Jefferson Technical Design
Chapter 1: Goals and Status

October 18, 1997

This set of documentation mainly provides the software program designs that make up the code base and planned enhancements and additions. In EA terms, it's probably most like a "Software Design Document (SDD)," but we often refer to it as the TDD or TDR.

It should serve as the basis of a final TDR after the written game design is complete.

1. Goals and Audience

1. People added to the project can learn everything they need to know in order to produce.

2. The document serves as a vehicle for identifying, ironing out, and reviewing the remaining technical design issues

3. It serves as the basis for defining and estimating development tasks.

4. It codifies the engineering philosophy and standard for robustness.

5. It identifies game design and technical unknowns, and supports the creation of plans and experiments to resolve them.

2. Intermediate and Final States

In the previous months of experimental and production programming, we have accumulated a lot of running software, and design ideas going forward. To support a growing team, and to solidify our mutual understanding and overall design quality, we did a substantial round of technical documentation leading up to mid-October 1997, in <u>advance</u> of writing a detailed game design script. Most major areas were documented to a state we call "Intermediate Stage" or "Alpha State."

The goals above can be refined to set the standard for this stage of the documentation:

1. Design of current software subsystems is complete and detailed enough for any member of the technical staff to read, interface, or make minor modifications. Suitable for bringing a new team member rapidly up to speed.

2. Designs reviewed by the team for clarity, validity, and efficiency.

3. Designs for programming yet to come meet the same standards of clarity and detail, but may be incomplete due to items "to be determined" in the game design, or by virtue of performance experiments or proofs-of-concept that need to be planned and executed.

4. Game design "TBD's" are phrased in the form of a question that can be answered in the written game design.