

# COMMONWEALTH HIGH GUARD

Highly trained and well equipped, the High Guard of the Inviroate Commonwealth of the Federated Worlds is a formidable adversary.

Promising pupils are tested at age 5 and, if deemed worthy candidates, are taken from their families and drafted into the College of the Guardian. Each child undergoes a rigorous battery of tests to determine whether they will be strong enough physically and mentally to become a Commonwealth High Guard trooper. During the next several years, the failed students are simply discarded, but the strongest pupils continue to be tested, trained and inculcated until they graduate aged 18. This brutal training regime creates an extremely capable, elite fighting force which is ultra-loyal to the office of the High Guardian.

Troopers often perform nothing more than ceremonial duties, but are occasionally called upon to act in a more combative role. The actions of the Commonwealth High Guard on the colony world of Riss, where the local police had lost control, have become legendary. The Carboni organised crime syndicate, with members drawn from several leading underworld gangs across the Commonwealth, had succeeded in overthrowing the forces of the Protectorate. The High Guardian's local representative, the Protector of Riss, had been assassinated and many police stations had been overrun.

In the temporary power vacuum that followed, the Carboni gang leaders declared that Riss was becoming an independent world and was going to separate itself from the Commonwealth. This direct challenge to the High Guardian's authority could not go unpunished, so the High Guard's Harmonisation Division was mobilised. Most of the population of Riss was eradicated in a heavy-handed campaign. This brutality only served to boost the reputation of the High Guard.

The actions of the Harmonisation Division created many new enemies for the High Guardian. Several of the Grand Families began to plot against him and attempted to infiltrate the College of the Guardian with their children, using their Psionic skills to retain an element of control over their offspring. This subterfuge has not yet borne any fruit and the Guard remains a truly independent faction.

The headquarters of the High Guard is in the Great Palace in Kumo Shuu, the de facto capital city of the Commonwealth, on the High Guardian's home world of Kumo Kei. All established worlds have a High Guard barracks in the main city, which serve the Protector, who is the High Guardian's local representative. Newly established colonies and orbital habitats are policed by private police forces, which are often paid for by a corporation.

