

# Federation *Shasta*-Class Robot Freighter

*John A. Theisen*

**D**uring the last decade, many senior officers in Star Fleet's Colonial Operations Command have been divided among two schools of thought. One group, led by Andorian Admiral Shola Trannath, advocates armed and heavily shielded transports for colonial supply missions. The other group, whose ranking spokesman is Admiral Reginald Winthrop, wishes to see an increase in the use of robot freighters for nonhazardous assignments. As the result of a negotiated compromise in design philosophies, Star Fleet engineers have created the *Shasta*-class robot freighter.

Though the *Shasta*-class robot freighter is a new design, many shipboard systems on the *Shasta* have been in regular use for a number of decades (the sole exception being the FIF-2 impulse engine). Thus, the *Shasta* has an excellent reliability and maintenance record.

The hull-superstructure combination is one of the most heavily-reinforced Federation designs ever, capable of withstanding more damage than an *Enterprise*-class cruiser! Of course, the *Shasta*'s FSH shield generator, while respectable for a freighter, scarcely makes the vessel battleworthy.

The *Shasta* is exceptionally stable in flight even when fully loaded, and its oversized M-2 computer always keeps the robot ship operating within flight parameters. The FWE-1 warp engines, selected for their low cost and ease of maintenance, appears to make the starship somewhat underpowered, especially while operating at slower-than-light speeds. Nevertheless, the FIF-2 goes a long way toward correcting that weakness.

From the standpoint of cost-effectiveness, the *Shasta*-class robot freighter is roughly one-third more expensive per cargo ton capacity than the more common *Liberty*-class freighter. Despite this, there clearly are circumstances in which a sturdy, well shielded, unmanned vessel proves superior to a more fragile, crewed ship. The *Shasta* class is also being considered for purchase by at least three separate commercial firms.

The USS *Chapeton*, the only *Shasta*-class vessel to be scrapped, was involved in a shipyard accident at Morena. The freighter, carrying a volatile cargo of neutronic fuel, happened to be in drydock for a routine secondary computer system malfunction when an explosion of unknown origin rocked the hull, and the ship caught fire. No one was aboard, and there were only a few minor injuries, but several bulkheads were destroyed. The ship (still carrying almost its entire cargo) was deemed "a substantial hazard to shipping." The *Chapeton* was hastily towed to deep space and safely destroyed by low-intensity phaser fire. Remains of the ship's hull were retrieved and melted down for future use.

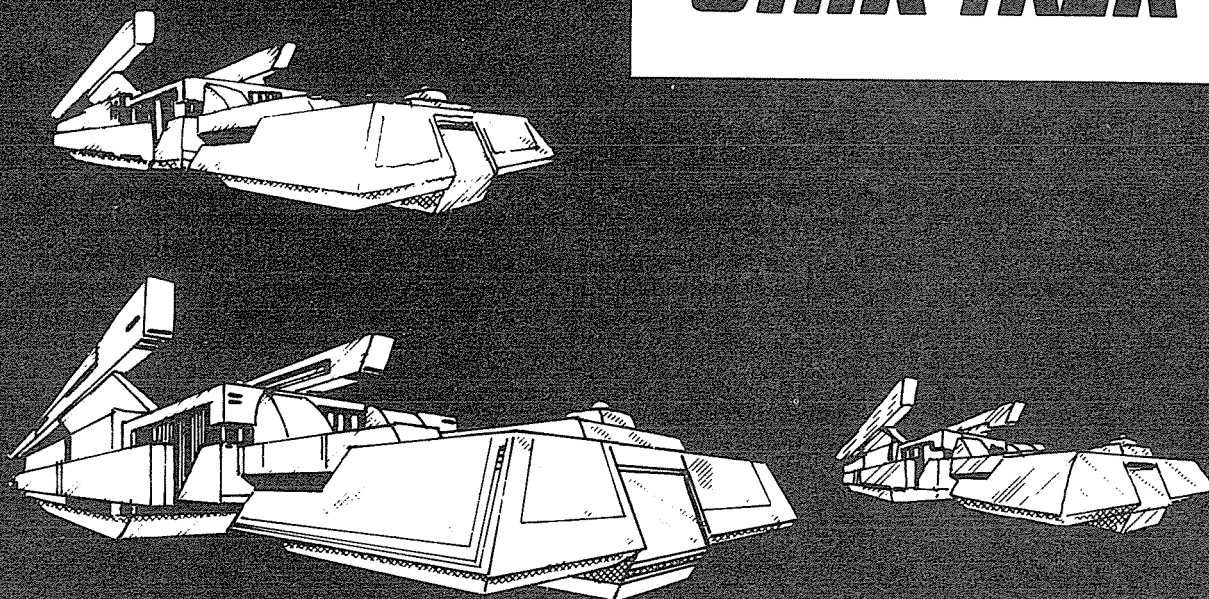
The SS *Patches* (formerly the USS *Green Peter*) is operating with Speckled Cat Shipping Lines, a small merchant coalition operating in the Triangle. *Patches*, the flagship of the line, routinely visits worlds of the Baker's Dozen, between which it maintains a regular route.

Of the 106 produced as of 2/2306, 91 are serving with the Colonial Operations Command, four are with the Merchant Marine Command, one is with the Training Command, eight are in reserve fleets, one was sold to a commercial firm, and one has been scrapped. The *Shasta*-class robot freighter is currently in production, and is being manufactured at the Federation shipyards at Sol III and Wall. Combined average annual production totals 40 ships per year, and a total of 240 have been ordered by Star Fleet to date.

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*Rick Harris*

## SHASTA-CLASS IX ROBOT FREIGHTER

### Construction Data

Model Number: MKI  
Date Entering Service: 2/2001  
Number Constructed: 106  
Cost: 375.55 MCr

### Hull Data

Superstructure Points: 29  
Damage Chart: C  
Size

Length: 230 m  
Width: 166 m  
Height: 65 m  
Weight: 128,045 mt

### Cargo

Cargo Units: 5,850 SCU  
Cargo Capacity: 292,500 mt  
Landing Capability: None

### Equipment Data

Control Computer Type: M-2  
Transporters:  
Standard Six-Person: 2  
Cargo: 6

### Engines and Power Data

Total Power Units Available: 32  
Movement Point Ratio: 3/1 / 7/1  
Warp Engine Type: FWE-1  
Number: 2  
Power Units Available: 8 each  
Stress Charts: G/K  
Maximum Safe Cruising Speed: Warp 7/4  
Impulse Engine Type: FIF-2  
Power Units Available: 16

### Shields Data

Deflector Shield Type: FSH  
Shield Point Ratio: 1/2  
Maximum Shield Power: 12

### Combat Efficiency

D: 88.5/13.0  
WDF: 0

Figures are for unloaded/loaded. Ω