Message to Spacers 10
Suwantek Systems TL-1800 Transport
Patrick Stutzman

***Message to Spacers* Archives!**

Suwantek TL-1800 Transport CL 6
Colossal space transport
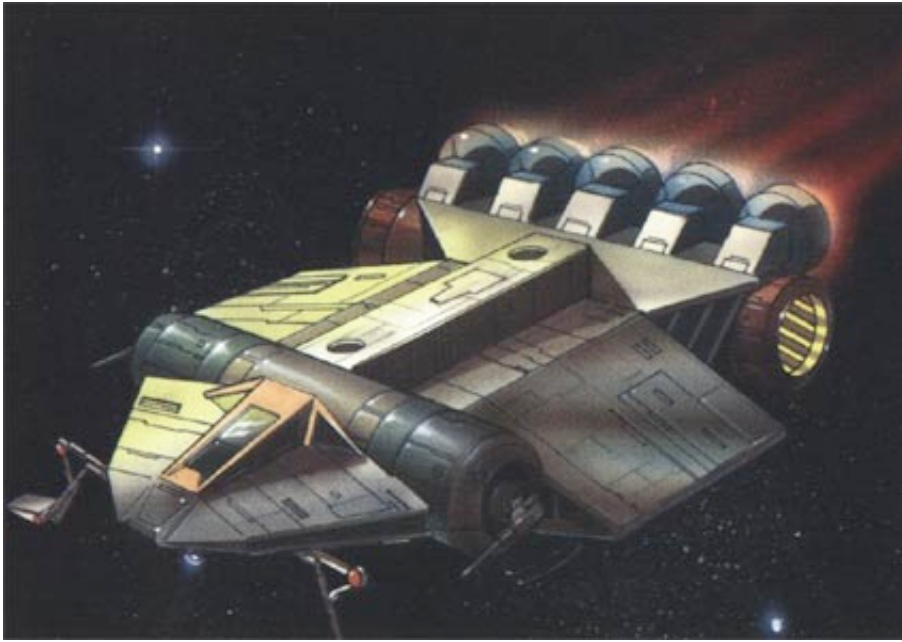Init -2; Senses Perception +7

Defense Ref 15 (flat-footed 12), Fort 26; +12 armor
hp 120; DR 15; SR 30; Threshold 76

Speed fly 12 squares (max. velocity 800 km/h), fly 2 squares (starship scale)
Ranged 2 laser cannons +2 (see below)
Fighting Space 12[ts]12 or 1 square (starship scale); Cover total
Base Atk +0; Grp +36
Atk Options if any

Abilities Str 42, Dex 16, Con —, Int 14
Skills Initiative -2, Mechanics +7, Perception +7, Pilot -2, Use Computer +7

Crew 1-2 (normal); Passengers 7
Cargo 110 tons; Consumables 3 months; Carried Craft none
Hyperdrive [ts]2 (backup [ts]10), navicomputer
Availability Licensed Cost 41,500 (15,000 used)

Laser cannons (2 gunners)
Atk +2, Dmg 4d10[ts]2

The Suwantek Systems TL-1800 was originally created to act as a poor man's freighter, having little armament, light shields, and a low speed when compared to other freighters in its class. However, the TL-1800 does have the advantage over many others in that it was designed specifically to carry cargo pods to supplement the already spacious cargo capacity.

The cargo pods are specially designed by Suwantek to hold more than the typical cargo pod bought and sold throughout the galaxy. The TL-1800 cargo pods can hold up to 100 tons of cargo and are modular to the extent that they can be linked to one another for easy attachment to the ship. A single TL-1800 can safely hold up to 4 of these cargo pods in space, but atmospheric resistance against the ship forces ship owners to detach all but one pod to safely navigate while flying in a planet's atmosphere. Anyone piloting a TL-1800 within an atmosphere receives a -5 penalty to any of his Pilot checks for every cargo pod attached to the ship beyond the first.

The TL-1800 hosts a superior engine assembly with Suwantek's Y-v-6 model sublight drive. Although the drive does not allow the ship to be quick, it does relief ship captains' minds with its low maintenance requirement. The Y-v-6 needs a checkup only once per standard year, unlike the recommended 3 to 5 times for other freighters. Likewise, the TL-1800's hyperdrive, Suwantek's StarBurn 4, performs well and requires an overhaul about once per standard year as well.

One of the few civilian-owned freighters allowed to carry weapon systems, the TL-1800 comes equipped standard with two laser cannons. The cannons, however, are locked into a forward-firing position, but they can be fire-linked to improve the weapons' performance. A strange twist with this is that the weapon systems in the TL-1800 are designed by Sienar Flight Systems, Suwantek's parent company, and are believed to be one generation older or the same generation as the weapon systems used in the Empire's TIE Interceptor starfighters.

The one major flaw perceived by many owners of earlier models of the TL-1800 is the navicomputer with which the ship comes equipped. Instead of contracting the task out to a company known for designing reliable navicomputers such as Industrial Automaton or Fabritech, Suwantek took a risk and designed their own, the Portal Delta navicomputer. The Portal Delta system performs very poorly, is prone to glitches, and requires almost constant maintenance. As a result, many ship owners quickly remove the Portal Delta and replace it with a better system or rely on an astromech droid.

History

Suwantek Systems, being a subsidiary of Sienar Flight Systems, is a fairly new company when compared to other shipbuilding corporations such as the Corellian Engineering Corporation and SoroSuub. When they started marketing their ships centuries before the rise of the Empire, people initially believed that the company would

not last long, since their ship designs did not inspire very many consumers. But, Suwantek persisted and, with the introduction of the TL-1200, sales picked up.

The TL-1800 followed in the footsteps of its older cousin and found its niche within the galactic community. Originally advertised as a less expensive alternative to CEC's famous YT-1300 freighter and using the modular cargo pods as a major selling point, many low-budget merchants took the bait and bought the ship.

Shortly after sales of the TL-1800 reached its peak, news of Suwantek's inferior navicomputer spread, and sales dipped for a short while. Eventually, customers realized that a small investment in another navicomputer or an astromech droid solved the problem. But, Suwantek realized their mistake and abandoned the Portal Delta for a more reliable Fabritech model. While this wise move helped pick up sales for a short time, the damage to the ship's reputation caused by the Portal Delta had already been done, and the ships never did sell as well as before.

However, the TL-1800 caught the eye of one particular organization that bought a large number of them and put them to good use: the Imperial Security Bureau. The ISB began using the TL-1800 to transport high profile personnel and highly classified cargo around the galaxy without drawing much attention. Whether Suwantek and Sienar executives put in a good word for the ship to the ISB is not known, but those people that suspected it did not complain about it for very long.

TL-1800s in the Galaxy

The TL-1800 found widespread use with merchants having lower incomes in the Outer Rim Territories. Its capabilities to carry large amounts of cargo, coupled with its lower price tag, gave even the most desperate of traders hope to be successful in their career.

Although the intended market for the TL-1800 was for small merchant companies and intra-system freight forwarders, the ship found success among mercenaries, pirates and other organizations that preferred to operate covertly. One such organization that purchased several of the ships and put them to good use was the Imperial Security Bureau. By using the TL-1800 to quietly move top secret and classified goods and information, they virtually guaranteed that their valuable cargo would reach its destination unhindered.

Discuss this article on the Forums

About the Author

Patrick Stutzman is a freelance game designer whose credits include *Threats of the Galaxy* and the upcoming *The Clone Wars Campaign Guide* for the **Star Wars** **Roleplaying Game** Saga Edition. He also maintains his Web site, *Star Wars*: The Forgotten Tales, and works on SWRPGNetwork under the name of Jan Tolbara. Currently, he lives in Kansas City with his wife, two children, and an annoying Force spirit that follows him wherever he goes. If you have any tips on how to get rid of this spirit, let him know.