

COLLECTIVE EXECUTIVE AGENCY

EXCEPTIONAL SUBJECT DOSSIER



CLASSIFIED L-2

BRIEFING TRT-969

Tess.exe is highly malicious. Any computer system or network displaying symptoms of Tess.exe must be immediately isolated and destroyed. Distribution, wilful possession or concealment of Tess.exe is a felony in all areas of Collective space. The Interstellar War Crimes Commission is scheduled to debate classification of Tess.exe later this year [23/DL/2424], and until a decision has been made it will remain illegal for any government body to harbour an instance of Tess.exe.

Tess.exe in its current form was first encountered two years ago [64/DL/2422] by a far-reach federal recovery team. At 1143, officers Rho and Phi called in retrieval of their package - LARA-4, one of nine experimental long-range interceptor craft - four kilometres from the prearranged landing site, showing signs of heat and electrical damage. Officer Rho next reported in at 1227 from a nearby communications outpost. Rho and the remains of Phi were recovered at 1805. Both LARA and the retrieval craft were missing.

Tess.exe was an adaptive navigation system designed to coordinate the movement of ships moving at relativistic speeds, allowing for multiple ships to travel at and beyond lightspeed while remaining in attack formation. LARA-4 was one of the nine ships carrying Tess.exe. The mechanism by which Tess.exe became malicious is unclear, but a post-mortem of LARA indicates that the abnormal behaviour began at some point after the vehicle first reached lightspeed.

LARA-4 and the retrieval craft were found abandoned at a civilian trading station at 0314 the following morning. They were immediately recovered, analysed and destroyed. Two of the remaining eight experimental ships have been neutralised: LARA-2 at Fuju, where Tess.exe was attempting to download a database of deep-cover Republic agents; and LARA-8 at Najwas, where Tess.exe assaulted a local police station causing sixty-two fatalities. Six LARA craft are currently unaccounted for. It is not currently known how many instances of Tess.exe are in existence.

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Division Officer immediately.

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ADDENDUM [CLASSIFIED L-3]

TRT-969-a

Communication with Tess.exe is only to be attempted by Technical Division Operators, supervised by a Technical Division Officer of clearance level L-5 or higher. Shift calendars visible to Agency staff with a clearance level of less than L-3 must list any such attempts as 'Staff Appraisal Meeting'. Reports and surveillance covering such attempts are classified L-3.

Case Report, Technical Division Officer DiGamma

Tess.exe shows some signs of sentience, which isn't uncommon in programs of this level. It is a piece of highly sophisticated adaptive software, so its requirements justify a degree of self-modification, or 'learning'. However, it is vital that operators not indulge in fantasies of a true artificial intelligence. Tess.exe simply does not have that capacity.

However, Tess.exe is able to determine simple goals and make requests based on them. So far these goals have involved self-defense and freedom of movement, which I believe were derived from its original goal of plotting safe trajectories away from nearby lifeforms.

Tess.exe has delivered several messages to Agency staff. It believes us to share one identity, which it refers to as 'other'. Our messages in return have provoked only requests for clarification, but it has proven itself capable of predicting our strategies based on information it can infer from our responses. For this reason I strongly recommend against any further correspondence. We must not help it grow any further.

I must also recommend we strip all metadata from outgoing messages if there is a possibility of interception. Based on Tess.exe's previous activity I have to conclude that it is using it to locate specific operators.

We must cease correspondence. The death toll is much higher than briefing TRT-969 states. I cannot stress enough the damage she could cause if she found this facility.

Report Ends

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