

In This Winlink Thursday Exercise for March 17, 2022, You Will:

- Download an ETO Winlink Net custom made Message Text Template file located at the ETO Website and copying this file in your Private Template folder
- Use Template Editor to modify the downloaded Template using the provided instructions.
- Create a new message using your newly customized ETO Message Text Template file responding to the pop-up prompts.
- Send this message to your ETO Clearinghouse.

Some Reminders, Especially for New Arrivals to ETO:

- First, fully read the instructions completely through, then come back to the beginning and 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.
 - If working from a paper copy, check-off each step you have performed.
- 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
 - 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 QTH to be plotted.

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

About Winlink Express Message Text Templates

- There are no HTML files with Message Templates, so no browser windows will open.
- 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.
 - The Template processing routines in Winlink Express expects that each record in the file to end in a Carriage Return Line Feed (CRLF) combination. Do not edit the text file on a Linux OS machine and expect it to work in Winlink. On Linux, text files end each record with just a Line Feed (LF). If an attempt is made, it will provide the prompts in a never ending loop.
- 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, define Variables, and Provide the Message Body.
- Templates have insertion tags that can insert items such as call sign, date/time, even GPS coordinates and if a GPS is attached to the computer and configured in Winlink.
 - The insertion tags are associated to the preceding Control Fields
- Variables can be defined which have an associated pop-up prompt that at use will prompt the operator to enter their ad-hoc 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 value. Limiting the response to just those pertinent to the variable.
- Selecting these Winlink Express Message Template 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. These should be in order of the definitions. Older versions of Winlink may present them out of order.
 - Once all pop ups have been provided a responded, the standard Winlink Express message window will be populated.
- The sample Template has the Variables declared separately from the usage of the variable. This was performed to show the relationships of variables and their usage within the template. Alternatively the ASK/SELECT can be placed in-line.
 - Instead of:
 - `Def: LocationDescr=<ASK Enter Location Description:>`
 - `Location: <VAR LocationDescr>`
 - An equivalent usage can be:
 - `Location: <ASK Enter Location Description:>`
 - All Variable Definitions must be written as a single line, as the Carriage Return Line Feed pair is the line terminator for the Template statement. If there is a CRLF pair, Winlink will think that is the end of the definition and may use the next line as text for the document. Let word wrap happen.
- Some additional information about the Text Templates is available in the Help text that can be accessed from the Template Editor’s Help button. This help file is named TemplateHelp.txt and can be found under the RMS Express directory.
- The **Latitude** and **Longitude** Insertion Tag provide the values reported by a GPS if one is available otherwise it calculates it or from the grid square if GPS isn't available.

Instructions begin on Next Page

Instructions:

- 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_2022-03-17_Exercise.txt.
 - Note its download location, you will need to copy this to your Private Template folder.
- To open a Windows Explorer window in your Private Template folder. There are multiple ways you can do this, following either instructions under a. or b. or c.
 - If you know you use the default RMS Express install.
 - Open Windows Explorer and navigate to C:\RMS Express\YourCallSign\templates
 - Alternatively, using the Winlink Shortcut:
 - Find *your* Winlink Express Icon *you* use for *your* Winlink messages .
 - Right click on your Winlink Express Icon to bring up the context menu
 - Select the **Properties** menu item.
 - Click on **Open File Location** as shown Figure 1.
 - A Windows Explorer window will pop up.
 - In this Windows Explorer window find the directory that has your Call Sign.
 - Double Click on that directory with your Call Sign.
 - Double Click on the directory named **Templates**.
 - Alternatively, if you *know for sure* the RMS Express directory that your Private Folder is in for Winlink Thursday's usage, Open a Windows Explorer window and navigate to the **Templates** directory under the directory with your call sign.
 - It is good to know what directory RMS Express is installed on your machine. I know many folks that keep two or more directories to allow them to run multiple Winlink Express applications on multiple radios and bands at the same time.
- Copy the file named Winlink_Thursday_2022-03-17_Exercise.txt that you downloaded from the ETO Website in Step 1 to your Private Template directory.
- Close the Windows Explorer Window and click on the **Cancel** button in the Windows Express Properties window if you used that method.
- Open your Winlink Express application.
- On the Winlink Main Page click the menu item **Message** then click the menu item **Template manager...**
 - On the Template Manager Window expand your Private Template folder by clicking on the Plus Sign next to your call sign.
 - Within the expanded Private Template Folder select the Template named Winlink_Thursday_2022-03-17_Exercise.txt
 - Click on the **Edit** menu item.
- Within the Template Editor window:
 - Note: By completion of Step 7's modification instructions, your template file should be nearly identical to the text within the text box of Figure 2, following **step k**. *Changes that should have been made when following the instructions are shown in red.*

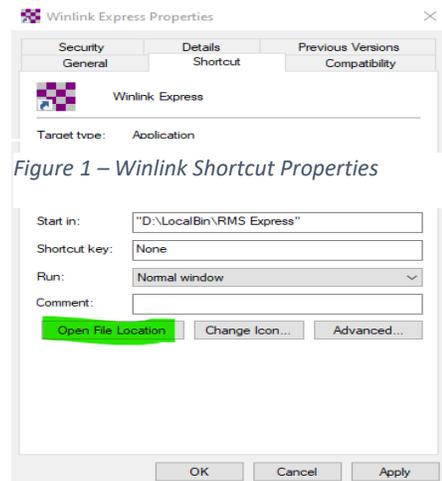


Figure 1 – Winlink Shortcut Properties

- b. Click on the Help Menu item to review the features for Fields, Variables, and Insertion tags.
- c. Edit the line starting with "Def: ClearingHouse=<SELECT" you will see the drop down list options are presented in a Name Value Pair (i.g. ETO-01=ETO-01) list.
 - i. Change the Name text in the Name Value pairs to match the Roman Numerals in the FEMA region Number map at <https://emcomm-training.org/General-Drill-Info.html> rather than equaling the populated value. Also insert as the first name value pair an additional entry "UnSelected=Clearinghouse Not Selected". If a proper clearing house is not selected, this UnSelected entry is used by default, it will create an error that will force the operator to select a proper clearinghouse value. Note: All Def: statements must be written as one line. Let the wordwrap of the editor move the text down the page.
 1. Def: ClearingHouse=<SELECT Choose Your Clearinghouse Delivery Address:, UnSelected=Clearinghouse Not Selected, Region I=ETO-01, Region II=ETO-02, Region III=ETO-03, Region IV=ETO-04, Region V=ETO-05, Region VI=ETO-06, Region VII=ETO-07, Region VIII=ETO-08, Region IX=ETO-09, Region X=ETO-10, DX=ETO-DX>
- d. Insert a blank line to insert a new variable after the line that starts with Def: Radiomode= and ends Other=Other>. Before the line starting with Def: AdditionalComments This new Variable will replace the insertion tag "<Callsign>" with a prompted variable asking for the Call/Tactical Call Sign.
 - i. Name this new variable: CallTactical and make it equal to the asking prompt "Enter the Call/Tactical sign of the Sender:" and force it to be upper case.
 - ii. Def: CallTactical=<ASK Enter the Call/Tactical sign of the Sender:, UP>
 1. Note: The UP makes all letters type to appear in upper case
- e. On the line containing Call/Tactical Sender: <Callsign> with Replace the Insertion tag <Callsign> with the <VAR CallTactical1> variable that you defined in step d.
 - i. Call/Tactical Sender: <VAR CallTactical1>
- f. Replace the text in the line starting with "-eto01-", with the text "-eto02-" this is an identifier that the mapping program will use to know how to read the content of your message. Nothing to do with the ETO clearinghouse address.
- g. Delete the line starting with the text "Version: ETO-Exercise - Template 01"
- h. At the location of the deleted line in step g, append the following lines in the Text Template. This will provide the Tab Delimited and Semicolon Delimited values similar to which the Winlink Check In HTML Form has. Note: Do not include the opening and closing double quotes ("")
 - i. On its own line, Append at the end of the file the text, "Below Info Used for Copy and Paste to Spreadsheet"
 - ii. Append a separate blank line
 - iii. Append a new line with the text, "Tab Delimited:"
 - iv. Append a separate blank line
 - v. After the new blank line, Append a line that provides the displayed response as tabbed delimited data. Note: Within the Template Editor, a Ctrl-Tab is typed to insert a Tab character:
 1. EmComm Training Organization Check-in <DateTime> <VAR LocationDescr> <Latitude>,<Longitude> <VAR Band> <VAR Radiomode> <VAR CallTactical>
 - a. The seperator between value groupings should be Tabs, not spaces. The only spaces in the line should be in the phrase

- “EmComm Training Organization Check-in”. The Insert tags <Latitude>,<Longitude> should be separated by a comma.
- b. If you copy and paste the line you will get spaces not tabs, so you will need to highlight the space between words and press Ctrl-Tab.
 - vi. Append a separate blank line
 - vii. Append a new line with the text, “Semicolon Delimited Values:”
 - viii. Append a separate blank line
 - ix. Append a line that provides the displayed response as semicolon delimited data:
 1. “EmComm Training Organization Check-in;<DateTime>;<VAR LocationDescr>;<Latitude>,<Longitude>;<VAR Band>;<VAR Radiomode>;<VAR CallTactical>”
 - a. *The delimiter between value groupings should be semicolons, not spaces.* Only spaces should be in the phrase “EmComm Training Organization Check-in”. The Insert tags <Latitude>,<Longitude> should be separated by a comma
 - x. Append a line with 10 hyphens, “-----“
 - xi. Append a line with the text, “ETO-Exercise - Template 02”
 - i. Validate your edits with the sample on the following page
 - i. If you are working with a digital copy of the Exercise instructions PDF file, you should be able to highlight and copy from it and paste to your edit window.
 - j. Click on the menu item **Save**
 - k. Click on the menu item **Close** in the Template Manger window.

Fully Edited Template Example (Figure 2) is on the Next Page

Figure 2, Fully Edited Template Example

```
Type: Winlink
Def: ClearingHouse=<SELECT Choose Your Clearinghouse Delivery Address:,
UnSelected=Clearinghouse Not Selected, Region I=ETO-01, Region II=ETO-02, Region III=ETO-03,
Region IV=ETO-04, Region V=ETO-05, Region VI=ETO-06, Region VII=ETO-07, Region VIII=ETO-08,
Region IX=ETO-09, Region X=ETO-10, DX=ETO-DX>
Def: CarbonCopy = <ASK Enter Carbon Copy Address:>

To: <VAR ClearingHouse>;
CC: <VAR CarbonCopy>;
Subject: Winlink Thursday Net Check-In - 2022-03-17

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, 12=12m, 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: CallTactical=<ASK Enter the Call/Tactical sign of the Sender:, UP>
Def: AdditionalComments=<ASK Enter Any Additional Comments:>

Msg:
-eto02-
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: <VAR CallTactical>
-----
Comments:
<VAR AdditionalComments>
-----
Below Info Used for Copy and Paste to Spreadsheet

TAB Delimited:

EmComm Training Organization Check-in <DateTime> <VAR LocationDescr> <Latitude>,<Longitude>
<VAR Band> <VAR Radiomode> <VAR CallTactical>

Semicolon Delimited Values:

EmComm Training Organization Check-in;<DateTime>;<VAR LocationDescr>;
<Latitude>,<Longitude>;<VAR Band>;<VAR Radiomode>;<VAR CallTactical>
-----
```

Expected Contents of Edited Template

8. Create a new message using this newly edited template.
 - a. Under the menu item **Message** click the menu item **New Message...**
 - b. On the New Message Window, click the Menu Item **Select Template**
 - i. On the Template Manager Window expand your Private Template folder by clicking on the Plus Sign next to your call sign.
 - c. Double Click on Winlink_Thursday_2022-03-17_Exercise.txt
 - i. When Prompted to "Choose Your Clearinghouse Delivery Address:"
 - ii. From the Drop Down select your clearinghouse address.

- iii. Click **Accept**
- iv. When Prompted to “Enter Carbon Copy Address:”
 - 1. If you enter your normal Internet Email Address you can validate the email has been handled by the RMS Station. Leave Blank if you aren’t interested in this validation.
- v. When Prompted to “Enter Location Description”
 - 1. Provide a description of your location as you would in the Check-In Form.
 - 2. Click **Accept**
- vi. When Prompted to “Choose Radio Band Operated”
 - 1. From the drop down select the Band you expect to use. If you plan on using a Telnet Session use the –N/A- option
 - a. 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.
 - b. If you are not sure, try downloading from a RMS Station to see if you can get a good connection.
 - 2. Click **Accept**
- vii. When Prompted to “Choose Winlink Mode Used:”
 - 1. From the drop down select the Winlink Session Mode you plan on using.
 - 2. Click **Accept**
- viii. When Prompted to “Enter Any Additional Comments:”
 - 1. You may provide a short statement related to the check-in. Leave blank if no comments are desired to be provided.
 - 2. Click **Accept**
- ix. The template has now populated your message
- d. Verify Message
 - i. Are all desired fields filled and looks similar to Figure 2 on following page?
 - ii. Is the Send as set to Winlink Message?
 - iii. Is it addressed to the correct ETO clearinghouse?
 - iv. Is your Carbon Copy address as specified?
 - v. Is your Location, Band, and Session type OK?
 - vi. Is your GPS Coordinates a decimal Lat and Lon and close to your actual position?
 - 1. 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.
 - vii. Unlike Forms, in Templates edits can be made to the message itself as there are no attachments that contain additional/duplicate information
 - viii. Are there insertion tags (text enclosed in <>) displayed rather than values?
- e. Click on **Post to Outbox** on the menu bar
- 9. Check the outbox to verify your message is in the Outbox
 - a. Message should look similar to Figure 2 on next page
- 10. Send the message
 - a. Select your session type from the drop-down list to the right of the **Open Session** button.
 - b. Click the **Open Sessions** button
 - c. The Selected Type of Session window will open.
 - d. For Radio modes:
 - i. Click on **Channel Selection** to open the Channel Selector

- ii. Double click on your planned RMS Station and Frequency
- e. Click Start to send your message.
- f. To have your Check-in included in the Map, your Check-In using this template
 - i. Must have a valid Decimal Formatted Latitude and Longitude.
 - ii. Must be received by the correct ETO Clearinghouse
 - iii. Your clearinghouse must receive it within the Exercise's time window so it can be assembled with other check-ins for mapping.

Screenshot of Message Using Edited Template

The screenshot shows a Winlink message composition window titled "Enter a new message". The window has a menu bar with "Close", "Select Template", "Attachments", "Post to Outbox", "Spell Check", and "Save in Drafts". Below the menu bar, there are fields for "From:" (W7OWO), "Send as:" (Winlink Message), and a checkbox for "Request message receipt". The "To:" field contains "ETO-10;", the "Cc:" field contains "myEmail@arrl.net", and the "Subject:" field contains "Winlink Thursday Net Check-In - 2022-03-17".

The message body contains the following text:

```

-eto02-
EmComm Training Organization Check-in
Status: [Exercise]
Date/Time: 2022-03-17 16:28:39
Location: North Of Dundee
GPS Coordinates: LAT 45.3125 LON -123.0417
Band Used: 40m
Session Type: VARA HF
Call/Tactical Sender: W7OWO
-----
Comments:
Additional Comments
-----
Below Info Used for Copy and Paste to Spreadsheet

TAB Delimited:

EmComm Training Organization Check-in 2022-03-10 16:28:39 North Of Dundee 45.3125,-123.0417
40m VARA HF W7OWO

Semicolon Delimited Values:

EmComm Training Organization Check-in;2022-03-10 16:28:39;North Of Dundee;45.3125,-
123.0417;40m;VARA HF;W7OWO
-----
ETO-Exercise - Template 02
  
```

Sample Message Generated From Template