

Design process

The core mechanism of the game is that the two players play the government authority and the infiltrator respectively. Players who play the role of the government need to prevent the infiltrator player from smuggling goods that cause national turmoil into the country, thus ensuring national stability. Players who play infiltrators need to use various strategies to smuggle all kinds of resources needed to subvert state power into the country and achieve the ultimate goal of subverting state power. The original design began with a border scene, new urban game scenes and new game modes have been added to the subsequent design process to make the game more playable.

Simplification of roles, cards, operations

Influenced by the excellent independent game of Papers, Please, the original designed card content is very detailed and rich: the player who plays the infiltrator needs to assign the character story background card and the carrying goods card according to the character attribute, players who play the government need to search for prohibited goods based on these clues.

Although there are a large number of clues, the clues that players can actually help players achieve their goals are extremely rare. This is because when I first designed the game, I focused too much on the player's story experience in the game. There is almost no clear design in the game mechanics. So after the first game test, my main changes were in the simplification of the board, characters and card content, and added quantifiable constraints.

The cards are simplified into two types, one is the soldier card, the other is the cargo card, also the cards such as the characters and character backgrounds are also removed.

Player action changes and game balance

In order to increase the clues that can assist the player in the game, the player's actions are changed to operate with offensive and defensive features: One of them bribed the soldier and the other side filled the vacant inspection of the bribery soldier. Because the operation of arranging cargo cards has a relatively high degree of freedom, the player moves the soldiers to check the goods and still lacks clear clues. The operation of checking the goods is too dependent on luck.

Because the operation of arranging cargo cards has a relatively high degree of freedom, the player moves the soldiers to check the goods and still lacks clear clues. The operation of checking the cargo cards is too dependent on luck. Therefore, the restrictions on the way the cargo cards are placed in the card are set. This restriction provides a clear clue to the player on the defensive side objectively, and restricts the player's over-free decking strategy at the same time.

Calculation of game points/changes in winning conditions and switching of scenes

The initial game score calculation was very complicated, and the calculation of the points and the victory conditions were simplified in the process of simplifying the game content. The

winning condition is changed from scoring victory to event winning, the cargo card is no longer directly related to the game result - the points, but the become a clue to the winning event.

The number of soldier cards limits the number of rounds in the game, simply increasing the number of soldier card and the cargo card will break the original game balance, add a new game scene and establish the relationship between the cargo card and the winning event through the switching of the scene. Extend the game duration while maintaining the original game mechanics, so that the game has an In-depth gaming experience.

Verification and adjustment of the overall game mechanics

The test of the two game scenarios found that the mechanism design of the second scene was based on a hypothetical game ending in the border scene. And because the winning condition of the second scene is a parallel relationship with the game purpose of the first scene. The game mechanics in the first game scene border and the game mechanics in the second game scene city create conflicts, causing the player to lose the motivation to follow the first scene game mechanics.

The conflict between the two scenes in the game's purpose makes the game mechanics need to be re-adjusted. The border scene still retains the original game mechanics and the original game target, the city scene, however, is changed into a new form of game – chess. In this way, the relationship between the city scene and the border scene becomes a mutual relationship. The goal of the player's game in the border scene is to obtain the resource advantage in the game of the urban scene.

Game mechanism design of city scene chess game

With the redesign of the game mechanism of city scene, with reference to the board game such as Warhammer, FOW, etc., designed a series of chess setting, game rules and characters. However, because of the design of the dual scene, the second scene needs to control the game duration within a certain range. The map and the game process designed according to the reference run successfully in the test, with the combination of chess game and card game the player have a rich game experience, but the game length of a single game is too long, the operation is too complicated, so that the first game scene has no sense of existence.

Scale adjustment of city scene chess game

The duration of the game is closely connected to the scale of game map. It is precisely because the map of the city scene is designed in a city-based scale so that the game duration is extended because of player have too much space to move. And because the player's game target is limited to a few positions on the map, that causes players have very low utilization of the remaining map space. So, the scale of the map is reduced from the city to the building in the city, and presented in the form of a floor plan. The change on the map scale not only controls the duration of the game, but also adjusts the player's game rhythm.

Turn-based system rework

The change in map scale not only changes the player's game experience, but also changes the design of the game round in the game mechanics. All the players' pieces are no longer playing

on the same map at the same time, each player plays the game on the map of in order. It avoids the confusion caused by multiple players playing games at the same time, and avoids the competition between players being too straightforward. This map is not only the game platform of the second game scene, but also the turn unit of the game.

New game goal

As the game's turn system changes, the infiltrator's direct target will only be the defender player. The competition between each infiltrator player cannot be achieved through the form of direct competition, and it needs to be reflected by another game goal: the victory points. Player can get more victory points by killing the target character first, so that the infiltrators do not need to fight directly through each other, but by competing with a new game goal: who can get the highest victory points.

Player operation design, game skill upgrade

Two different game scenes are set up with two different player operating mechanisms, but if players still have to calculate dices to make their move in the game will make the game rhythm too slow. In order to help player to get a more direct game experience, the dices were redesigned and the original values were replaced by various tactical moves. So players don't need to do the calculation during the game, the dices will show what players' characters can perform in a much more direct way.

But there will also be special circumstances in which the player throws four identical dice to affect the rhythm of the game. The function of the skill upgrade card is to convert the various tactical actions designed on the dice. Players can use these skill cards to get the chance to change the tactical action in the game round. These upgrade skills require players to trade with their victory points, in this way, the player's in-game operations, game goals, and competition between each other are connected through this game skill upgrade system.