliance on esoteric matters, the Doctor is also responsible for the mental wellbeing of personnel. Matters of life and death are quite literally in their hands. If they have reason to doubt the ability of even a higher-ranked official, they may need to exercise their judgement and step in.

Role descriptor: This role will primarily be based within the site house. However, any player taking this role should be prepared to move at a moment's notice if - for example - another character is hurt and cannot return to the main building. The Doctor will be an experienced battlefield medic and should be prepared to enter into potentially 'dangerous' situations without participating in combat directly. Any player playing the doctor should also be aware that their services may be called upon by other players outside of any known shift patterns.

OOC reference: .Dr Frasier - *Stargate:SG1*, Leonard McCoy - *Star Trek*

JOB NAME: STAFF SGT.

Indicative Skills: Will be primarily combat-focussed - active and passive, Outdoor Survival

Affiliation: Army, reporting to the Major

Job descriptor: *On-site security lead.* The security of Strathbrerachan is paramount, and few people know this better than the Staff Sgt leading security detail. Answering to the Major, the Staff Sgt is ultimately responsible for keeping the site under control, and the wellbeing of their team. The first to enter the front lines and the last to leave, the Staff Sgt knows that although this project might seem like a cushy genteel sort of affair on the surface, the political landscape and level of importance placed on the site getting results would make it an irresistible target to any threats that might know of its existence. Attention to detail is paramount, as is strong leadership, especially when there are civilians in the mix. One bad move and the whole thing could fall apart. The damage would be irrevocable.

The Staff Sgt is likely to find themselves working with the MI agents on site on matters of local security.

Role descriptor: Any player on the security team should keep in mind that this will be a physically active position that is more likely to experience combat than other role types. Security will be expected to patrol the site regardless of the weather, and potentially travel further afield if the need arises. As with all senior personnel roles, this will require potentially difficult decision-making and the capacity to deal with any consequences for failure. This would be an ideal role for any player who would enjoy the experience of the event without being tied down to the extensive puzzle-solving and prop-building of other roles.

OOO reference: Worf, Tasha Yar - *Star Trek TNG*, Colonel Jack O'Neill - *Stargate: SG1*, Aeryn Sun - *Farscape*, John Reese - *Person of Interest*, Olivia Dunham - *Fringe*, Richard Winters - (*As depicted in*) *Band of Brothers*

JOB NAME: CORPORAL

Indicative Skills: Will be primarily combat-focussed - active and passive, Outdoor Survival

Affiliation: Army, reporting to the Staff Sgt, and Major

Job descriptor: *On-site security.* It would be easy to write-off the security personnel as brainless mooks, but no one attending Strathbrerachan has been chosen lightly. Corporals serving on security detail may not have to make the sort of Big Decisions that senior staff do, but it's their lives on the front line and their quick decisions that may save or lose the entire project. They have been chosen because of their skill on the battlefield and their attention to detail when off it - they are a few grades above the average squaddie and will have proven themselves more than once in their career. The Staff Sgt commanding the security team cannot be in all places at once, and it's more likely than not that when a threat comes onto the radar, it'll be a Corporal who'll be there to confront it. Fight or fall back? Observe or confront? Heat of the moment decision-making and observation are invaluable skills and you will have to exercise them regularly.

Role descriptor: Any player on the security team should keep in mind that this will be a physically active position that is more likely to experience combat than other role types. Security will be expected to patrol the site regardless of the weather, and potentially travel further afield if the need arises. This would be an ideal role for any player who would enjoy the experience of the event without being tied down to the extensive puzzle-solving and prop-building of other roles.

OOO reference: Corporal Hicks or Private Vasquez - *Aliens*, Spoon - *Dog Soldiers*, Starbuck - *Battlestar Galactica* (2004)

JOB NAME: INTELLIGENCE LEAD

Indicative Skills: Get Under Skin, Knowledge: Cryptography, Knowledge: Spycraft, Modern Languages, Outdoor Survival, Torture

Affiliation: Foreign Office

Job descriptor: *Field-experienced MI Specialist.* While the Major is the ranking military officer on site, the Intelligence Lead is the link back to the Secret Intelligence Service and the Foreign Office. They will be privy to a lot of highly classified information that even the Major does not have access to and will have (in theory) the power to countermand military orders on grounds of national security with no (again, in theory) questions asked. They will have been a field operative in the past and, despite the site's focus on cryptography, their skills will be centred on more old-fashioned spycraft. They occupy the position they do due to their tried and tested discretion and judgement in critical situations. As the Service's primary point of contact on site, it will also be their job to ensure that no individuals or working practices have been compromised. They are likely to work with the Staff Sgt.

Role descriptor: A player occupying this role should have a good head for keeping track of such things as: what the current state of play is; what everyone is up to; unusual behaviours and matters that Cause Concern; what is known, and what isn't. The Intelligence Lead may be more or less active and can be adjusted to suit the player. They will possess field skills, however rusty, and may have the option to delegate more physically active tasks to trusted personnel. Primarily, the role is a very 'political' one, requiring care and a lot of interpersonal soft skills. It will also require the strength to take things a little further when discretion no longer seems to be working.

OOO reference: Number Six - *The Prisoner*, Angleton - *The Laundry Files*, Harry Palmer - *The IPCRESS File*, Francis Urquhart - *Yes, Minister*, Harry Pearce - *Spooks*, Alfred Pennyworth - *Batman (DC Comics)*, Smiley - *Tinker, Tailor, Soldier, Spy*

JOB NAME: INTELLIGENCE OFFICER

Indicative Skills: Get Under Skin, Knowledge: Cryptography, Knowledge: Spycraft, Craft: Cryptography, Modern Languages

Affiliation: Foreign Office, reporting to the Intelligence Lead.

Job descriptor: *Desk-based MI specialist.* Nominally under the supervision of the Intelligence Lead, the Intelligence Officer has the greatest knowledge on site of cryptography techniques and good practice. While the operation is not one of conventional cryptography at its heart, diverse conventional techniques are also used to provide additional obfuscation. They will work closely with the Communications Specialist and the Operators as a result. More significantly, The Intelligence Officer has the best understanding of information security, and what procedures to follow to ensure that the right people - and only the right people - know the right things. With and through the Intelligence Lead, they will also be the Service's eyes and ears on site, keeping a lookout for suspicious behaviour or seemingly innocent minor breaches of protocol that may be Causes for Concern.

Role descriptor: The Intelligence Officer role is almost entirely a desk job. They will be responsible for identifying and applying 'conventional' codes (guidance will be provided, but existing familiarity is useful). The player in this role will also need to be able to follow the exacting procedures relating to information security, with an eye for detail.

OOO reference: Harold Finch - *Person of Interest*, Merlin - *Kingsman*

JOB NAME: THEORETICIAN

Indicative Skills: Academics: Mathematics; Academics: Physics

Affiliation: Civilian

Job descriptor: *Fundamental Theory Experts.* The Protocol, like other strands of modern cryptography, is fundamentally based on mathematical principles and their application. The team of theoreticians on site will be the experts in the theory of what the Protocol can do, and why it works the way it does. Their long term goal is working out the full capabilities of the theories used. More day-to-day, the team expands on the theories by working out why the practical implementation of the theory isn't working as it should.

Role descriptor: This role would be suitable for anyone who enjoys extensive number and logic puzzles, and roleplaying around specialist knowledge - including glossing 'mystical' principles in mundane (albeit technical-sounding language). An OOC knowledge of maths is not required - puzzles will be designed as doable by anyone who has a basic grasp of logic puzzles, such as Sudoku. This character can expect to spend a lot of time engaging with cerebral hypotheticals. The role would suit players of any levels of physical capability. As there are multiple Theoreticians, an interested player can suggest how 'theoretical' or 'applied' they want their background to be. This will have minimal gameplay implications, except perhaps for which bits of larger problems they may have insight into.

OOO reference: Walter Bishop - *Fringe*. Casper Darling - *CONTROL*, Charlie Epps - *Numbers*, Dr. Samantha Carter - *Stargate:SG1*, Egon Spengler - *Ghostbusters*, Doc Brown - *Back to the Future*

JOB NAME: ENGINEER

Indicative Skills: Academics: Engineering, Academics: Electrical Engineering, Craft: Jury Rig, Knowledge: Mathematics

Affiliation: Civilian

Job descriptor: *Creators of the Machinery.* The engineering team are ultimately responsible for turning the theoretical underpinning of the Protocol into equipment that delivers what it needs to. There is currently an extensive suite of mechanical and electronic equipment that someone had to build, and now that equipment needs reconfiguring, adding to, and fixing when it breaks. The members of the engineering team will have been selected for their ability to create - often from first principles - working solutions in resource-limited circumstances. Given their diverse skillsets and experience, more often than not it falls to the Engineers to also handle matters of more mundane maintenance on site.

Role descriptor: More than any other position, an Engineering role is ideal for players who enjoy 'playing with the toys'. A significant part of an Engineer's gameplay will involve solving puzzles with real-world props, and creating pieces where there are none available with given resources. As there are multiple Engineers, an interested player can suggest how 'theoretical' or 'applied' they want their background to be. Although all Engineers will pitch in on the same tasks, any given individual might be expected to take the lead on either the more 'puzzle-solving' or 'practical fixing' aspects as appropriate. Engineers can be played by players with a range of physical mobility. Depending on the player, there will be some physical requirements including: motor control (e.g.: wiring) or navigating the surrounding area to maintain remote equipment.

OOO reference: Kaylee - *Firefly*, Ray Stanz - *Ghostbusters*, Miles O' Brien - *Star Trek: DS9*, Chief Galen Tyrol - *Battlestar Galactica* (2004)

JOB NAME: COMMUNICATIONS SPECIALIST

Indicative Skills: Academics: Linguistics, Modern Languages

Affiliation: Civilian

Job descriptor: The Communication Specialist works in an advisory capacity regarding a linguistic approach to any protocols and subsequent codes used. Their job involves interpreting any incoming signals and preparing a variety of responses, as well as analysing logs. As the primary language expert, they also function as a translator should it be required. As the senior go-between between the Operators and the people composing the messages, the Communications Specialist will exercise a lot of judgement in what Protocols are the most appropriate for any given situation. Given the nature of the Protocol, this role isn't suitable for any standard linguist: The Communications Specialist possesses a unique level of empathy and mind for interpretation of non conventional communication techniques.

Role descriptor: This role will involve a good deal of liaising and decision-making, but will see the player as a largely static figure with little need to venture beyond the main site buildings. The Communications Specialist is the one who decides what messages are being sent, how they are being sent, and what resources are being dedicated towards this. The role will involve some high-pressure decision-making and collaboration with MI personnel to assist with decoding and approach. Also working closely with Theoreticians, Operators, and Arcane Specialists, this role is best suited towards someone who enjoys bringing multiple bits of information together and making smaller scale decisions based on this. The Protocol uses non-standard means of communication, so players occupying this role should be prepared to exercise their linguistic skills to condense complicated concepts into often vexing packages, and interpret the same in return. The role is suitable for players of all physical capabilities.

OOC reference: Daniel Jackson - *Stargate*. Lieutenant Uhura - *Star Trek*

JOB NAME: OPERATOR

Indicative Skills: Craft: Code, Craft: Programming

Affiliation: Civilian

Job descriptor: *Old-School Programmers*. When the Protocol was first formalised, it was thought that the actual task of processing machinery input and output would be almost a trivial one, little more than akin to working on a typewriter from dictated notes. This proved not to be the case in the slightest. The Operators - initially selected primarily for their discretion and accuracy - had to take on board a lot of information and exercise a lot of judgement in the process of selecting Protocols, coding and decoding, and questioning the instruction of much more supposedly learned people when they appear wrong. With intimate knowledge of how the Protocol actually works and the ability to find ways around problems as and when they occur, the Operators are at the metaphorical front line of the Operation.

Role descriptor: A player undertaking the role of Operator should be good at understanding and following written instructions, but with an eye for detail and a nose for when things don't seem right. They will be the ones working 'on the coalface' when the Protocol is used, and ultimately every exchange of information that the Operation performs passes through them. Although it might be easy to write off the Operators as mere information processors, it's their hard work, intuition and talent that ties the whole thing together. Their unique experience puts them in a strong position to input on any Protocol-related matters. The role is suitable for players of all physical capabilities.

OOC reference: Astrid Farnsworth - *Fringe*, Margaret Hamilton, Dorothy Vaughan - (*As depicted in Hidden Figures*)

JOB NAME: ARCANE SPECIALIST

Indicative Skills: Dependent on background

Affiliation: Dependent on background

Job descriptor: The Protocol at the heart of the Operation is drenched in Weird. Although there are some very intelligent scientific minds at work condensing what they can into numbers and machinery to turn theory into a practical solution, there are some elements at work that can't quite be explained. This is where the Arcane Specialists come into play. Coming from a diverse range of backgrounds, Arcane Specialists have been selected to join the Operation as a result of their work in the wider world - work that marked them out in some way and made them useful to the Operation. Working to support the Theoreticians, Engineers, and Operators on staff, Specialists will interact with the Operation on an as-needed basis. They offer guidance and expertise where required, but accept that even their knowledge has its limits. When something unexpected happens, they're the ones best placed to make sense of it drawing upon their past experiences and studies.

Role descriptor: Arcane Specialists have no day-to-day function within the Operation so their gameplay will be less structured than that of other players. Nonetheless, when their time and attention is needed, they can expect to spend significant time poring over information and puzzles, approaching the challenges from a more esoteric point of view. The role is suitable for players of all physical capabilities.

OOC reference: Dr. William Weir - *Event Horizon*, Patrick Jane - *The Mentalist*, Dale Cooper - *Twin Peaks*, Rupert Giles - *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*. Duc de Richleau - *The Devil Rides Out*, Dr. William Bell - *Fringe*.