

Weaponry Adjuncts

What else can they do? A good bit, actually...

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Tractor Beams

Tractor beams are usually thought of as the 'tow trucks' of space, and this is how they are most often used. However, it is entirely possible to use them in defensive and offensive fashion.

An example of the defensive use of tractor beams might be to pull an asteroid between one's own spacecraft and an enemy spacecraft, in order to use the asteroid as a shield. Alternatively, one might use it to attach to the same asteroid—or to an enemy spacecraft, effectively using it as a hostage against other spacecrafts' fire.

Offensive use of a tractor beam includes latching onto an enemy vessel in order to hold it in place (relative to the attacking vessel, at least) while firing upon it.

They are fundamentally a part of what is known in galactic circles as Higgs field technology, which includes pressor beams, artificial gravity, and force fields.

Pressor Beams

This is a reconfiguration of the same Higgs field used to create a tractor beam. In this instance, it reverses the direction of force, causing a push rather than a pull. It, too, can be used both offensively and defensively, and in similar fashion.

Force Fields

Force fields are yet another configuration of a Higgs field, typically in pressor mode. These fields can be any size from that required to protect a spacecraft carrier or space station, down to a portable, personal field. However, the smaller the field is required to be, the smaller the field generator must be, and the more limited its capabilities. (A single-being body-shaped force field is still in development.)

Force fields are designed to be adjustable, within limits; they can be programmed to be gas-permeable, to be 'soft' (meaning that impact upon it creates a nearly perfect elastic collision but does not harm the object impacting) or 'hard' (in which case impact causes significant damage, up to and including loss of the impacting part) or to allow nothing in or out save for very narrow bands of electromagnetic frequencies. In a pinch, even these frequency windows can be closed, and in such an event, the tiny but powerful field-unit force field is proof against even a nuclear blast—though they tend not to survive the blast, since the energies have to be diverted somewhere, and the central unit typically overheats and shorts out.

Artificial Gravity

Yet another offshoot of Higgs field technology, where a Higgs field in tractor mode is used over a large area. In a pinch, and under unusual circumstances, a particularly creative agent can manage to use artificial gravity as a weapon, something akin to a broad tractor beam; since it can be scaled, a wily agent might run up the gravity in one room of a spacecraft while running it down in another. The resulting gradient is extremely difficult to traverse without injury.

Passive Cloaking

The objective of cloaking is to make the object being cloaked as invisible as possible. To that end, passive cloaking replicates the surroundings such that what is behind the object or person, relative to an outside observer, is essentially projected in front of the object being cloaked, usually on the object's surface, by means of a specialized coating or similar. Experimental craft being developed by the Research & Development department incorporate liquid crystal skins, which can then be tied into the sensor array to sample the environment and replicate it on the craft's skin.

Active Cloaking

Active cloaking applies the same concept as passive cloaking, but rather than using a projection mapping skin, it sets up a field around the object, craft, or person that effectively reroutes the light around the object. There are several technologies found throughout the Galaxy that can do this, including adjusting a force field to serve as a high- resolution gravitational lens. Most are classified in nature.

Sensor Scrambler

The sensor scrambler is a newly- developed, classified technology, only just beginning to be used on Agency spacecraft. The details are classified.

Solid Holograms

This name is a slight misnomer. It is not a hologram in the usual Earth- laboratory sense, but rather a kind of photonic field, as photons are bosons. The ability to manipulate a Higgs field led to a revelation that certain other bosons could be manipulated in similar fashion, leading to shapeable photonic fields, dense enough to give the impression of a solid object when combined with certain other classified technologies.

Solid holograms can be overlaid on almost any object, including the human face. This results in the object underneath being perceived as whatever object the solid hologram is projecting. In the case of a small unit being used as a disguise, an additional scanning system underlies the solid hologram, reading the features and expressions of the agent and replicating them on the holographic face, thus enabling realistic interactions.