Starfield: "Terra's Toll"

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Document Revisions Table

Version	Description	Requestor	Date
1.0	Initial Document		2/12/2025
1.1	Initial Document Update v1.1		2/19/2025
1.2	Initial Document Update v1.2		2/20/2025
2.0	Level Design Document		2/23/2025

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Level Summary

Quick Summary

"Terra's Toll" is a single-player level intended as a freestanding quest for the video game *Starfield*, taking place after the Chapter Unearthed of the base game, where players have gained some understanding of Earth's current state. The level combines puzzle-solving, exploration, combat, and investigation. Players set out from New Atlantis to investigate a confidential project that was suddenly halted by Aeternum, gradually uncovering its truth.

Level Feature Overview

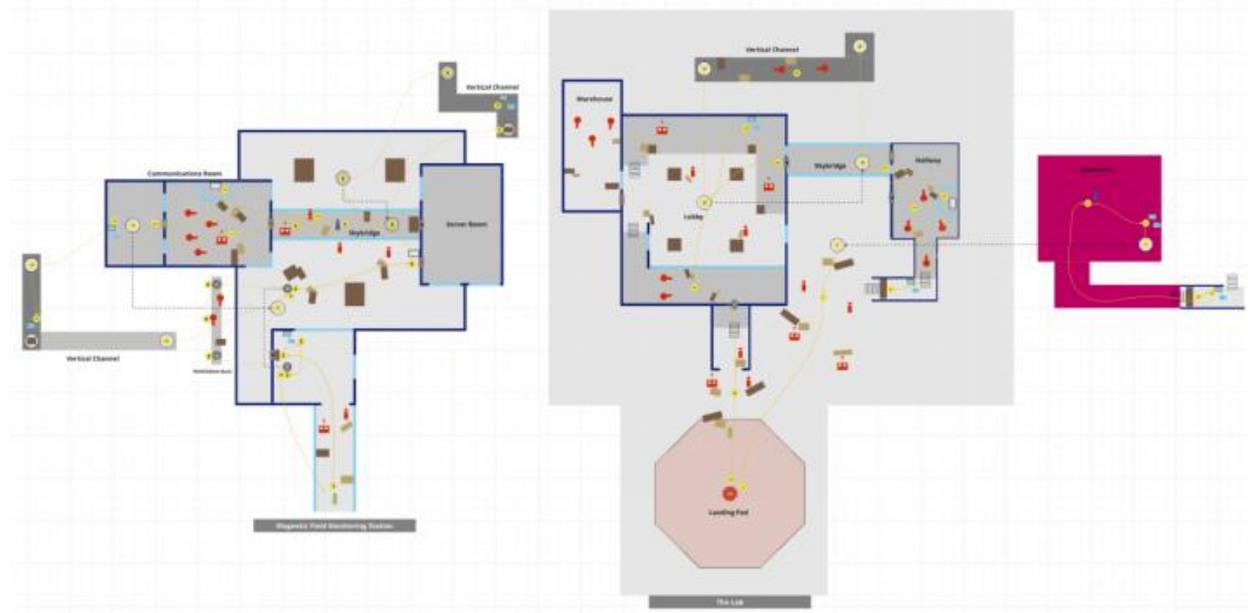| Category	Sub-Category	Feature List

Gameplay Themes		• Unique zero-gravity level layout
		• Support multiple combat styles
		    o Aggressive
		    o Less aggressive
		        ▪ Stealth
		        ▪ Hacking

Player	Player Weapons	• Start
		    o Ballistic Rifle: AA-99,
		    o Pistol: Ember
		    o Melee: Rescue Axe
		• Featured:
		    o Laser Gun: Almost no recoil, better suited for zero-gravity combat

	Player Skills/Abilities	• Combat • Security • Pick locking • Persuasion • Stealth • Jetpack

AI	Enemies	(If the player ultimately chooses to support Aeternum, then Aeternum Security Force and Victor will switch to the player's faction.)
		• New Faction Background: Aeternum is an ancient technology company whose business includes planetary geological exploration and spaceship manufacturing.
		• Aeternum Security Force
		    o Weapon
		        ▪ Melee: Rescue Axe
		        ▪ Rifle: Equinox, Grendel
		        ▪ Explosion: Grenade
		• Victor (leader of Aeternum Security Force)
		    o Weapon

		• Shotgun: Coachman • Melee: Syndicate Enforcer • Turrets & Robot Model A

	Friendlies	(If the player ultimately chooses to support Aeternum, then Wendy and Dr. Solari will switch to the opposing faction of the player.)
		• Wendy Hayden
		    o Weapon
		        • Pistol: Ember
		• Dr. Solari
		    o Weapon
		        • Rifle: Equinox

Challenges	Obstacles/Hazards	• Locked Room • Security (Turrets and robots)
	New/Unique Gameplay	• Zero-gravity combat • Gravity based Puzzle-solving
Context	Location in Game	• Quest Start & Quest Giver: New Atlantis • 1st Location: Magnetic Field Monitoring Station • 2nd Location: Lab on Volii Epsilon • 3rd Location: Back to Magnetic Field Monitoring Station
	Challenge Fit in Game	• Ideally players above level 20 who have already learned lockpicking, jetpack, persuasion, and combat skills • For players without relevant skills, Wendy (Quest Giver) will provide suit with higher protection level with jetpack
	Narrative Fit	• Standalone level • Ideally after the Unearthed chapter in the base game, players have gained some understanding of the current state of Earth after exploring NASA
	Basic Backstory / Results Info	• Aeternum Shipyards is a company focused on planetary geological exploration, but they recently suddenly closed one of the projects they managed
Aesthetics	Major Visual Themes	• Ruined Star Station • Sterile Hypertech • Withered Eden
	Setting/Mood	Station • Dim • Abandoned Lab • Bright

Development Schedule

Milestone	Date
LDD	2/23/2025
Whitebox	3/9/2025
Initial Gameplay	3/30/2025
Gameplay Complete	4/20/2025
Aesthetics	4/27/2025
Launch	5/4/2025

Level Overview

Overview Map

Figure 1: Overview Map [1]

Narrative Flow
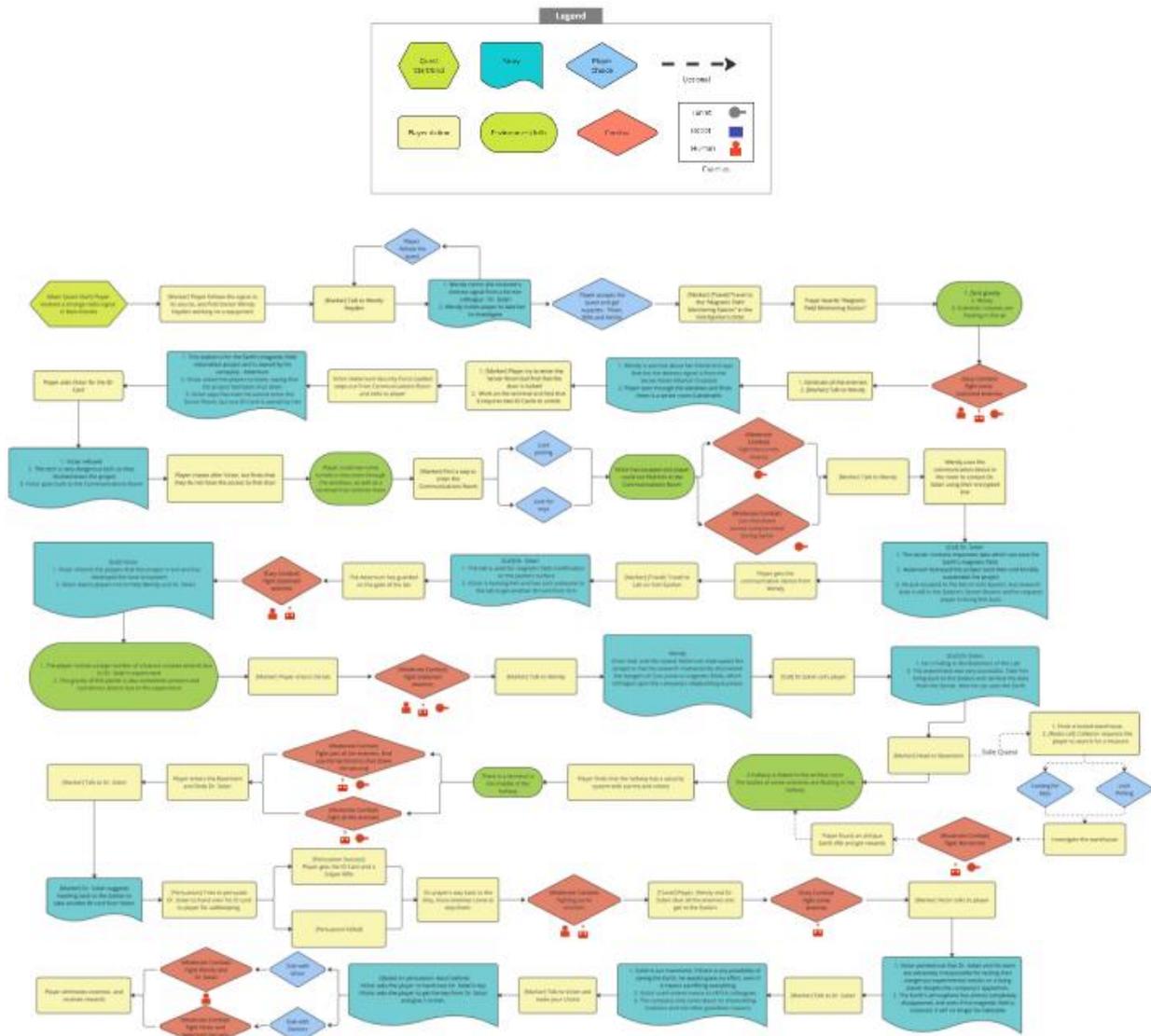
Figure 2: Narrative Flow Summary [2]

Level Details

Detail Maps

New Atlantis & The Magnetic Field Monitoring Station

Figure 3: Detailed Map of the Station [1]

Map Label / Stage	Event Summary	Event Details
0-1	After accepting the quest from Wendy, the player headed to The Magnetic Field Monitoring Station with Wendy	• Wendy says that she received a distress signal from a former colleague - Dr. Solari and asks player to investigate there with her • Wendy follows the player
1	The player clears some enemies after boarding the station	• After clearing all the enemies, a marker is created, and the player needs to talk with Wendy. • Wendy says that the distress signal is from the Server Room

		(Marker Created)
2	The player tries to get to the server room but finds that the door is broken.	• There is Ventilation duct above
3	The player uses the terminal to change the gravity to 0, so that they can enters the Ventilation duct at 3	
4	The player destroyed some turrets in the Ventilation duct, then they exit the Ventilation duct at 4	
5	The player tries to enter the server room but finds that it is locked	• The player works on the terminal and find that it requires two ID-Cards to unlock • Victor (Aeternum Security Force Leader) steps out from Communications Room and talks to player on the Skybridge • Victor has one of the ID-Cards for the server room
6	The player tries to chase after Victor, and finds a way to the Skybridge through a Vertical Channel above their head	
7	In the channel, a box blocks the player's way out, the player uses the terminal to change the gravity to 1	
8	The box drops and the player could get out from the channel and get into the Skybridge	
9	The player clears some enemies guarded in front of the Communications Room	• Humam and Robot enemies
10	The player tries to get into the Communications Room but find that the door is locked	
10a	The player loots the key from an enemy	
10b	Lock picking into the door	
11a	The player fights all the turrets directly and clears them	
11b	The player shut down turrets using terminal during battle	
12	The player finally gets into the communications room and contact Dr. Solari using communication equipment there.	• New marker "Lab on Volii Epsilon" created after the player has talked with Dr.Solari
13a-18	The players return to the ship using the same way	• If the player chooses this path, they will not receive extra rewards
13b	The player changes the gravity to 0 using the terminal on the wall	
14	Player gets into the channel. In the channel, a box blocks the player's way out, the player uses the terminal to change the gravity back to 1	• If the player chooses this path, they will receive extra ammunition and a med pack in the channel
15	The box drops and the player could get out from the channel and get back to the	

16-18	The player gets back to the ship using the channel and Ventilation duct	
19	The player headed to the Lab on Volii Epsilon	

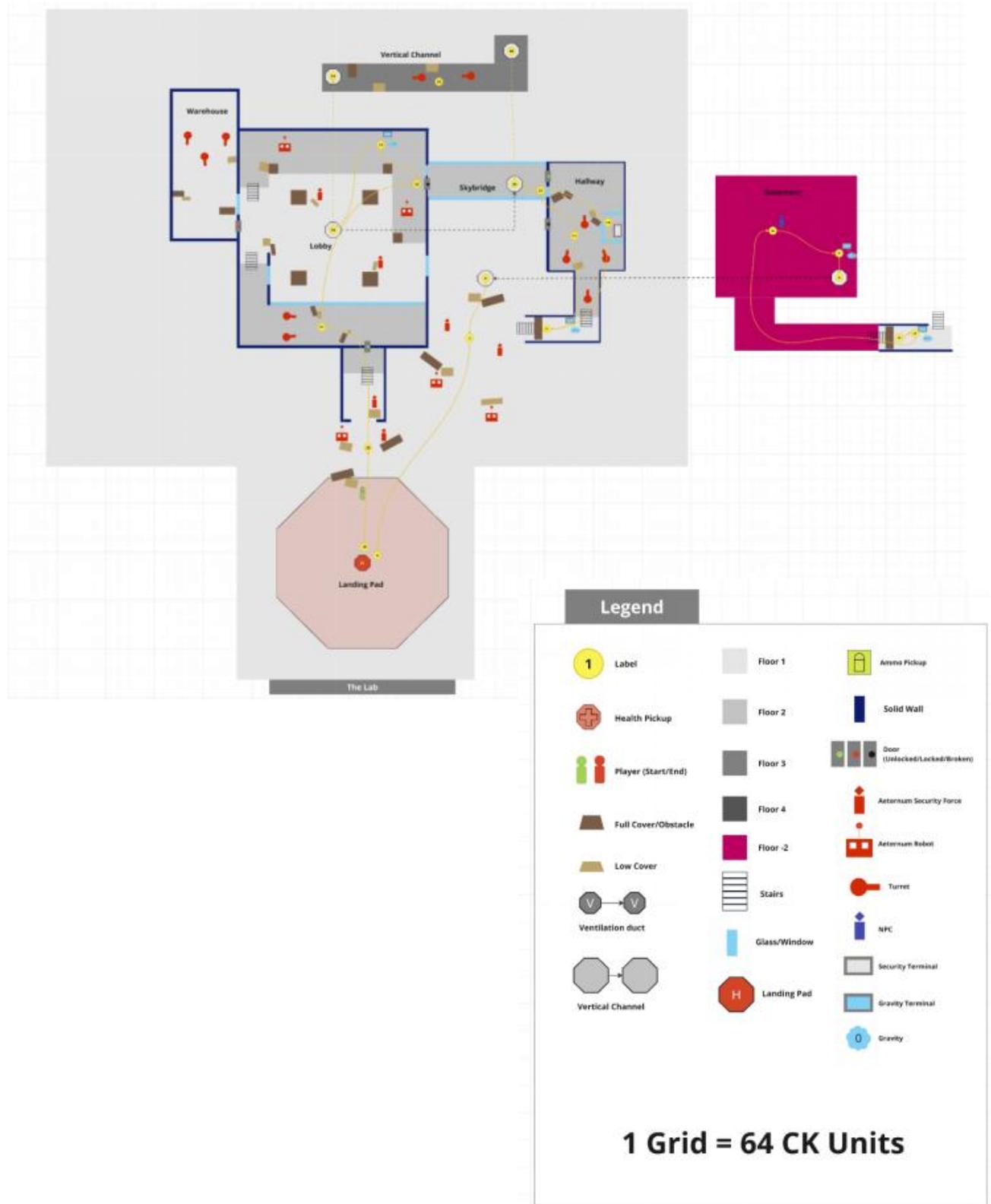**Figure 5: Detailed Map of Lab [1]**

Map Label / Stage	Event Summary	Event Details
19	The player lands on the Landing Pad and exits the ship	
20	The player clears some enemies guarded on the gate of the lab	
21	The player enters the lab and clears all the enemies there	• Dr. Solari says that he is hiding in the Basement of the Lab • New Maker – Basement Created
22	The player tries to get to the Basement using the skybridge but finds that the entrance's door is broken	• The player finds a channel above their head.
23	The player changes the gravity to 0 using the terminal	
24	The player goes through the channel	
25	The player clears some turrets in the channel	
26	The player exits the channel at 26	The player sees through the window and notices that there is a terminal in the middle of the hallway, with some turrets on the ceiling.
27a	The player fights all the turrets directly and clears them	
27b	The player shut down turrets using terminal during battle	
28	The player tries to get to the Basement, however, there is a box blocks their way	
29	The box drops after the player changes the gravity back to 1 using the terminal at 29	
30	The player finally gets to the Basement and finds Dr. Solari there	• Dr. Solari says that there is a secret passage in his basement that leads directly back to the surface.
31	The player changes the gravity to 0 using a terminal at 31	
32	The player gets back to the surface using the tunnel (Secret Passage)	
33	The player clears some enemies guarded around the exit of the tunnel	
34	The player returns to the station	

	with Wendy and Dr.Solari	

The Magnetic Field Monitoring Station
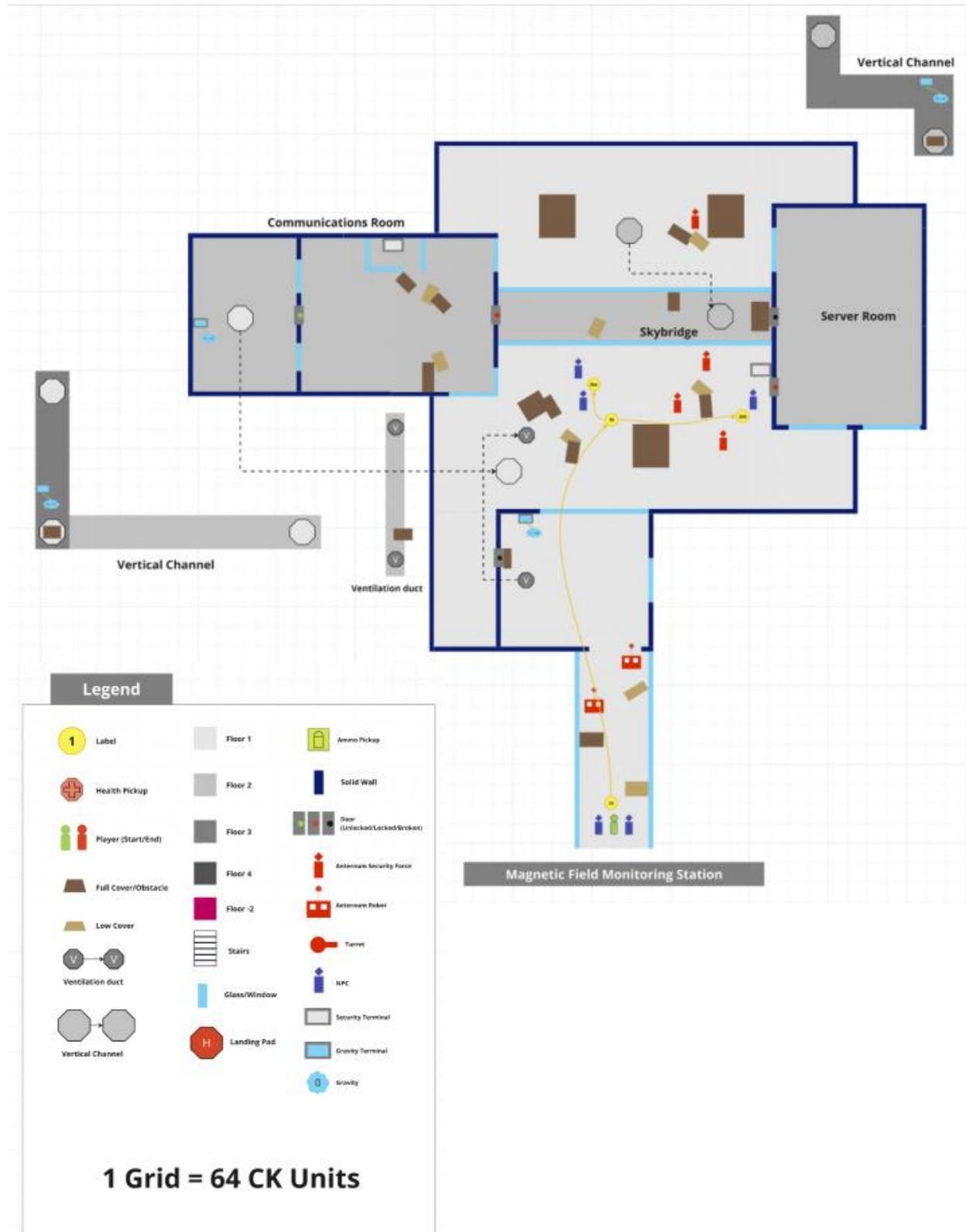
Figure 6: Detailed Map of Station [1]

Map Label / Stage	Event Summary	Event Details
34	The player returns to the Station, clears some enemies guarded by the entrance and uses the Ventilation duct to get to the door of the Server Room	
35	Player makes the choice	
36a	The player chooses the side with Victor, after that, they fight Wendy and Dr. Solari	
36b	The player chooses the side with Wendy and Dr. Solari. After that, they fight Victor and the Aeternum Security Force	

Skill Progression Chart

	Legend			
	E	**M**	**H**	**X**
New skills	Intro	Reinforce	Master	
Starting Skills (START)	Beginner	Advanced	Expert	Master
Challenges	Easy	Medium	Hard	Legendary

(Skill progression chart table — detailed grid of skills across locations: New Atlantis, Magnetic Field Monitoring Station, The Lab, with columns Start, Spaceport, On Boarding, Communications House, Outside the Gate, Lobby, Warehouse, Hallway, Room, On Boarding, In Front of Server Room. Rows grouped under Starting skills, Weapons, Enemies, Learned Skills.)

Figure 7: Skill Progression Chart [3]

Aesthetic References

"Terra's Toll" included two main areas, the Magnetic Field Monitoring Station features a dark, cluttered atmosphere with flickering lights and floating debris in zero gravity. The Lab located on Volii Epsilon showcases a brightly lit, high-tech interior that starkly against the wasteland outside.
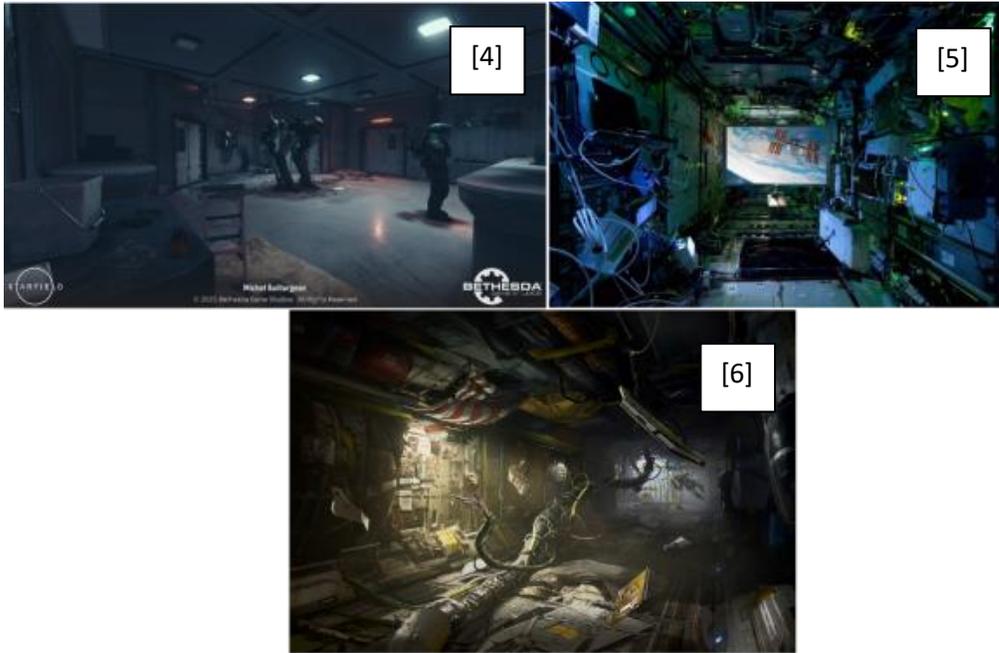
Ruined Star Station

Figure 8: Contact Sheet for Ruined Star Station [4,5,6]
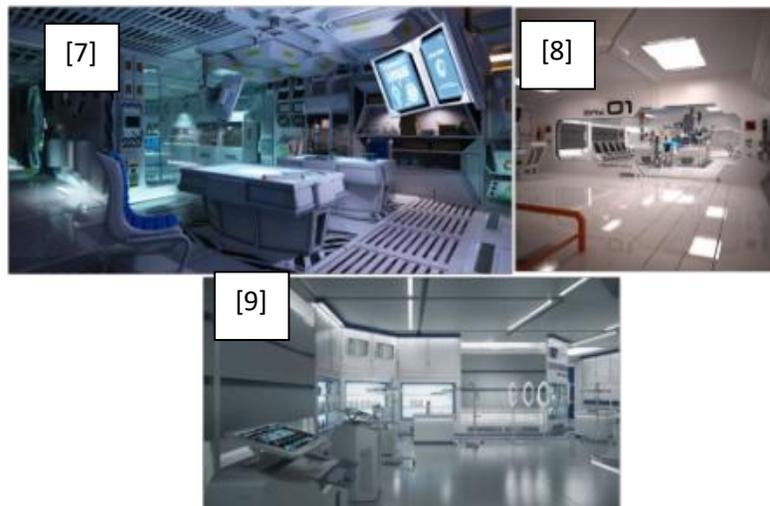
Sterile Hypertech

Figure 9: Contact Sheet for Sterile Hypertech [7,8,9]

References

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Appendices

Appendix A: New Skills / Gameplay Mechanics

Adjustable gravity system

Function
The player uses a specific terminal in the scene to toggle gravity between two states (0 and 1)

User Interface
Use the standard Terminal User interface style in *Starfield*

1. Primary Menu
   a. Title: Gravity Control
      Description: Current gravity status ("On" / "Off")
2. Secondary Menu
   a. Turn Gravity On
   b. Turn Gravity Off

Numbers
Once the player adjusts settings via the UI, the scene's gravity remains in the chosen state (0 or 1) until the player changes it again.

Feedback
1. Player: With gravity turned off, the player floats and can move in any direction using the jetpack.
2. Weapons: In zero-gravity, firing a ballistic weapon will exert recoil that pushes the player in the opposite direction.
3. Environment: Objects float when gravity is off, and they fall again once gravity is re-enabled.
4. Enemies: Under gravity, they drop to the ground. Without gravity, they will be able to float in midair.

Appendix B: Context Detail

General Context

Aeternum is an ancient technology company whose business includes planetary geological exploration and spaceship manufacturing. Recently, they shut down a secret project on Volii Epsilon.

Backstory

For decades, scientists have been searching for ways to repair the decline of Earth's magnetic field. Aeternum, as a tech giant, has launched a project near Volii Epsilon to study planetary magnetic fields and has reportedly achieved great success. Of course, technology is a double-edged sword; it is said that Aeternum's project conducted large-scale magnetic experiments on the surface of Volii Epsilon, disrupting the planet's natural balance and causing deadly anomalies to local flora and fauna. Now, they have suddenly announced the shutdown of the project, and no one knows why.

Aftermath

Players retrieve the missing scientist, and regarding the research results in the server, people find themselves in a moral dilemma: should they continue to take risks and conduct related experiments, or choose to give up?

If they choose to continue, the number of habitable planets currently known is limited, and the risks of related experiments are significant. However, if the players decide to give up, how can we know that continuing to use Grav Jump technology won't damage the magnetic fields of other planets? Perhaps in the end, these planets will also sacrifice themselves for humanity's journey towards galactic civilization, just like Earth.

Appendix C: Character Descriptions

NPC 1: Wendy

Description	Human female
Background	She was once a scientist of the Earth's magnetic field restoration project
Goals/Motivation	Find her colleagues Uncover the reason Aeternum closed the project
Personality/Archetype	Straightforward
Relationships	Victor - Former colleague in the same department Dr. Solari - Former colleague from different departments

NPC 2: Victor

Description	Human male
Background	He is the current the leader of the Aeternum Security force, responsible for maintaining the company's security
Goals/Motivation	Destroy all data related to the Earth's magnetic field restoration project Protecting the company's reputation and interests
Personality/Archetype	Loyal to the company
Relationships	Wendy - Former colleague from different departments Dr. Solari - Colleague from different departments

NPC 3: Dr. Solari

Description	Human female
Background	Chief Scientist of the Earth's Magnetic Field Restoration Project
Goals/Motivation	Research methods to restore the Earth's magnetic field Revealing the damage of Grav Jump technology to planetary magnetic fields
Personality/Archetype	Focused
Relationships	Wendy - Former colleague in the same department Victor - Colleague from different departments

Appendix D: Dialog Flow

NPC 1: Wendy

Appendix E: Development Risks

Map Label	Description/Mitigation	Type	Priority
All	Allow players to switch the gravity of the scene, and be able to independently control a specific object to remain in a fixed position under both 1/0 gravity conditions	Script	High

Appendix F: Key Asset Needs

Description	Type	Priority
N/A		