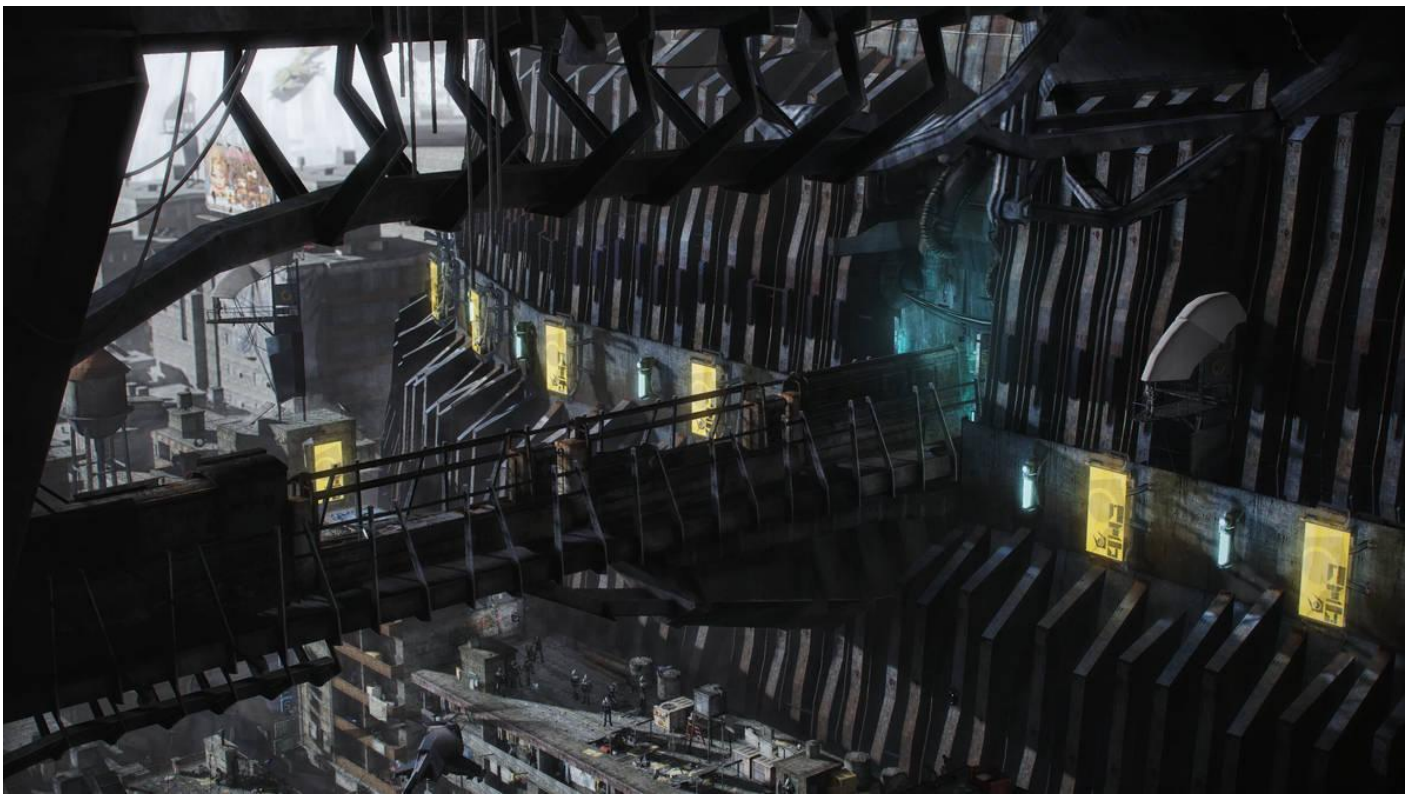
The Overwatch Provisional Arm

- Between Flesh and Overwatch

Between Flesh and Overwatch



The Formation

The Seven Hour War ended organised human resistance in a single day. In the aftermath, the Combine did not rebuild Earth’s militaries but instead dismantled them. Command structures dissolved and national identities lost their operational value. What remained were individuals with **training, discipline, and combat prowess.**

During the first years of occupation, Civil Protection maintained urban compliance within the newly established cities and more. However, the Outlands destabilized faster than anticipated. Rebel cells formed in abandoned infrastructure. Xenian fauna migrated through quarantine gaps. Industrial districts became contested zones where policing failed and open conflict emerged.

The Combine required a force capable of sustained violence without granting it the independence of a traditional army.

The Overwatch Provisional Arm was established as a transitional instrument. It drew from screened human candidates who demonstrated physical resilience, psychological stability, and operational

discipline. *Former soldiers, survival trained civilians, and technically skilled assets were evaluated through controlled trials.* Selection did not reward ideology or loyalty to Earth, instead it rewards adaptability and compliance.

OPA personnel are structured around a modular squad doctrine. Each squad operated with limited tactical autonomy while receiving strategic directives from Overwatch command nodes.

However, OPA was never intended to be permanent. It was created to stabilize occupied territory while the Combine refined ~~transhuman Overwatch soldiers~~. **It exists in the narrow space between defeat and total assimilation.**

The Position of OPA in Combine Control

Within the occupation hierarchy, Civil Protection governs the visible order of the city. It enforces policy among the population. It processes dissent before it becomes organized resistance. Its authority ends where structured policing becomes *attritional warfare*.

OPA operates beyond that threshold.

In the Outlands, unregulated districts, infestation zones, and active insurgent landscapes, OPA enforces Combine authority through direct engagement. It conducts suppression of armed cells, and eradication of antlion and headcrab infestations that threaten infrastructure stability.

During citywide escalation events, OPA shifts from peripheral deployment to central reinforcement. It secures transport hubs, protects Citadel adjacent assets, and neutralizes fortified resistance positions. Its presence marks the transition from civil enforcement to **military containment**.

Additionally, OPA also functions as a data collection body. Every engagement supplies Overwatch with battlefield metrics where things such as casualty ratios, reaction times, munitions efficiency, and squad cohesion statistics are logged and analyzed. Command protocols are adjusted in response and tactical formations are revised.

Control is maintained through a calculated exchange model. Performance directly affects access to privileges: reduced deployment cycles, advanced training, and improved equipment access are awarded for operational efficiency. Increased rotation frequency and high risk assignments punish and correct underperformance.

OPA does not represent sovereignty. It represents utility within the Combine’s control architecture.

Hierarchy and Function

Enlisted Personnel: Volunteers and Conscripts	**Enlisted Personnel form the operational backbone of OPA.** • Volunteers includes former soldiers before the Combine's arrival and loyalists who were lucky enough to be inducted. • Conscripts are enlisted with no choice. They conduct outland security, perimeter sweeps, patrol operations, and direct engagement with insurgent forces or hostile fauna. They operate Combine issued weaponry while wearing modified traditional military garb. Their autonomy is limited but functional. They think tactically within assigned parameters. Their performance determines access to privileges, deployment frequency, and long term viability within the program.