

The Beacon Group: Introduction

“This is the Red Phone Operator calling on behalf of the Beacon Group. Due to emergency circumstances, you have been activated from stand-by status to full agent. In twenty minutes, a car will pick you up for your briefing with Control. Please stay where you are. This is not a drill.”

History

Magic, the occult, crypto-zoology, and the undead. The government knows that these things exist, and that someone has to keep tabs on them. Investigate. Catalogue. Neutralize. But it's not in the interest of the government to be seen to believe in such things. It doesn't play well on the evening news. Enter the Beacon Group.

The Beacon Group was founded during World War 2, when the allied governments received word that the Nazis were actively seeking the Spear of Longinus and the Ark of the Covenant. An independent group was formed, with no direct connection to the government. Plausible deniability. For sixty years, the Beacon Group has operated in secret.

Information is exchanged using a deliberately obfuscated process; the Beacon Group's only pipeline to any government agency is through the Red Phone. Some days, the Red Phone rings; a lead is communicated, and the Beacon Group starts the investigation. Sometimes the Beacon Group finds its own leads. After the threat is neutralized, they pick up the Red Phone and call in clean-up.

There are three Beacon Group offices: Beacon West, Beacon Centre and Beacon East. The three groups have no contact with one another; they don't share names, or addresses, or phone numbers. But between the three offices, supernatural threats are kept in check.

The Characters

At various points in the past, each of the characters have been recruited to work for the Beacon Group. The jobs were small, but seemed to hint at a larger truth:

- perform an autopsy on a body killed by some kind of feral beast;
- write and publish crank literature about ghosts;
- make sure a police report is misfiled;
- go through the library's newspaper archive to compile a list of people who've disappeared from a particular park;
- hack into a computer network.

The characters accepted. They got on the payroll. A little bit of extra cash to supplement their daily jobs. They were only told basics when they accepted the jobs. Every year or two, they'd get some minor assignment from the Red Phone operator. Now they've been called in.

A Typical Crew

There are no hard-and-fast rules about this sort of thing, but a typical Beacon Group roll call generally

includes the following skills:

- An investigator: someone with police or detective skills. Interviewing techniques, evidence collection, etc.
- A weapons specialist: ex-military, preferably. When things get dangerous, the weapons specialist is at the front
- A doctor: especially someone who is good at forensics, xenobiology, and other general sciences
- A researcher: especially a folklorist. Exposure to the occult is also an asset.
- A technology expert: computers, mechanics, machines of the strange.

The Emergency

Control is a man with no name. He tells the group that this is the only time they'll ever meet him. He exists to brief the characters; afterward, he'll disappear.

The Beacon Group building in Our Fair City is empty. Several agents are missing, and one is in a coma. Shortly before the disappearance, the Red Phone gave them information about ritual murders in a small town, nearby. The current theory is that Agents Foster and Chan went to investigate the ritual murders, and the other four followed another lead. Chan was found, half-dead just outside of the town. He's in a coma. Foster's phone was found on a riverbank, nearby. Agents Wilson, Sharma, Bale and McKinnon haven't checked in for 72 hours. Two stand-bys have also gone missing.

The computer records are encrypted with a possible mystical encryption mechanism. And nobody's 100% sure just how safe the Beacon House is. There are Horrible Things in some of the holding cells in the basement, and there's something very wrong with one of the bedrooms.

The characters are to take up the mantle of the local Beacon Group. An ideal outcome would be if the ritual murders were dealt with, and the fates of the missing agents were determined. If the missing agents were recovered, alive, so much the better. But nobody's holding on to fantasies.

Inspirations

- The Mystic World
- Torchwood (although with more of a focus on the occult and less on aliens)
- The X-Files
- Supernatural
- Horror Hero
- Ultraviolet (British series)
- World of Darkness

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