Flashpoint Campaigns

What's New

3 April 24

On Target Simulations

MATRIX GAMES

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1 What's New in Version 2.1.4 Beta 2

1.1 Content Updates

NEW! - We are releasing the standalone "GM Giraud" scenario featuring French versus Soviet forces on the Epinal map. Joao Lima is the author.

NEW or UPDATED! - User Manuals. Big thank you to Mr. John Osborne for his help on these!

- FM FCCW-01 Game Operations.pdf is up to date again
- FM FCCW-03 Tutorial Operations.pdf is up to date
- FM FCCW-04 Scenario Design.pdf is new
- FM FCCW-05 Battle Planning.pdf is new
- FM FCCW-06 Campaign Design.pdf is new

1.2 Feature Changes & Fixes

- **Sensor ranges** show more detail in the Subunit Inspector. Separate ranges for detect, classify and identify are shown. "Detect" means that you know something is there, "classify" means that you think it is a group of vehicles, likely tanks, and "identify" means that you know they are T80s and can shoot direct-fire weapons at them.

- **Data Fix**. The national data file "CW 80s United States.xls" has been updated. A correction has been made for a specific US cavalry vehicle, US577 (H/J series formations), regarding passenger carrying capacity. This impacted the scenarios Finale, Steel Rain, The Long Night, Tutorials 1, 2, and 3, and CZ-SN4 Going for Gold.

- Standalone scenarios "**Lesson of War**" and "**Brothers in Arms**" contained West-German panzer grenadier units which lacked sufficient organic transport to load all passengers at once and move. This was due to blanket data change, and these two scenarios have been adjusted so that the affected units are mobile again.

- **Tournament Play.** We have found and fixed some minor scoring bugs.

- The **pathfinding** 'weights file' that minimizes overstacking has been updated.

- We fixed the **rendering** of unit counters where gray mobility, steps, and orders indicator colors were bleeding through from inactive units to subsequent active units. They show in white again as they should.

- If you use the F5 hotkey to show and hide the core information panels, the **Radio Log** will not also open and close. It has its own hotkey, F7, and now works independently of the main group of panels.

- **Campaigns Games**. Units that ended a scenario in a spotted state started the next scenario in that same state. They now start unspotted.

- **Battle Planning**. Resupply missions could be given to forces in the battle planner but the label used was "Reorganize" which was confusing. This has been changed to "Resupply" instead.

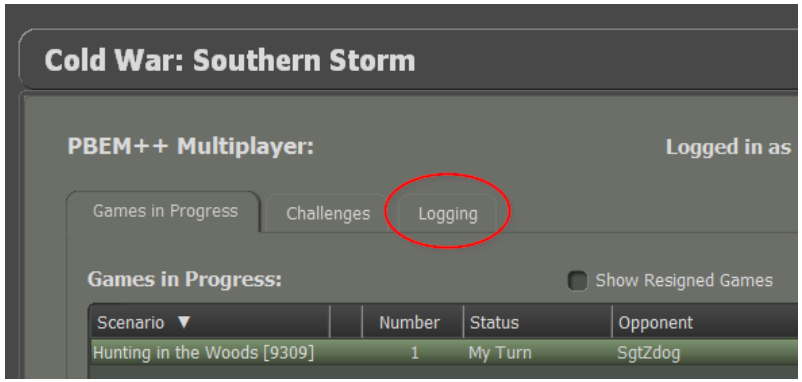
1.3 PBEM++:

We have not made any specific changes at this time. The Matrix PBEM++ servers have a timeout of 120 seconds, and version 2.1.3 of the game had a timeout of 30 seconds. This was increased to 120 seconds in 2.1.4 Beta 1. This alone may fix the intermittent "We have a failure to communicate" error messages.

If there is an Internet problem upstream of the game, such as a mangled HTTP packet, then the game will be notified and will show an error message, e.g., error HTTP 400, but that is all. We hope to make this part of the code more fault-tolerant in time, but we have

not done so yet.

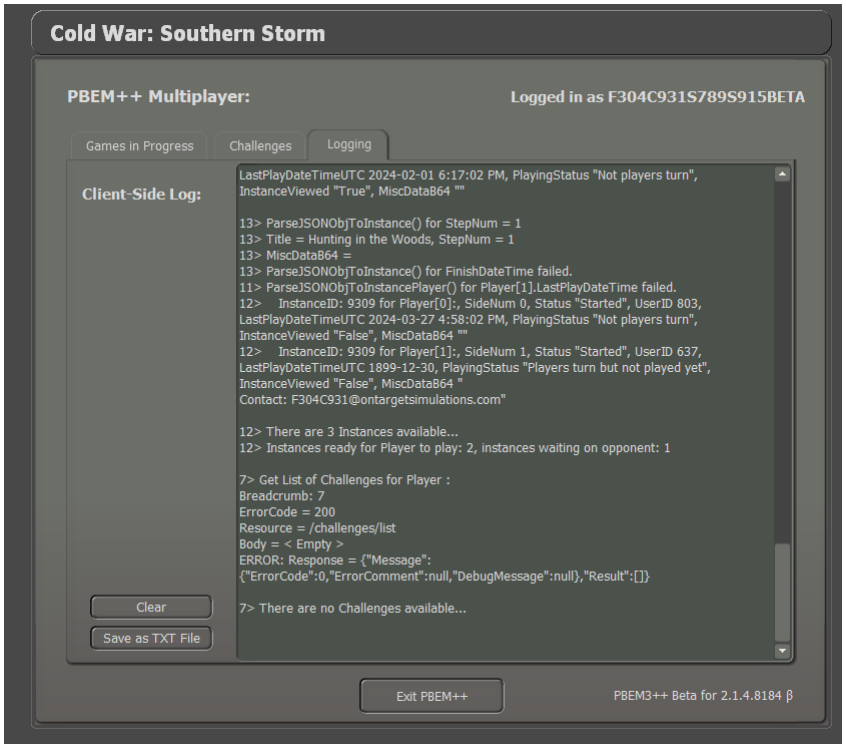
If there is a problem of some sort, it will reveal the web service logging screen and allow the player to interact with it. You can find it here:



If you can see this Logging tab, please go to it and save the log as a text file and send it to us care of

Robert.Crandall@ontargetsimulations.com.

Before you send it you might want to find and remove your plain text password from near the top. It is harmless to send it, but it would be a good practice just on general terms not to. We will, of course, respect the passwords we receive.



This log file is a verbose transcript of the background web service dialog and is pure gold for debugging. In particular, it will help us understand what is a problem in our code versus the webservice code versus the Internet transport layer itself. Gold!

2 What's New in Version 2.1.4 Beta 1

This document describes the changes found in the February 2024 update for build 2.1.4.8064 released for Flashpoint Campaigns: Southern Storm.

2.1 Content Updates

NEW! – Content Generation Documentation. WE have relased three new FMs that explain how to make scenarios (FM04-Scenario Design), add in Battle Plans (FM05-Battle Planning), and how to build campaigns (FM06-Campaign Design).

Updated! – We have updated FM01 Game Operations for al of the latest new features and tweaks for 2.1.4.

Updated! – We have updated two of the Operational Area Guides (OAGs) as well. Both OAG CWSS010 SITREP Southern Storm and OAG CWSS-02 Force Review are updated to the latest 2.1.4 level.

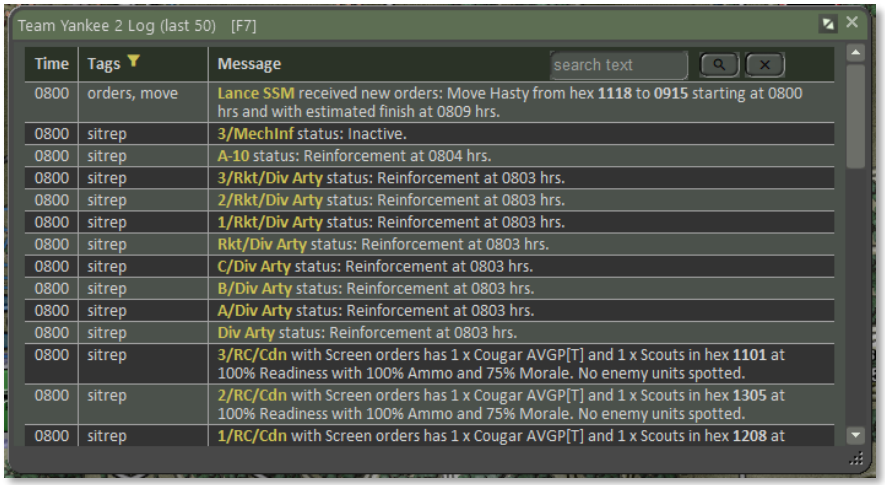
The Canadian Campaign has had some play adjustments from the original author based on feedback from users.

2.2 New Feature –Tournament Play

This did not require many visible changes to the game, but we have now put in the plumbing to support Matrix Tournament Play through the PBEM++ server. The main visible change is that there is a new column showing a "T" for tournament in the Game in Progress list. This is a big help for understanding which paired game is which. The Message area below also now contains hardwired tournament information as appropriate.

We look forward to seeing tournaments of Flashpoint Campaigns begin.

2.3 New Feature – Unit Log Redesign

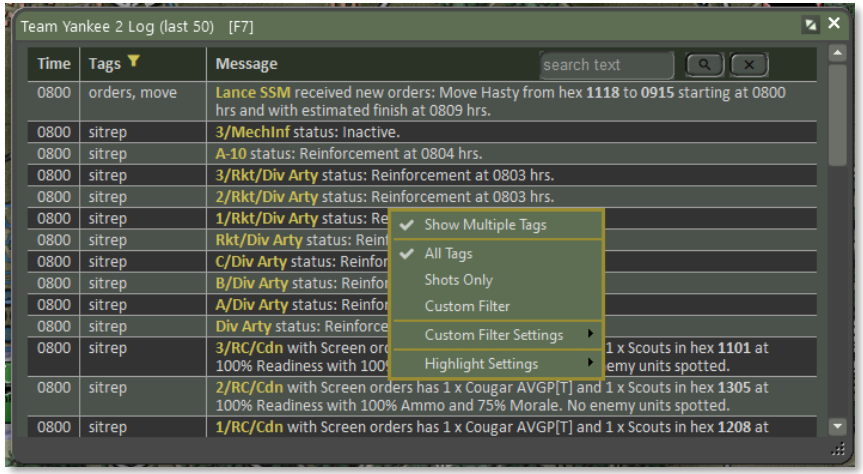


As the game unfolds, a series of messages are recorded to the unit logs with a time stamp, a "tag" or type of log entry, and then the text of the entry.

2.3.1 What's New:

- All messages are now Tagged (instead of just some of them as before)
- Tags are now filterable (see below)
- Unit names are highlighted to make them easier to find and hotlink to the Dashboard
- Locations are given a subtle highlight (just bold, no color) and are hot linked to flash on the map
- The log is searchable – see the top right corner
- Highlight colors may be specified by tag type so that specific tags can be emphasized or de-emphasized (see below)

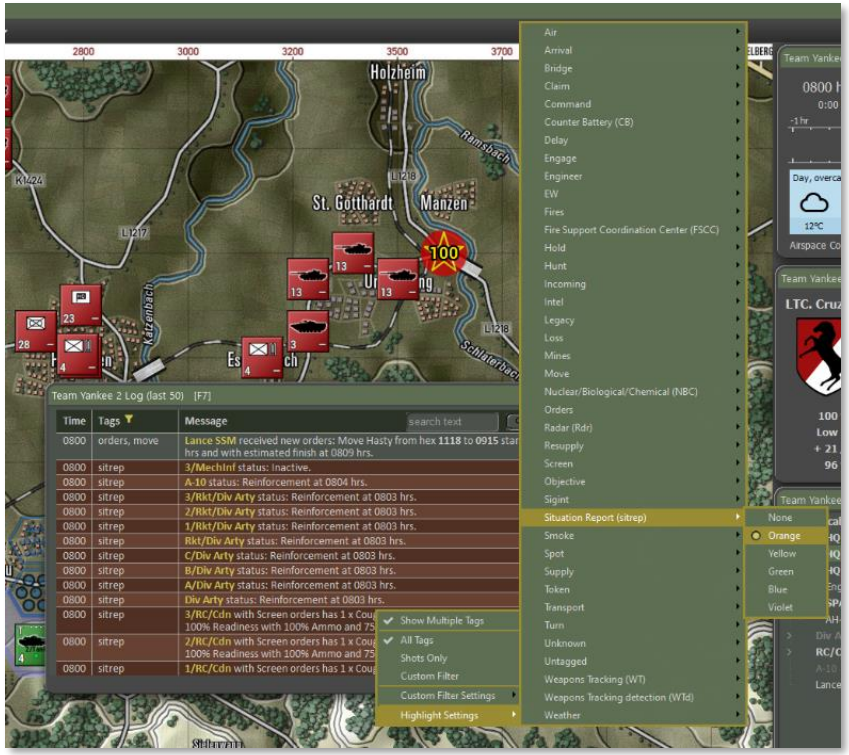
There is a new filter icon (a yellow funnel icon) next to the "Tags" column header. Right-click on it, or anywhere else on the log, to pop up the filtering menu.



For convenience, the Tags column can be set to show only the dominant primary tag for a log entry, or to show all tags.

Filtering. The log can be filtered by Tag types. To see just the messages that involve bullets flying, use the "Shots Only" combat filter. For further customization, use the "Custom Filter Settings" popout to uncheck the Tag types you don't want to see, and then set the filter to "Custom Filter." You will not see messages you don't care about.

Highlight Settings. The highlight settings are a way to make the tags you want to stand out using different colors. Use with care! It's all too easy to set everything to have a highlight color and become dazzled by the beautiful but unreadable Christmas tree-like effect that results.



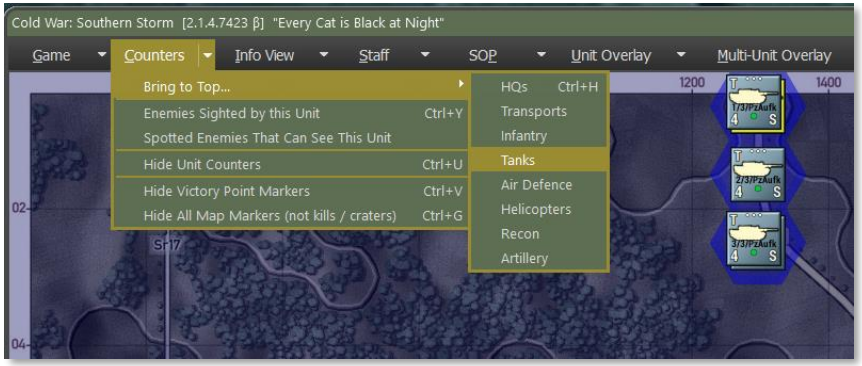
This new system is used everywhere we show the unit logs – this log, the unit dashboard, the counter-battery screen, and the TOC Ops Unit Logs report.

If this dialog has the Windows focus, then it can be closed by tapping the Escape key.

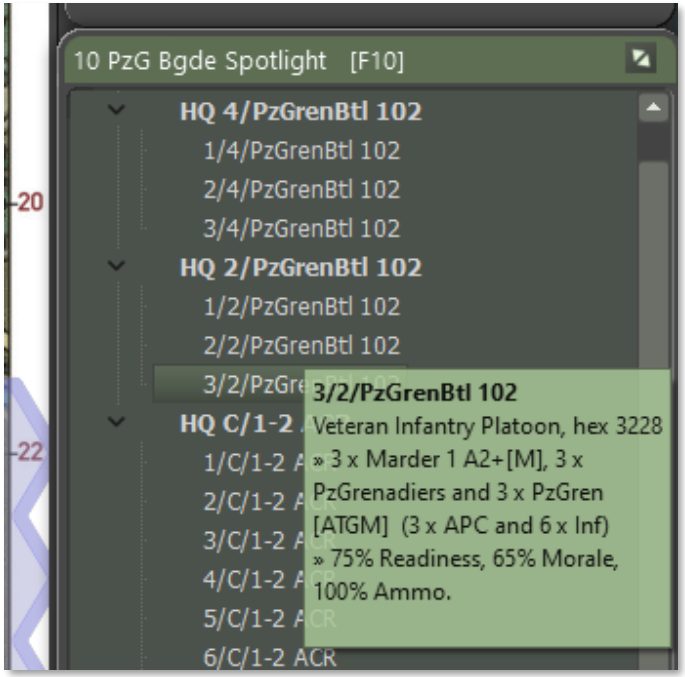
2.4 Major Bug Fixes and Enhancements

The following items are new bug fixes or feature additions and refinements in this update.

1. **New User Interface**: Bring the selected type of counter (HQ, transports, air defense, etc.) to the top of each stack to make them easier to find. Previously, we did this only for HQ units, but we have extended it now to numerous other unit types as well.



2. **New User Interface**: Tooltips have been added to numerous buttons and also to all of the chain of command tree views. Now, a player can run their mouse over the list of names in any tree view, e.g., the Spotlight, and instantly see the composition of the unit.



3. **Campaign Games**: Version 2.1.3 of the game would sometimes lose track of which side of a campaign game the player really controlled if the player was on the Warsaw Pact side. CZ Campaign and Panzer Leader now play properly again.

4. **Campaign Games**: a problem with occasional missing setup areas in campaign scenarios has been fixed.

5. **Unit Over Stacking**: In some scenarios there could be over stacking of units, especially at chokepoints such as newly discovered minefields. The game does a better job now of spreading out the units in such cases.

6. **Timing of Arrival of Reinforcements:** Scenario authors schedule the arrival time of reinforcements as 'minutes from the start of the game'. Given that player turn lengths vary so much, the chance of the reinforcements arriving at an inconvenient time - just after the

player has issued orders and turn resolution has started – is likely, with reinforcements sitting out the rest of the turn in the arrival hex where they might be subject to enemy attack. The new rule is that reinforcements will be pushed or pulled in time to arrive just as a player orders phase is about to begin. Arrival times can be pulled forward if they are scheduled to arrive within the first 10% of the next command cycle, otherwise, they will be pushed back to the following orders phase. This is part of the friction of war. For example, if the command cycle is 45 minutes and the reinforcements are scheduled to arrive in 4 minutes or less, they will arrive early. Otherwise, they will arrive in 45 minutes less than a few seconds.

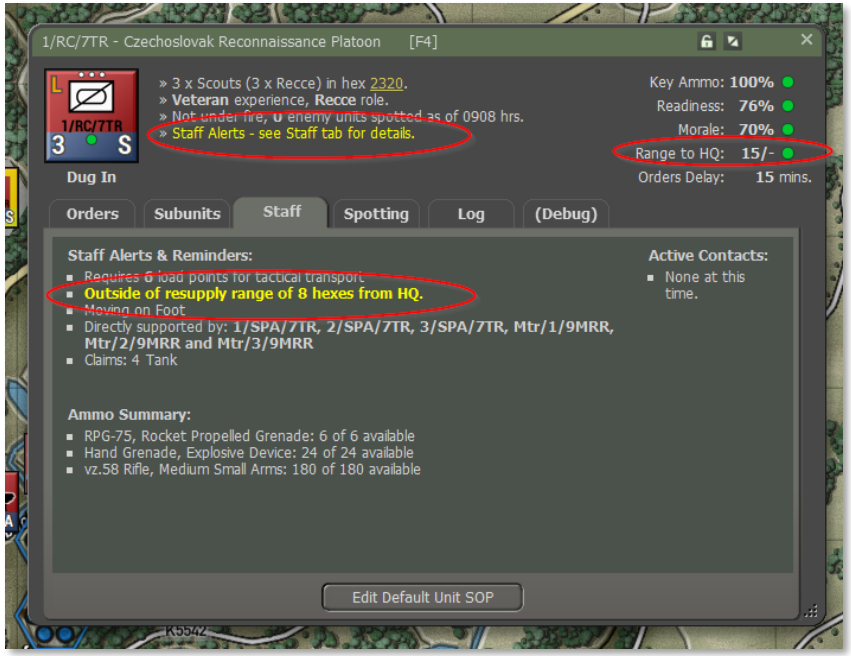
7. **Amphibious units moving in all water hexes could not be spotted:** Although amphibious units have a low profile when in the water, that water also does not offer any cover or concealment. We increased their visual and thermal signatures should they are more likely to be spotted.

8. **Helicopters no longer fly so aggressively over known enemy units:** In particular, when flying home to resupply, helicopters will attempt to avoid flying over known enemy locations. They also avoid spending as much time hovering over ridge lines.

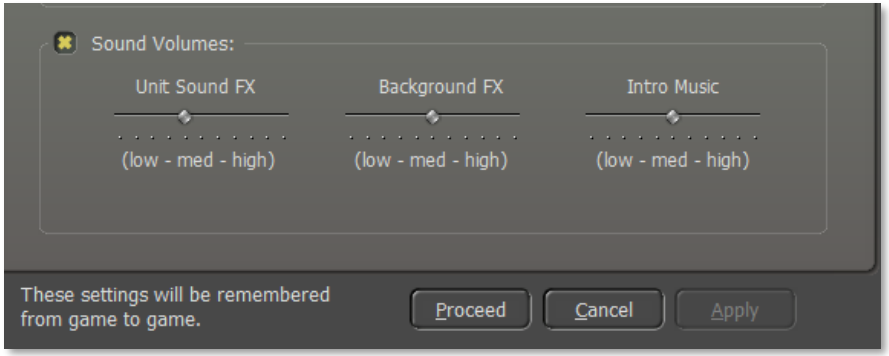
2.5 Minor Fixes and Improvements

1. **User Interface**: Show a unit's total ammo inventory at a glance in the Staff page of the Dashboard to save time.

2. **Alerts for Ground Recon units outside Supply Range**: If Recon units have no particular Command Range by design but do have a Resupply Range of twice what their command range would otherwise be. This meant that if they were too far away they could not Rest and Resupply. Now the Dashboard alerts the player up top and gives detail in the Staff report:



3. **Quality of Life:** The ability to mute all sound effects while preserving volume settings. We added a Disable All SFX checkbox to the User Preferences dialog. This new checkbox works like the existing Ctrl-Q (blanket Quiet Sound FX) but does not force the player to zero out and, therefore, lose the three respective volume levels. The state of Ctrl-Q is now saved to the flashpoint.ini file and used for the next game. This makes it easier to set and keep the various relative volume controls and toggle them on and off as a group more easily.



4. **PBEM VCR Replay**: Animations were not always showing in VCR replay of PBEM games. This was fixed.
5. **Campaign Improvement**: The campaign Recovery Report that appears between scenarios in a campaign is now printable.
6. **Quality of Life**: The "Escape" key now closes these additional dialogs if they have the user focus:
   - Dashboard,
   - SU Inspector,
   - Radio Log,
   - SOP Manager, and
   - Off Map Assets.

   The dialog must have a Windows focus for the Escape keypress to work. For example, If the Dashboard is up but the player has clicked on the main map, then the map has the focus and not the Dashboard. An Escape keypress in this case will be ignored.
7. **PBEM++ server timeouts** were defaulted to 30 seconds, but Matrix uses 120 seconds. We now use 120 seconds to avoid spurious time out errors in PBEM++ games.

8. **Improved PDF Printing**: The problem was with images, and specifically, with cached images. Printed reports should work better now.
9. **Battle Planning**: In battle planning during scenario creation, the mission described as "Reorganization" is now labeled as "Resupply". In either case, it both resupplies and restores readiness to the units involved. Only the label has changed.
10. **User Interface**: Here and there in the popup hints we had yellow text written to a yellow background. This did not work well and has been corrected.

3 Known Issues

The following items are known issues that will be addressed in a near-term release.

The team is still looking into units that fail to shoot spotted targets at close ranges when engagement/kill probabilities are very low. Some improvements have been made in this area and we are also looking at ways to better inform the player as to why shooting may not be happening or is ineffective. In a number of cases units with depleted or small number of subunits in good cover and concealment are just hard to spot if they are not moving or shooting. This is all a highly complex area of the code with a large number of dynamic factors.

4 If You See Something Odd...

If you think you are seeing strange behavior, please let us know in the forum (Tech Support) and please get us a save game (.SAV and .SAV.BLR files) to review with your observations. These really help us diagnose any issue in the game code.

5 Finally

Please enjoy the game. The OTS team has worked on it for many years and hopes that you have as much fun with it as we have. Development on both the game engine and the content is going to continue for years yet.

- ***The OTS Team***

6 Flashpoint Campaigns Credits

6.1 On Target Simulations Team

- Lead Programmer and Head Honcho: **Robert "Ironman" Crandall**
- Data, Programming, Graphics, and Sound: **Jim "Cap'n Darwin" Snyder**
- Programming, Data, Models, and Research: **Jeff "Iron Mike" Sugden**
- Map Master, Programmer, AI, and Graphics: **William van der Sterren**
- Quality Czar and Testing Lead: **Charles "The Whip" Belva**
- Programming: **Kevin "SgtZDog" Zemon, Will Jackson, Alex Kriesel**
- Testing: **Tomasz Niedzinski**
- Scenario and Campaign Design Lead: **Joao Lima**

6.2 Cold War Contributors/Testers

- Alexander "Stimpak" Schwarz, Bryan "Tazak" Jones, David "22sec" Whitt, Mike "MikeJ19" Johnstone, Jurrie van der Zwaan, John "JohnO" Osborne, Jorgen "Jotte" Torgersson, Jo van der Pluym, Scott "WABAC" Gibbs and Steve "Mad Russian" Overton

6.3 Cold War Beta Testers

- Alexander "Lomo7j" Shestakov, Bas "Baskaatje" Kreuger, Calvin Breaker, ||CptMiller||, Craig "CTCharger" Truesdell, Dario Miroli, Dave Duckett, David "ultradave" Anderson, Don "Dovs" Lazov, Doug Miller, Durkik "gucciflocka97" Koth, Eemeli "Kurrestan" Sorri, Eric Estes, Exsonic01, Gary Bezant, Gary Heintz, Harry "harry_vdk" van der Kooij, Henry Simpson, Howard Rigg, Hoyt Burrass, Ian Strauss, Jack Herling, James Cleeter, Jing "cristianwj" Wang, Jonas Solberg, Jonathan (Yogdog) Brown, Justin Wonderlick, Kamyar Ashfar, Marc Bellizzi, MadGuard, Mark "nelmsm" Nelms, Maxime Lemieux, Nefron, Panta "Panta_slith" Astiazaran, Patrick Walker, PullG, Reto "rgeiger" Geiger, Richard "The Plodder" Lloyd, Ringtailhawk, Robert "rsallen64" Allen, Searry, Shannon "ObfuscatedJava" Morgan, Stas "StasSche" Schebetov, Steve (CV90) Lohr, TarkError, Terry Barnes, Todd "sfbaytf" Fong, Todd Bergquist, Tommi "Tomcatter" Saarainen, Tyler "daddywarlord" Knapp, Ai "Xavier Jot" Zhang

6.4 Matrix Production Manager

- **Erik Rutins** – The man behind the curtain keeping us on task!

OTS on the Web

Matrix Games Forum: https://www.matrixgames.com/forums/viewforum.php?f=10149

Check Us Out on Steam: https://store.steampowered.com/app/2366530/Flashpoint_Campaigns_Southern_Storm/

Check Us Out on Discord: https://discord.com/channels/911711314051739659/911711314257248331

OTS Facebook Page: https://www.facebook.com/ontargetsimulations

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