TaskForce

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Chapter 1

TaskForce

1.1 TaskForce Gamer's Manual

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              TaskForce V0.17 (06.03.98)
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1.2 What is TaskForce?

TaskForce is a strategy game in the tradition of Laser Squad, Act of
War, or Jagged Alliance. If you aren't familiar with any of these,
just imagine a bunch of mercenaries packed with some mean equipment
operating in enemy territory.

In TaskForce you take control of such a group of soldiers and try to
accomplish certain objectives by wise employment of your powers.
Your opponent will be either the computer, another human player,
or even time itself.

A special feature of TaskForce is the mission editor included in the
archive. This way you can easily design your own maps and define
individual mission objectives.

1.3   Distribution and Disclaimer

TaskForce is Mailware. If you like the game, you should feel ←
   obliged
to send
          me
           a short notice, by either email or snailmail.
You may copy and use TaskForce for free, but I retain copyright for
all files included in this archive, unless otherwise noted.

TaskForce may be redistributed for non-commercial purposes provided
no changes are made to the archive.

DISCLAIMER:
USE OF THIS PROGRAM IS ENTIRELY AT YOUR OWN RISK. THE AUTHOR CANNOT
BE HELD LIABLE FOR ANY DAMAGE DIRECTLY OR INDIRECTLY CAUSED BY USE
OR MISUSE OF FILES IN THIS DISTRIBUTION.

This program makes use of the ReqTools package which is
©1991–1994 Nico François, 1995–1997 Magnus Holmgren.

TaskForce and all related files are © Jens Granseuer.

1.4   Requirements

To run TaskForce you need any Amiga model with at least
Kickstart 2.04 and about 0.5 MB of free RAM.

At least reqtools.library V38 must be installed on your system.
The library is included in this archive.

1.5   Installation

To install TaskForce to your harddisk, simply execute the installer
script provided with this archive.

If you want to install the required files manually, copy the
TaskForce directory to the place of your choice and reqtools.library
to Libs: if you haven't got it, yet. That's it. Simple.

1.6   How to play.

On the options screen you can select the number of players and the

          difficulty
           settings, enter your names and choose the mission you want
to set out on. Before playing a mission, you should have read the
appropriate briefings so you know what you are expected to do.
After accepting the current settings, you will find yourself right on

the playground.

Apart from the main playing area, there are three others of some
importance to you and your troops. To the right you see a list of all
mercenaries under your control. The colour they are printed in tells
you about their current conditions. Black means everything is alright,
while yellow indicates critical health and red unconsciousness. If a
name appears green, that character is poisoned.
The small area below contains more specific information on the
currently selected
                  character
                  , like hit points or weapon.

Below the status bar is a small map of the area of operations. Pressing
the left mouse button on a spot of this map will take you to the
selected part. All mercenaries under your control are represented by
yellow dots, while all enemy and neutral characters are displayed red.
You better make sure if it's really an enemy before taking him out.

At the bottom of the screen important messages will be displayed.

Your characters are controlled mainly by keyboard, though to a certain
extent this is also possible by mouse. To command a mercenary, he must
be selected. This is indicated by a red cursor drawn around him.
To deselect him simply press space or click the left mouse button on
his image. Do the same to select him again.

For most actions in TaskForce action points (AP) are required. If a
character has no AP left, he can't do anything. AP are regained at the
beginning of a new turn.

You move your characters using the number pad or by mouse. If you want
to move using the mouse you must guide your characters one step after
another, as there is no pathfinding for player characters yet. How many
AP movement costs depends on the type of terrain you are crossing. The
value for standard types like grass or road is 2, but may be higher for
more difficult terrain, for example debris.

Pressing 'i' or the leftmost gadget at the bottom of the screen will
bring up the inventory. Here you can pick up and drop objects and
select another weapon.
If you have a gun equipped as your current weapon, you can enter firing
mode by pressing 'm' or the second to left button. Move the cursor over
a target and press '5' to release a shot.
The third button (n) will select the next of your mercenaries, and the
last (e) will end your turn.

All other actions can be accessed by pulldown menus (Action menu). Some
objects may be operated (doors or buttons, for example).

Certain items you may find have special abilities. You usually use (u)
these
                  items
                  .

There are two ways to engage another character in close combat. You can
either just try to walk onto the occupied square, or you can step up

next to him and then press 'a'.

If you expect to be attacked you may set your soldier on guard (g).
This enables him to return fire if he is shot at during the next turn.
It is only possible to enter guard mode if the mercenary has at least
5 AP left. This decision is final, that means, all his AP are cleared
and he can't be selected again until the beginning of your next turn.
This measure won't help against thrown weapons or an attack in close
combat. If somebody shoots at him, though, he will return fire and,
even better, if he has got a better perception rating than the
attacker, he will shoot first!

There are still a few other actions but these should be pretty
self-explanatory by now.

A mission is considered completed if one of the players has reached 100
points. Points are awarded on reaching certain goals which are usually
described in the mission briefing.
If you play against a computer opponent, the mission is considered
total failure if all your mercenaries are killed. This is not
neccessarily the case in a two-player scenario.

1.7   Character Information

All characters you can control in TaskForce have some values that
represent skills and different aspects of their personality. These
values decide on how well that particular characters does in a
situation the skill is needed.

All skill values may range from 1 (worst) to 10 (best) and can be
inspected in the inventory screen ('i').

Strength is used to determine how much a character can carry
around with himself and how far he can throw items. The damage dealt
in close combat also depends on the strength value.

Firearms is a measure for the character's marksmanship. The
higher this value the better the odds to hit a target with a gun.

Close Combat is similar to the firearms skill, but defines the
chances to hit an opponent in close combat.

Stealth is currently not used in any way and will probably be
changed into something more sensible or even removed altogether. Any
ideas?

Perception has two main purposes in TaskForce. First, during a
mission a character may be required to make a Perception test. The
result of this test determines what happens then. You will not be
informed about such a test taking place, so if the character fails
you won't even know about it. Second, if a character is in attacked
when in guard mode and he has a higher Perception rating than the
attacker, he may return fire first.

1.8   Difficulty Settings

In TaskForce there are three different difficulty settings.

As a Rookie you will always see all of your enemies. This spoils
a lot of the fun and is only recommended for absolute beginners.
Therefore Advanced is the default setting.

An Advanced player will only be aware of enemies that enter his
line of sight. You never know what's waiting behind the next corner.
You should always try a mission on Advanced or Professional
level, and only switch to the next lower setting if this proves too
difficult for you.

Professional players finally suffer from some malfunctioning of
the eyes and their perception radius is limited to eight squares.
What do you think you've got this seventh sense for?

Unless there are really vast differences in skill or an heavily injust
mission setup it is highly recommended that both parties are set to
the same level.
There is absolutely no point in making the computer player a Rookie.
In this case he will immediately throw all his troops into the battle.

1.9   Special Items

Some items in TaskForce have special uses. These are:

* antidot: If you are poisoned application of antidot will reduce the
  poison level and possibly cure you.
* explosives: A nasty and powerful weapon, explosives have to be primed
  before use. If you use them you are asked for a value to set the
  counter to. This value is given in turns, that means if you set it
  to 1 the fireworks will start at the end of your turn, 2, at the
  end of your opponent's turn, etc. Don't forget to drop them once
  they are primed!
* keycards: They are sometimes needed to open doors. If you carry the
  keycard if you try to open a door it is required for, it will
  automatically be used.
* medkits: Well, what do you expect?
* protective suites: On some occasions you will have to deal with
    dangerous chemicals or other poisonous substances. While you are
    wearing a protective suite you will be immune to the most unhealthy
    follow-up effects.

1.10   History of TaskForce

V0.17 (06.03.98)
   * first public release

1.11 Contact

If you encounter any bugs, have some ideas for improvements, or
just want to tell me how much you (don't ?) like TaskForce, send
your comments to this address:

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Snailmail:                Email:

  Jens Granseuer          jensgr@gmx.net
  Junkermanns Weg 7       or
  59071 Hamm              jensg@steingym.ham.nw.schule.de
  Germany                 (this one valid only until May '98)
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If you create any missions for this game, feel encouraged to send
them, too. If I like them, I may include them in the archive.

Have fun!