

# BANDIT COUNTRY<sup>v2.0</sup>

## WHAT IS BANDIT COUNTRY?

Bandit Country is the RPG of espionage and covert action for-hire. Characters usually have a professional history and training in special forces and / or espionage agencies. They have moved on and found that running a bar or taking up a day job doesn't pay the bills or provide the thrills. So they became Bandits. Deniable assets for hire. People who do the jobs that governments and business need done. And who keep their mouths shut. They are mercenaries in a grey realm where there are no lines and few answers.

Perhaps they work as contractors for an organization that sells their services. Sort of like the Private Contractors that can be found in all the worlds war zones but even more secretive. These organizations don't have websites or public portals. You can't Google them. People talk to people who assign lines of credit and logistics and write up tasking requirements and a fortnight later some dictator in South America is dead from a heart attack or a specific train on the Munich U-Bahn is 30 seconds early or the traffic management system in Seoul breaks down for exactly 37 seconds. Perhaps they have their own contacts. Reliable people from their past lives that pass on the odd job. However the jobs come to them, they are the tasks that the organisation can't or won't do itself. Either the Bandits have the expertise on site that is not available to the Patron or the Patron does not want to be associated with the outcome. These are truly clandestine operations. The stakes are high, as are the rewards. The outcome is deniable and the Bandit will take all of the consequences of failure. There is no rescue, respite or recognition.

Welcome to Bandit Country.

## INSPIRATION

BANDIT COUNTRY has several key influences.

Firstly, KUBOS by Liam Brennan. YRP is a blatant sibling of Liams work. Download KUBOS at: <http://www.1km1kt.net/wp-content/uploads/2008/12/kubos.pdf>

My other inspiration is the GUMSHOE series of games from [Pelgrane Press](#).

The GUMSHOE games define a style that is very much at the heart of how I N and how I think BC is best used. Defined by Robin Laws (GUMSHOE designer) as 'Player Facing', it is a style of gaming where the Narrate focuses on the story and the players make all the rolls and are responsible for determining the random outcome of the interaction of their characters with the story.

[Wilderness of Mirrors](#) by John Wick. A neat little game of espionage and paranoia by one of the masters. He wrote it for much the same reason that inspired me to write (cobble) Bandit Country.

It is up to you to decide how far the apple has dropped from the tree.

If you want to comment about BC please check out my blog <http://matt3rh0rn.wordpress.com/>

Matt Haines.

## CHARACTERS

### **CONCEPT**

Start by discussing concepts for your CHARACTER with the Narrator. Make sure that your character will be capable of meaningful interaction in the story and will be fun to play.

### **ABILITIES**

Choose up to 6 things that the Character is better at than the average person. These Abilities can be as broad or as refined as is appropriate to the game. An example ABILITY is 'Cop'. The Character is good at all the things that a cop can do. Alternatively, 'police procedure', 'Shoot' and 'Drive' may be required to model a police officer. It all depends on the style of the game.

Divide 8 points between the ABILITIES.

ABILITY	DESCRIPTION
0	TYPICAL
1	COMPETENT
2	ACCOMPLISHED
3	OUTSTANDING

The CHARACTER is UNTRAINED or TYPICAL at all other things.

UNTRAINED applies to things that require training or education to do and are not part of the cultural norm for the character. For example, in a modern story piloting a fighter plane, performing surgery and writing a computer program are all TASKS that require training so a character who does not have them noted as ABILITIES will be UNTRAINED and unable to successfully attempt them in most situations.

Driving a car, attempting first aid and using a computer to search the internet are TYPICAL skills and a character can attempt these tasks whether they are ABILITIES or not. TYPICAL TASKS can be attempted with a score of 0.

### **TALENT = 6**

TALENT is an indicator of how capable a person is. TALENT is spent to add to the total RESULT of a TASK. TALENT can also be spent to gain an ADVANTAGE in a scene.

### **Wounds = 0**

Whenever you are hurt roll against your total damage to see if you are stunned / unconscious. A CHARACTER dies when Wounds exceed 6.

**PERKS** are fairly specific set of conditions/circumstances that promote CHARACTER excellence. Gain a +1 EFFECT bonus if the TASK succeeds. Perks such as Tough or hardy might add 1 to the total number of Wounds a character can sustain before death. Start with 2 Perks.

**FLAWS** are fairly specific set of conditions/circumstances that retard CHARACTER excellence. TALENT cannot be spent on a TASK when a FLAW is in play. Start with 1 Flaw.

## TASKS

	TASK FAILED				TASK SUCCESS					
RESULT	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
EFFECT	4	3	2	1	1	2	3	4	5	6

TASKS are PLAYER CHARACTER actions that are important enough to the story that their success or failure is pivotal to the action. TASKS are defined by the GOAL of the CHARACTER. The PLAYER defines the GOAL by stating the desired outcome of the TASK. The outcome is measured in EFFECT. EFFECT is applied according to the GOAL of the TASK. TALENT can be used to boost a result (prior to roll) as long as the ABILITY is not UNTRAINED.

Some TASKS are competitive. In this case the relevant ABILITY of the competing Character is subtracted from the total.

### RESULT

NORMAL TASK:  $1d6 + \text{Ability} + \text{TALENT} \text{ Vs } 5$

COMPETITIVE TASK:  $1d6 + \text{Ability} + \text{TALENT} - \text{Opponent Ability} \text{ Vs } 5$

### CHALLENGE

Some TASKS are more Challenging than others. CHALLENGE is the amount of EFFECT required to successfully complete the TASK. Depending on the TASK

- 0 Routine
- 1 Challenging
- 2 Hard
- 3 Real Hard

### TASK CHALLENGES

TASK CHALLENGES are TASKS with complicated objectives. Set a CHALLENGE rating that must be met over the span of several tasks, perhaps using a range of ABILITIES. Success EFFECT is subtracted from the total CHALLENGE. Fail EFFECT adds to the total CHALLENGE. The TASK CHALLENGE is successfully concluded if the CHALLENGE is reduced to Zero. If the CHALLENGE is doubled due to failure, the Character has failed.

Eg: TASK CHALLENGE: >6< Deactivate the security system.

The Character must generate 6 points of EFFECT using electronics or infiltration type ABILITIES. If TASK failures add EFFECT to the Challenge so that it reaches 12, the Task has failed (fallen or spotted as appropriate).

### EFFECT

CHALLENGE is subtracted from EFFECT for a SUCCESS. ( $\leq 5 \text{Result}$ )

CHALLENGE is added to EFFECT for a SUCCESS. ( $> 4 \text{Result}$ )

- Apply as damage.
- Apply as bonus to following TASK check.
- Apply as 10% modifier to units (time,\$,distance,litres,etc).
- Apply as combination of the above.

## **TALENT**

Talent is a pool of points that can be spent improving the Effect of a TASK or to gain an advantage in a scene.

- +1 per point to any TASK
- 1pt minor scene advantage
- 2pt significant scene advantage
- 3pt major scene advantage

## **ADVANTAGES**

One of the key uses of TALENT is to gain ADVANTAGES during a scene. This system is intended to be very flexible and to allow players a degree of editorial control over the events of the story that are beyond the impact of their characters. ADVANTAGE should be narrated in terms or in some way relevant to the Characters ABILITIES or actions.

## **REFRESHING TALENT**

Spent TALENT points are refreshed by achieving Goals. Goals must have some story significance.

- ¼ total or 1pt: achieving a goal
- ½ total or 3pts: achieving a series of goals

## **GROWING TALENT**

A character can earn a new Talent Point to add to the total by completing a major Goal or some other significant achievement. The Narrator may choose to cap the absolute total.

## **BURNING TALENT**

If appropriate, a character can gain new ABILITIES or get better at existent ones by burning TALENT. The cost of raising an Ability equals the total number of Ability Points. It is only possible to grow an ABILITY by 1 point at a time. The Characters TALENT pool is reduced by the amount burned.

TALENT can also be Burnt to buy off FLAWS. The most common example of this is buying off TRAUMA FLAWS from serious injury. In this case the TALENT burn cost is 3. If the Player Roleplays the Characters attempts to deal with the FLAW, cost is 2. If the Player puts significant effort into dealing with the FLAW or allows for a sufficient passage of time, cost is 1.

## CONFLICT

Fighting is a fluid event that is defined by the goals of the active parties. It is not broken into rounds or segments of time. A single Combat TASK usually covers several blows and should be described in terms of the tempo of the fight as opposed to the duration of the action. EFFECT is calculated as DAMAGE or ADVANTAGE against the losing participant.

**DAMAGE** is applied to the opponent as WOUNDS (after armour is subtracted). If relevant, a Character must roll over their total WOUNDS. A failure indicates unconsciousness.

**ADVANTAGE** is added to the result of the following FIGHTING TASK. Advantage can be interpreted in terms of footwork, finding a chink in the opponent's armour, flanking, aiming or any other situation that increases the likelihood of harming the opponent or achieving the GOAL.

Advantage can also be used in a similar manner to a TASK CHALLENGE to achieve a specific GOAL against the target.

Eg: Player wants to maneuver the opponent to push them through a window.

CHALLENGE is 4. Player EFFECT lowers the Challenge, Opponent EFFECT raises it. If it reaches 0 the player succeeds, if it reaches 8 the opponent succeeds.

## TRAUMA

If a Character takes 3 or more WOUNDS from a single attack, they have a TRAUMA. This is a FLAW that adds +1 to the CHALLENGE rating of all relevant TASKS. Even though the WOUNDS can be healed, the TRAUMA FLAW can only be removed by burning TALENT, or the passage of time. Examples are broken limbs, punctured lung, heavy bleeding, internal bruising, etc.

## SHOOTING

- Rapid fire to point target boosts the RESULT by +1 Only effective at CQB ranges.
- Autofire to point target boosts the RESULT by +2
- Rapid fire to saturate cover adds +1 CHALLENGE to actions by those in cover.
- Autofire to saturate cover adds +2 Challenge to actions by those in cover.
- Per step closer or further than the Zero boost the CHALLENGE by +1
- If Target within min range boost the CHALLENGE by +1
- Resolve Aiming by creating a TASK CHALLENGE. If the shooter passes the challenge they have acquired the target, otherwise not. Either way, a shot is fired unless the shooter abandons the Challenge prior to failing it.

## **OPPONENTS and GEAR**

Opponents can be considered to be “grunts”, “captains” or “commanders”.

- GRUNTS are the rank and file opposition. They are Competent (1) at their core role and Typical (0) at all other things. Grunts usually have 0 Talent but some exceptional Grunts have 1 Talent.
- CAPTAINS lead the GRUNTS and perform special tasks. They are Accomplished (2) at their core role, Competent (1) with related tasks and Typical (0) at all other things. Captains have 3 Talent.
- COMMANDERS lead the CAPTAINS and perform high level tasks. They are Outstanding (3) at their Core tasks, Accomplished (2) at related tasks and Competent (1) at most other things that matter. Commanders have 6 Talent.

## **GEAR**

What sort of gear is available to a Bandit?

This isn't James Bond. If it can be found in a catalog and a retailer is available, it can be bought. A Patron will very occasionally supply a specific piece of equipment. Remember that the reason that they hired a Bandit to do the job is that they do not want to be associated with the consequences of the mission.

Finding illegal or restricted gear on site is usually left to the Bandit. It is up to the Bandit to improvise with the available tools rather than to have some fancy piece of kit that has been designed in the basement of an espionage organization. This is one of the challenges of working for the Espionage community as opposed to being employed within it.

Perhaps a character has contacts within the community that can provide spy tech. Just remember that each favor given is a favor owed.

Narrator; don't go overboard with tech! If technology could solve the problem there would be no need for hiring a Bandit. Bandit Country is about people with unconventional skills and knowledge finding solutions. Technology is a tool. Nothing more.

## **FIREARMS**

Firearms are task dedicated tools for delivering a payload over a distance to a target. Most firearms have an effective maximum and minimum range. Maximum range is the distance at which random factors have more influence on the chance of hitting than operator skill. Minimum range is the degree to which the proximity of the target, the tightness of the terrain and the length of the weapon reduces the ease of acquiring the target.

All firearms have a sighting system, either open sights or a telescopic sight. Sights must be Zeroed to a specific range.

Open sights allow for good peripheral vision and situational awareness. These are either iron sights or low or non magnified optical sights such as the Eotech holosight. Any target within 10% of the zero range is within the zero. Open sights zeroed to 100 yards can easily acquire a target from 90-110 yards away.

Telescopic Sights allow for accurate fire to greater ranges. They cause reduced peripheral vision and situational awareness because the operator must be snug to the sight and is focusing on an event further away. Telescopic sights can easily acquire a target within 5% of the zero. Eg: a zero of 500 yards can acquire a target 475-525 yards away.

A target that is further or closer than the zero incurs a +1 CHALLENGE per step. In the case of the open sight above, it is per 10 yards closer than 90 or per 10 yards further than 110. In the example of the telescopic sight above, the +1 CHALLENGE is applied per 25 yards that a target is closer than 475 yards or further than 525 yards. Most modern sighting systems allow for resetting the zero during combat. The rear portion of most iron sights can be reset to a specific range band. Many battlefield telescopic sights have an optical scale visible through the sight that can be used to determine the range to target and provide a new zero. If either of these actions is performed, the weapon is re-zeroed to the new range and the target can be re-acquired.

Firearms used for Close Quarter Battle are usually zeroed to 10 yards. CQB shooting does not incur penalties for non zero shooting if the range to target is 20 yards /meters or less and the weapon is zeroed for CQB. All pistols are zeroed to CQB and are generally ineffective for point shooting beyond these ranges.

## **SHOOTING TECHNIQUES**

### **POINT FIRE**

This is center of mass shooting at a specific target. It can include controlled single shot fire where single shots are fired and the target reacquired between shots, rapid fire wherein single shots are fired in rapid succession at a point target and automatic fire where a weapon capable of firing more than one shot with the pull of the trigger is used to fire a burst at a point target. The purpose of point fire is to put as many shots as possible into the target. Controlled point fire has the greatest chance of hitting with fewer rounds. Rapid fire is an excellent option at short ranges and automatic point fire is even better, though only available for military or law enforcement firearms.

### **SATURATION FIRE**

This involves shooting at an area or general target. Either rapid fire or automatic fire is used to saturate the area. The purpose of saturation fire is either to hit multiple grouped targets or to suppress targets that are behind cover.

## ARMOUR and PROTECTION

ARMOUR	RATING	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Armour generally only protects against impacts. Grappling/ falling/ etc usually bypass armour.</li><li>• Only Ballistic armour protects against firearms and explosives.</li><li>• Armour adds to the CHALLENGE of many endurance and fine coordination TASKS.</li></ul>
LIGHT	1	
MEDIUM	2	
HEAVY	3	
VERY HEAVY	4	

Body armour is a definite survival enhancer on the modern battlefield. Most modern armour is designed to be functional and non restrictive in terms of most battlefield tasks but it is heavy, hot and uncomfortable.

Light and Medium armour are both concealable to some degree and are made from a range of ballistic fibers. Heavy armour is the stuff that soldiers wear. It is a more hardy version of medium armour and incorporates stiff plates at front and back. There are numerous designs but the general approach is for the plates to cover the torso vitals and to be removed and disposed of if they are ever hit. A smart operator disposes of the vest too.

Very Heavy Armour is the stuff that bomb disposal guys wear or that door gunners use. Ballistic shields also fall into this category.

Ballistic helmets usually come in the heavy and very Heavy protection range.

### HIT LOCATIONS

If it is relevant to your story you can use hit locations to determine if armour or soft human has been hit. Roll 1d6. If the result is 3-5, body armour has been hit. If the roll is a 6 the helmet has been hit. Assuming one is worn.

Do not use this process to determine where a shot hits! Decide on that based on final damage and the necessities of your story. Use it as a yes/no arbiter as to whether the shot struck armour or not.

An easier way of doing this is to assume it hits armour unless there was a specific GOAL for hitting an unarmoured portion of the target.

### COVER and PENETRATION

If cover is capable of stopping or slowing a bullet rank it from 1-5. The internal structure of most buildings is 0-3. If you are unsure make it 2. If you think that the cover would stop a bullet, disallow any penetration. Most modern rifles can shoot through a layer of bricks. Most modern SMGs or pistols can't.

## WEAPON CHARTS

Weapon	Min range	Max range, open sights	Max range telescopic sights
Pistol	Touch	20 yards.	No change
SMG,Carbine	1yard/ meter	100 yards/meters	300 yards/meters
Rifle	2 yards/ meters	300 yards/ meters	500 + yards depending on the weight of the projectile (heavier = further)

WEAPON	DAMAGE	NOTES
FIST/FOOT/GRAPPLE/ IMPROVISED WEAPON	0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Damage is added to effect after the Result is determined and before applying appropriate armour.</li> <li>• Most firearms ignore non-Ballistic armour.</li> <li>• Shotgun and explosive damage is 3close/2medium/1long range.</li> <li>• Falling damage is 1 per 2 metres.</li> </ul>
PISTOL/KNIFE/BATON	1	
ASSAULT RIFLE/SWORD/AXE	2	
SNIPER RIFLE/CAR.	3	

### FIGHTING

Weapons are tools used to harm and kill an opponent. For those who trade in harm it is generally accepted that the least effective way of doing this is unarmed. The single (yet significant) advantage of unarmed fighting is that it does not involve a weapon that can be found on the person or taken away from them. The quickest way to neutralize an opponent if a firearm is not available usually involves effecting deep penetrating wounds to the vital organs such as the heart or brain or effecting severe trauma to the spine, circulatory system (usually by cutting a major artery) or by restricting the airflow (typically at the throat). Any other method has unpredictable results. If a weapon is not available, improvise one from the objects at hand.

### SHOOTING

To paraphrase those in the know “a pistol is used to fight your way back to the long arm that you should never have set down”. Pistols are versatile close quarters defensive weapons that are easy to carry, can be concealed and are the firearm of last resort. In any offensive operation long arms are the weapon of choice. SMG, carbine, rifle or shotgun? Choose the tool for the job. And carry a pistol as backup in-case it jams or malfunctions.

### EXPLOSIVES

Explosives are a great option for causing a significant amount of harm to a large area. Numerous options are available to those who know how to use them. All have a detonator and fusing device. The fuse activates the detonator which activates the explosive. It is often a good idea to use remote fusing options as opposed to fundamentalist types who prefer to wear the explosives and utilize a personal fusing device such as a hand held trigger.

The challenge with explosives is that forensic processes for tracking them are becoming quite sophisticated and their use will definitely attract Law Enforcement agencies in those nations that have them. Investigation of the aftermath of an explosive event takes quite some time but usually provide useful information and can lead to future troubles for the Bandit that deployed them. In a profession that seeks to avoid consequences, explosives are usually cause more trouble than they are worth.

## **NARRATOR ADVICE**

### **CREATING MISSIONS FOR BANDIT COUNTRY**

Read the news. Ask yourself the golden questions. Why? How? When and Where? What were the motivations? If a particular party is blamed for an action, is it possible that another party performed the task so as to appear that way? Deception is the goal of the Bandit.

Choose a location or action. Something needs to be done and the Patron doesn't want to, or is not capable of, doing it. Who is the Patron? What is the relationship between the Patron and the action?

How does the Patron present the Action to the Bandit or those who represent him? It is very rare for a Patron to overtly announce their intentions. It is more likely that they will approach through a third party. What happens if the Bandit(s) investigate the approach and determine who the Patron is? Think in terms of consequences.

So now you have a Patron and an Action. Who is the target of the Action? How capable are they? What sort of resources do they have on site and how capable are they of investigation and retribution following the Action?

It is often best to present the Action to the Bandits in terms of desired outcomes. Part of the fun of play is to have a relatively free hand in planning and performing the Action. Don't tell them how to do it. Unless this adds to the drama by restricting their options in an interesting way. 'Kill the Columbian Drug Lord' can be interesting. 'Kill the Columbian Drug Lord when he is in church next Sunday making sure that no-one else is harmed' is a significantly greater challenge.

Be willing to design actions that are small and specific. Switch the voting box in a Boston Auto Union meeting before it is counted. Don't ever let your stories become larger than life. Bandits are not at the cutting edge of National Strategic Policy. At least, not all the time. Allow the actions to be small and personal. Drama is built through the challenge of the action rather than its scope on the world stage.

### **NARRATING COMBAT**

Don't allow Combat to become a mainstay of your game. Considerable effort should be made by the Bandits to avoid it where possible. Combat is brutal and success is not guaranteed.

Combat must be visceral. It is not an intellectual activity. It is about neutralizing the other party before he can do the same to you. Combat is very fast and should be played this way. Maneuver and fire, move on. Take out the sentry. This is not a movie. Step in close, upper cut. Bring down the elbow as you step in again to break the collar bone. Fold the target to the ground and kneel on his neck until he goes limp. Use this time to reload your M4.

Most contacts should be resolved with a single TASK. A second task is only involved because they fucked up the first time. Maneuver to advantage and take the target down. Sweep around the door and double tap the guy facing you. Two in the chest. Keep moving and double tap the guy at the table in the back before he can stand. Last guy is reaching for a gun at his waist as you step up and tap him down the center line. This whole action can be one TASK. Don't get bogged down.

## TIPS FOR YOUR GAME

### CHARACTERS

- Make ABILITIES relatively broad and PERKS / FLAWS relatively specific.
- Use PERKS and FLAWS to define things like contacts, old injuries, etc.
- If you want to go for more of a 'skill list' approach to ABILITIES, create a list (jack it from some other game) and give an appropriate number of ABILITY POINTS to divide between them. You might want to cap the number of 3 point ABILITIES that a starting Character can have.

### TALENT

- TALENT really sets the power level of the Game. You can cap TALENT so that if additional TALENT is earned it must be applied to new ABILITIES or buying off FLAWS. High TALENT (10+) allows a Character to do just about anything.
- Setting conditions for refreshing the TALENT POOL can alter the action pace of the game too. Rapid or easy refreshes mean that most TASKS will use TALENT. Slow or difficult conditions mean that TALENT will be used sparingly.

### TASKS

- The Narrator NEVER rolls the dice! Phrase all tasks in terms of the Player Characters. If something happens that they did not initiate, propose a task in reaction to that event.
- Ask yourself: Can this guy do this? If the event is something that is standard to the character, don't bother asking for a task. If it is really important to the story, ask for a TALENT spend instead. 1 point to resolve the issue in the characters favor.

### GENRE / POWER LEVEL

- As written, BANDIT COUNTRY is fairly harsh in combat. If you want a more heroic game double the number of WOUNDS that they can take. Let them use TALENT to heal. Boost the starting talent. Give plenty of opportunities for partial or full TALENT refresh.
- If you want to go the other way, cap TALENT at 6. Limit the application of TALENT. Be more specific about the situations that TALENT can be used in.

### COMBAT

- I have written this before but it is really important: Don't let the rules slow combat! One TASK per plan. If the TASK is failed, maybe the plan has not survived contact with the enemy. The hammer is down and the guns are out. The Bandits are going to have to figure it out on the run. No time for planning now.
- Be lenient! The first shot that hits a character will probably be the last. The TASK system is very versatile and can be interpreted in numerous ways. Allow TALENT spends to make up for poor choices (or at least to delay the consequences for a while).
- Professionals have a plan, civvies panic. When the shooting starts and the knives come out everyone reacts according to their training and preparation. Opponents have a plan! Even if that plan is self-preservation. They will follow it. This is not a computer game where the opposition stands behind crates shooting until they are shot. They will advance, hold, retreat, flank and support. Wounded guys will get assistance from their mates. Civvies will be unpredictable. Most will freeze and cower. Some will run away. Others will charge. Creating real reactions for Narrator Characters will encourage real strategy from the Players.

## USING BANDIT COUNTRY RPG

It is very easy to convert any published material to use with BCRPG.

NPCs convert easily by considering their role and capabilities in the story as a whole. Rank them as either Grunts, Captains or Commanders. Look at stats and skills and interpolate them into Abilities. The easiest way is to give them a key Ability that relates to their role. A guard has the Guard Ability. It covers all the stuff he does as a guard! Easy. For more capable NPCs give them a couple of key Abilities to suit their role and add depth. Hand out a couple of TALENT points if they are exceptional.

Convert gear by again assigning it a role. Weapons can be given a min and max range and a zero (if firearms). Other gear has a role and may either add to EFFECT when used or reduce CHALLENGE, depending on how you want to represent it in the game.

Maps can be provided to the players but keep away from using them in combat. Strategically planning an action, yes. During the action, no. No one runs around with a map mounted on their glock. Be strict with this. Players want a crutch to work with. Force them to use their imagination and memory. If a combat is going wrong and everyone wants maps, insert a flashback costing each player 1 TALENT. Give them a chance to read the map and make some plans, as though they had done this prior to the current fight. Then take it away again and get on with it. There are no certainties in combat and having maps and plenty of time to strategise during the action is definitely going against the style of BCRPG.

Take artistic license. Use what you like from the published material and ignore the rest. Especially encourage and reward innovative problem solving. If a story requires a specific yet unavailable item or if it bottlenecks at a point because a particular action is required, be willing to think outside the box and allow the story to continue. Bandits think on their feet and must adapt and be versatile. If the material that you are using does not reward this type of play, change it so that it does.

Last and most importantly. If something happens and you are not sure how to apply it in terms of rules, make it up. Do whatever seems right at the time. Most players will not even notice and maintaining story flow is more important than being correct. Players will remember a passage of play where they did something cool and unconventional. If they remember a passage where you stopped everything to check a rule or figure something out, it will not be for the best reasons.

## **SPECIAL ABILITIES**

What about the Supernatural or Superscience? What if a character had undergone specific surgeries and training enabling them to use Psionic abilities.

None of this is really in the realm of Bandit Country. It may, however, suit your vision of the game and as a result Special Abilities are presented here.

SPECIAL ABILITIES are ABILITIES that most people do not have and cannot Learn. In some cases they can be trained but only by specific and exclusive agencies with exacting requirements.

### **PSIONIC ABILITIES**

Psionics are the Special Ability to induce paranormal phenomena. Choose a specific effect or range of linked effects that the character can create through Psionic manipulation. Give it a name. This is the Psionic Special Ability.

The CHARACTER must expend at least 1 point of TALENT to activate a Psionic ABILITY. This TALENT cost does not add to the TASK RESULT. Otherwise, treat it like any other ABILITY.

### **MAGIC ABILITIES**

MAGIC is the SPECIAL ABILITY to alter the natural order to suit the Character.

Over time the natural Order will reassert itself over the magical effect. The CHARACTER must expend at least 1 point of TALENT to activate a MAGIC ABILITY. This TALENT cost does not add to the TASK RESULT.

MAGICAL ABILITIES come in the form of ALLIES or SYMBOLS.

#### **ALLIES**

The magician has come to some sort of agreement or pact with mystical or elemental forces and they perform tasks upon a successful request on behalf of the Mage. Most elemental powers work in this way. A magical soul staff containing the trapped essence of a spirit lord is another example.

#### **SYMBOLS**

These are the 'cheat codes' of the universe. When used correctly they have a fairly specific range of effects. These can be ancient primal words, runes, astrology, divination, etc.

## CHEAT SHEET

	TASK FAILED				TASK SUCCESS					
RESULT	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
EFFECT	4	3	2	1	1	2	3	4	5	6

### RESULT

1d6 + Ability + TALENT Vs 5

### CHALLENGE

CHALLENGE is the amount of EFFECT required to successfully complete the TASK. In an OPPOSED TASK, the opponents ability is applied as CHALLENGE.

- 0 Routine
- 1 Challenging
- 2 Hard
- 3 Real Hard

### EFFECT

Remaining EFFECT is applied after Challenge is subtracted.

- Apply as damage
- Apply as bonus to following check
- Apply as 10% modifier to units (time,\$,distance,litres,etc)
- Apply as combination of the above

### TASK CHALLENGE

- Use EFFECT from TASK Successes to reduce the CHALLENGE to 0.
- TASK failure EFFECT adds to the CHALLENGE.
- If CHALLENGE is doubled, TASK CHALLENGE is failed.

### TALENT

- +1 per point to any TASK
- 1pt minor scene advantage
- 2pt significant scene advantage
- 3pt major scene advantage

### SHOOTING

- Rapid fire to point target boosts the RESULT by +1 Only effective at CQB ranges.
- Autofire to point target boosts the RESULT by +2
- Rapid fire to saturate cover adds +1 CHALLENGE to actions by those in cover.
- Autofire to saturate cover adds +2 Challenge to actions by those in cover.
- Per step closer or further than the Zero boost the CHALLENGE by +1
- If Target within min range boost the CHALLENGE by +1
- Resolve Aiming by creating a TASK CHALLENGE. If the shooter passes the challenge they have acquired the target, otherwise not. Either way, a shot is fired unless the shooter abandons the Challenge prior to failing it.