Teleportation

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The article about the Teleportation (Beam) mechanics of the player-controlled host stations for moving host stations inside a level.

(This page is currently under construction!)

1 Information

Teleportation (Beam) is a core gameplay element that allows the player to relocate their host stations inside the 3D world via repositioning on a visible sector within a secured line-of-sight or a radar coverage.

2 Overview

All player-controlled host stations in the game are equipped with an advanced and powerful teleportation module. Which allows them to re-materialise at the other parts of the level, as long as sufficient energy for beaming is available. Teleportation allows the instant relocation of the player's host stations to the other locations in the level in a matter of seconds which is not only useful and convenient, but it can be also used to gain significant strategic or tactical advantages.

Beam energy is used to teleport host stations. The energy expenditure for teleportation deduced from Beam Energy battery is proportional to the magnitude of the beaming distance. The larger the displacement, the more energy is required to perform the beaming. The beam energy cost also increases exponentially, which means in order to conserve energy it is much more efficient to make multiple 'short jumps' over a short distance rather than performing a long distance jump at once.

Teleportation does not cost energy and is free of charge in one specific situation: When beaming over any friendly power stations that are controlled by the player. The implication here is that each power station the player controls across the map essentially becomes a 'free beam point', where the player can relocate instantly without having to worry about the time and energy required to reposition their host stations over large distances.

Therefore, securing a network of friendly power stations around the level directly contributes to the map control potential of the player by enlarging the zone of control and sphere of influence around the level, which translates to various strategic and tactical advantages that can be employed against the opponents. The same power stations can be also used as safe retreat points for host stations as well.

3 Mechanics

Unlike the player, the AI cannot teleport their host stations, and instead rely on the direct movement of their host stations for relocating.

Beaming has several advantages over manual movement. One of the major advantages is that the process of beaming is almost instant compared to any type of normal movement. This makes it possible to easily bypass or escape enemy presence via careful coordinated teleportation. Most importantly, the cost for teleportation over controlled friendly power stations is completely free of charge, regardless of the actual distances between the player's host stations and the power stations. This means exerting a control of power stations scattered around the level allows a rapid deployment and manoeuvre of the host station, effectively increasing and fortifying the sphere of influence and map control for the faction.

Beaming over a large distance costs a lot of energy (except when beamed on top of the friendly power station sectors). To compensate this, the player can decide to make multiple 'chain' beams over a short distance to cover a large area. This is an energy efficient method to displace a large distance without having to spend too much energy. Such restrictions exist to prevent exploitation of beaming function to always reliably escape a dangerous situation. If the players are forced to perform a small beam over the distance, at least they can be tracked much more easily. This also renders securing a safe beam point around the level even more crucial.

4 AI and User Differences

As mentioned above, the AI players cannot teleport their host stations unlike the players (and conversely, the players cannot manually move their host stations like the AI and can only teleport). Instead, the AI can relocate their host stations by manually flying around, employing the physical and kinematic parameters of their host stations. Whilst this form of movement does not cost energy, manually displacement of the AI host stations are affected by numerous and significant drawbacks compared to the instant and more reliable teleportation mechanics of the user host stations.

Host stations are massive entities and their slow movement speeds mean that the moving host stations can be easily tracked and pursued by enemies, and during the reposition phase between two displacement points, the AI host stations become even more vulnerable and susceptible to ambush attacks since there is no other emergency method to escape immediate threats and volatile situations. AI host stations will also damage and destroy buildings they come across in their movement vectors via collision to make room for their movement, and will also attempt to climb up any elevations or static terrains present in their paths. These obstacles function as further deterrents to AI host stations that can significantly delay their manoeuvres.

All these factors combined, the teleportation mechanic of the player is vastly superior to the manual movement mechanic of the AI. This is also one of the reasons why the developers removed the teleportation features from the AI (since it rendered the game too difficult for the testers), whilst only the player had retained such a powerful displacement tool under their control.

5 Strategy & Tactics

Since the host stations serve as an integrated mobile base with all comprehensive RTS functions, relocating and repositioning host stations can have drastic effects in all game situations.

The teleportation cost increases exponentially based on the magnitude of each jump. Therefore, in order to conserve energy, the player should rely on multiple short beams over short distances (called 'chain-beaming') rather than performing a big jump over a large distance; unless the player is teleporting over the top of a friendly power station, where the cost is free.

For this reason, controlling multiple power stations around the key locations in levels can dramatically increase the map control potential of the player, as well as their zone of control and sphere of influence, which can be used as direct advantages against their enemies. In dangerous situations, these power stations may also serve as safe location to retreat host stations.

One of the most common strategy and tactics is using the teleportation to construct a new base at a different part of the level. This is especially useful if establishing a new base on the frontline or strategically important areas will allow you to coordinate attack more effectively into enemy bases, or when your current position is hard to defend and exposed to multifront attacks from multiple sides.

Another common tactic is making short chain beams to quickly create units on the frontline or other tactical positions and immediately beam back your host station back for recharging energy battery. This is a particularly useful manoeuvre when deploying units that are relatively slow, as they usually take significant time to arrive in their destinations if they were created and sent out inside the bases in a large level.

Perhaps the most aggressive manoeuvre involving teleportation is applying the free cost of beaming over friendly power stations as an offensive tool. This tactic can be performed by capturing one of the power stations in enemy bases (whether close to enemy host stations or not), and then immediately teleport your host station (the energy batteries should be full for the most effect) over there and create powerful units to attack or raid enemy bases and their host stations.

6 Trivia

- During the initial development of Urban Assault, the AI host stations could also teleport like the user host stations. The AI could also perform a strategy of beaming into enemy bases in a similar manner as the player. This AI teleportation feature was eventually scrapped out because the beta testers found the game to be too difficult.

7 Notes

- The energy math for teleportation and beam energy cost per displacement is hardcoded. Add more information here in the future.