

## In This Winlink Thursday Exercise for March 10, 2022, You Will:

- Learn a bit about Winlink Express Message Text Templates.
- Download an ETO Winlink Net custom made Message Text Template file located at the ETO Website.
- Place the file in your Private Template folder,
- Create a new message using this custom ETO Message Text Template file responding to the pop-up prompts.
- Send this message to your ETO Clearinghouse.
- This is Part One of a two week exercise, Part Two will be the Exercise for March 17, 2022.

## Some Reminders, Especially for New Arrivals to ETO:

- Fully Read the instructions first, then follow the instructions precisely. Details are sometimes missed in the reading, and some of our assignments can be tricky! Even if you know the subject, follow each step to verify all actions requested are performed.
  - It is suggested you read the instructions fully prior to performing the exercise.
- Make Sure you Address the Message to the Correct Clearinghouse for Your Geographic Location (especially if you're temporarily in a different region)
  - All our Tactical Addresses are all formatted as "ETO-nn", where nn is always either a 2-digit number ("01", "03", ..., "10") or "DX".
  - Make sure you type a ZERO, not the letter "O", in the 2-digit number.
  - If you don't know your Clearinghouse's Tactical Address, Use this web page to look it up: [https://emcomm-training.org/More\\_Info.html#Maps](https://emcomm-training.org/More_Info.html#Maps)
  - For this exercise the Text Template will prompt you for your Clearinghouse's Tactical Address, you will just need to select the proper one.
- For our exercises, we recommend that you always check the "Request message receipt" box in your message before you Post it to your OutBox.
- Another suggestion from our Gurus: put your own "normal" Email Address in the CC box, so that you receive a copy in your non-Winlink Email, as another confirmation that your Winlink message was sent out correctly.
- Finally, make sure that your copy of Winlink Express and its Forms are updated to the current version.
- **IMPORTANT!** Just because you receive a CC: of your own Winlink submission, and/or receive an ACK from your Clearinghouse, doesn't guarantee that your position will be shown on the Results Map. Your message needs to follow the exercise instructions correctly, for your location to be plotted.

## Continue to the Next Page for a Quick Discussion About Winlink Express Message Text Templates:

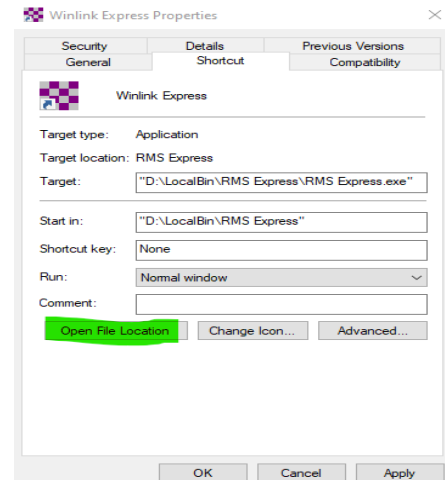
## About Winlink Express Message Text Templates

- A Winlink Express Message Template is a text file containing information to be inserted into a message. Particularly useful for “canned” portions of the message.
  - Only one template can be used per message, repeating the template or using another will only result in the second template replacing the results of the first.
- Templates have Control Fields that allow for specifying the Subject, To:, CC:, and Attach: fields of the header.
- Additional Control Fields can define whether the message is Read Only, to define Variables, and Provide the Message Body.
- Templates have insertion tags that can insert items such as the template user’s call sign, current date/time, GPS coordinates calculated from the Grid Square, from last position report, or the measured GPS if one is attached to the computer and configured in Winlink.
  - The insertion tags are associated with the Control Field they follow.
- Variables can be defined which have an associated pop-up prompt, that at use will prompt the user for entering custom information for the message.
  - Pop-up prompts may be a simple query where you are required to fill in the text
    - Text is entered as free form text, no validation is performed on the content provided.
  - Pop-up prompts may be a selection list of predefined values. This allows to limiting the response to just those pertinent to the variable.
- Selecting these Winlink Express Message Templates for use is identical to selecting a Standard Template.
  - But rather than getting an HTML Form to fill out in a browser window, pop-up windows will appear, one per variable field.
  - Once all pop ups have been responded to, the standard Winlink Express message window will be populated.
  - Unless the Attach: Control Field is used, there will be no attachments with the message
  - Unless the Read Only Control Field is used the message can be edited after generating.

**Continue to the Next Page for the Instructions:**

## Instructions:

1. Download the Winlink Thursday Exercise Template file that you will use from the ETO Website. ([Winlink Thursdays Webpage](#)). The file name will be named Winlink\_Thursday\_2022-03-10\_Exercise.txt.
  - a. Note its location, you will need to copy this to your Private Template folder.
2. To open a Windows Explorer window in your Private Template folder.
  - a. Find *your* Winlink Express Icon *you* use for *your* Winlink messages.
  - b. If you use a Desktop Icon to start Winlink Express
    - i. Right click on your Winlink Express Icon to bring up the context menu
    - ii. Select the **Properties** menu item.
    - iii. Click on **Open File Location** as shown in Figure 1.
      1. A Windows Explorer window will pop up.
      - iv. In this Windows Explorer window find the directory that has your CallSign.
      - v. Double Click on that directory with your CallSign.
      - vi. Double Click on the directory named **Templates**.
      - vii. You are now in your Private Template Directory.
    - c. If you use the Start Menu Shortcut to open Winlink Express
      - i. Click the Start Menu button
      - ii. Scroll the left column selection list down to the RMS Folder Icon
      - iii. Expand the folder by clicking on the RMS Folder entry
      - iv. Right click on Winlink Express, hover over **More** and select **Open File Location**
        1. A Windows Explorer window will pop up
        - v. In this Windows Explorer window find the directory that has your CallSign.
        - vi. Double Click on that directory with your CallSign.
        - vii. Double Click on the directory named **Templates**.
        - viii. You are now in your Private Template Directory.
    - d. Alternatively, if you *know for sure* the RMS Express directory your Private Folder is within for Winlink Thursdays usage, Open a Windows Explorer window and navigate to that directory.
      - i. I've seen multiple installed copies of Winlink on one computer, these can be abandoned install directories, shared computers with multiple Winlink Express directories for different users of the computer, or as in my case, RMS Express installed in directories for other purposes that don't relate to Winlink Thursdays usage.
  3. Copy the file named Winlink\_Thursday\_2022-03-10\_Exercise.txt that you downloaded from the ETO Website in Step 1 to your Private Template directory.
  4. Close the Windows Explorer Window and click on the **Cancel** button on the Windows Express Properties window.
  5. Open your Winlink Express application.
    - a. If it was already open, close it and restart to ensure the template folder directory has been read.



6. Under the menu item **Message** click the menu item **New Message...**
7. On the New Message Window, click the Menu Item **Select Template**
  - a. On the Template Manager Window expand your Private Template folder by clicking on the Plus Sign next to your call sign.
8. Double Click on `Winlink_Thursday_2022-03-10_Exercise.txt`
  - a. When Prompted to "Choose Your Clearinghouse Delivery Address:"
    - i. From the Drop Down select your clearinghouse address.
    - ii. Click **Accept**
  - b. When Prompted to "Enter Carbon Copy Address:"
    - i. If you enter your normal Internet Email Address you can validate the email has been handled by the RMS Station.
      1. Leave Blank if you aren't interested in this validation.
  - c. When Prompted to "Enter Location Description"
    - i. Provide a description of your location as you would in the Check-In Form.
    - ii. Click **Accept**
  - d. When Prompted to "Choose Radio Band Operated"
    - i. From the drop down select the Band you expect to use. If you plan on using a Telnet Session use the **-N/A-** option
      1. An experienced operator will know what bands are available for the time of day and propagation conditions they are currently experiencing that their license permits.
      2. If you are not sure, try downloading from a RMS Station to see if you can get a good connection.
    - ii. Click **Accept**
  - e. When Prompted to "Choose Winlink Mode Used:"
    - i. From the drop down select the Winlink Session Mode you plan on using.
    - ii. Click **Accept**
  - f. When Prompted to "Enter Any Additional Comments:"
    - i. You may provide a short statement related to the check-in. Leave blank if no comments are desired to be provided.
    - ii. Click **Accept**
9. The template has now populated your message
10. Verify Message
  - a. Are all desired fields filled and looks similar to the figure titled **Screenshot of Message Using Template** following the instructions?
  - b. Is the Send as set to Winlink Message?
  - c. Is it addressed to the correct ETO address?
  - d. Is your Carbon Copy address as specified?
  - e. Is your Location, Band, and Session type OK?
  - f. Is your GPS Coordinates a decimal Lat and Lon and close to your actual position?
    - i. If you don't have a GPS device configured, the Winlink Express app will calculate the LAT LON from your Grid Square configured in your settings.
  - g. Unlike Forms, Templates allow edits to be made within the message itself as there are no attachments that often contain additional/duplicate information
  - h. There should be no insertion tags (text enclosed in <>) displayed?

- i. Your template may be corrupt. Validate it looks identical to the text after the Heading **Contents of Winlink\_Thursday\_2022-03-10\_Exercise.txt** following the instructions.

11. Click on **Post to Outbox** on the menu bar
12. Check the outbox to verify your message is in the Outbox
13. Select your session type from the drop-down list to the right of the **Open Session** button.
14. Click the **Open Sessions** button
15. The Selected Type of Session window will open.
16. For Radio modes:
  - a. Click on **Channel Selection** to open the Channel Selector
  - b. Double click on your planned RMS Station and Frequency
17. Click Start to send your message.
18. To have your Check-in included in the Map, your Check-In using this template
  - a. Must have a valid Decimal Formatted Latitude and Longitude for your station location. (Example: LAT 45.3125, LON -123.0417)
  - b. Must be received by the correct ETO Clearinghouse
  - c. Your clearinghouse must receive it within the Exercise's time window so it can be assembled with other check-ins for mapping.

**Reference Figures and Text on following pages:**

# Screenshot of Message Using Template

Enter a new message

Close Select Template Attachments Post to Outbox Spell Check Save in Drafts

From: W7OWO Send as: Winlink Message  Request message receipt Set Defaults

To: ETO-10;

Cc: MyInternetEmail@arrl.net

Subject: Winlink Thursday Net Check-In - 2022-03-10

Attach:

-eto01-  
EmComm Training Organization Check-in  
Status: [Exercise]  
Date/Time: 2022-03-10 11:26:41  
Location: North Of Dundee  
GPS Coordinates: LAT 45.3125 LON -123.0417  
Band Used: 40m  
Session Type: VARA HF  
Call/Tactical Sender: W7OWO

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Comments:  
Exercise Template Sample Usage

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Version: ETO-Exercise - Template 01

# Contents of Winlink\_Thursday\_2022-03-10\_Exercise.txt

Type: Winlink

Def: ClearingHouse = <SELECT Choose Your Clearinghouse Delivery Address:, ETO-01=ETO-01, ETO-02=ETO-02, ETO-03=ETO-03, ETO-04=ETO-04, ETO-05=ETO-05, ETO-06=ETO-06, ETO-07=ETO-07, ETO-08=ETO-08, ETO-09=ETO-09, ETO-10=ETO-10, ETO-DX=ETO-DX>

Def: CarbonCopy = <ASK Enter Carbon Copy Address:>

To: <VAR ClearingHouse>;

CC: <VAR CarbonCopy>;

Subject: Winlink Thursday Net Check-In - 2022-03-10

Def: LocationDescr=<ASK Enter Location Description:>

Def: Band=<SELECT Choose Radio Band Operated:,-N/A=-N/A-, 70cm=70cm, 1.25m=1.25m, 2m=2m, 6m=6m, 10m=10m, 15m=15m, 17m=17m, 20m=20m, 30m=30m, 40m=40m, 60m=60m, 80m=80m, 160m=160m>

Def: Radiomode=<SELECT Choose Winlink Mode Used:, Telnet=TELNET, VARA FM=VARA FM, VARA HF=VARA HF, ARDOP=ARDOP, PACTOR=PACTOR, Packet=PACKET, Mesh=MESH, Other=Other>

Def: AdditionalComments=<ASK Enter Any Additional Comments:>

Msg:

-eto01-

EmComm Training Organization Check-in

Status: [Exercise]

Date/Time: <DateTime>

Location: <VAR LocationDescr>

GPS Coordinates: LAT <Latitude> LON <Longitude>

Band Used: <VAR Band>

Session Type: <VAR Radiomode>

Call/Tactical Sender: <Callsign>

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Comments:

<VAR AdditionalComments>

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Version: ETO-Exercise - Template 01