

Winlink Thursday: Verify your Winlink Gateway has an Internet Connection

In this Winlink Thursday Exercise for July 7th, 2022, you will:

- In Winlink Express, create a new plain outgoing message to “query@saildocs.com”
- Using Winlink Express with a Radio (not Telnet), connect to a Winlink Gateway of your choice.
- Send your message.
- Connect again, to the same Gateway, and check for new messages.
- Determine if you have received a response from SailDocs.com Robot.
- Answer a question about the response to your Query by sending a Winlink Check-in form to your ETO Clearinghouse with the Callsign of the Gateway and its Status, in the Comments field.

Some reminders, especially for New Arrivals to ETO:

- Read and Follow the Instructions **PRECISELY**. Details are sometimes missed in the reading, and some of our assignments can be tricky!
- Make Sure you Address the Correct Clearinghouse for Your Geographic Location (especially if you're temporarily in a different region)
 - Our Tactical Addresses are all formatted as "ETO-nn", where nn is *a/ways* either a 2-digit number ("01", "03", ..., "10"), “CAN” for Canadian participants, or "DX" for all others.
 - 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 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.
- 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 100% correctly, for your location to be plotted.
- IMPORTANT! Always restart Winlink Express before beginning an exercise, to insure that you have the latest version of both the Winlink Express application and the Templates.

- ETO exercises are designed to be completed using the Winlink Express client, in a Windows environment. If you choose to use any other Winlink Client Program, your mileage may vary, and your response may not be mapped or graded as Correct.

Summary:

1. This exercise requires that you use RF to connect to a Winlink Gateway (HF, VHF, or UHF), twice. Telnet isn't usable, in this exercise, because Telnet mode connects *directly* over the Internet, between your computer and the Winlink Network backbone (on Amazon Web Services), and completely bypasses all Winlink RF Gateways.
2. Primary Purpose: when working in the field, we may have to assure ourselves that, if we are sending Priority messages via RF through the Winlink System, it would be beneficial to know if the Gateway we are connecting to, is itself actually connected to a live Internet feed, so that we know our messages won't be "stuck" somewhere.
3. Secondary Purpose: Introduce the free SailDocs.com services to our ETO team members.

NOTE: If you DO NOT have access to *any* RF Winlink Gateway, skip to Step 10 below, and put "NONE" in the Comments field of your Winlink Check-In form submission.

Exercise:

1. Create a new plain outgoing message in Winlink Express. Address it to Query@saildocs.com
2. In the Body of the message, put the words "send info".
3. Post the message in your OutBox.
4. Connect to any Winlink RF gateway (VHF, UHF, or HF), and send your message.
5. Disconnect the session.
6. Wait for a few minutes...
7. Connect again, to the same Winlink RF gateway, and check for new messages.
8. If you received a response from SailDocs.com, Congratulations! You have established that your Winlink Gateway of choice, is indeed connected to the Internet, at their end.
9. If you DID NOT receive any response, after a few minutes, try a different gateway.
10. Create a new Winlink Check-In message, and address it to your Clearinghouse.
11. Make sure your Latitude and Longitude are included in the appropriate fields, in the template.

12. In the Body of the message, enter the full Callsign of the Winlink RF Gateway that you successfully connected to SailDocs.com with.
13. Send your Check-In message to your Clearinghouse.

Example of Initial Outgoing Message to SailDocs.com:

Enter a new message

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

From: N6NBN Send as: Winlink Message Request message receipt Set Defaults

To: query@saildocs.com

Cc:

Subject:

Attach:

send info|

Typical response from SailDocs.com “info” query:

8RE39AR1NTG6 - info

Close Print View Attachments Reply Reply All Acknowledge Forward Delete

Message ID: 8RE39AR1NTG6
Date: 2022/06/03 00:31
From: query-reply@saildocs.com
To: N6NBN
Source: SMTP
Downloaded-from: RMS:W7ACS-10
Subject: info

Saildocs Info File
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(revised July 16, 2006)

Thank you for your interest in Saildocs, an Internet service for the bandwidth-impaired. Saildocs offers text-based document retrieval and subscription services for offshore sailors, adventurers, missionaries and others who somehow live their lives without broadband connections. There are currently two services offered, a document retrieval service which will return documents from the Internet or our own files, and a subscription service which will send Internet documents (for example weather reports) at scheduled intervals. Saildocs is supported by Sailmail (www.sailmail.com) but can be used by anyone who agrees to the terms and conditions (below).

Document retrieval:
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Saildocs can either retrieve documents from its own library, internet documents which are in its index (primarily text weather information), web pages, or grib data (specialized weather data files).

Documents are requested by sending an email to: query@saildocs.com. The subject line can be anything.

Winlink Check-In Form, to be sent to your Clearinghouse:

Please put your data into these fields:

Winlink Check In
ETO Winlink Thursday

[Setup](#) Click to add your agency/group name to title [Load Check in Data](#) [Form Info](#)

This is for an initial check in via Winlink Express. Also sent as plain text in message body for non-Express users.

Date/Time: [Select Status](#) Exercise Net: REAL EVENT Band: -N/A-VHF: 220 Mode: Telnet Packet: Ardop

Send To: <<== your clearinghouse [Clear ALL "Send To" Entries.](#)
Entries will remain until you change or clear them

Calls Signs of Initial On-Site Operator(s): <<== your callsign

Station Contact Name: Station Call sign:

Location: <<== Describe your Location.

Latitude and longitude: LAT: LON: MGRS: Grid:

LAT/LON and MGRS default to the center of the grid square listed in Express Settings, unless a GPS is used or Lat/LON or MGRS must be entered manually. Without properly formatted GPS coordinates this form cannot be mapped in Winlink Express.

Comments *Max Characters 220*

 <<== Callsign of Winlink RF Gateway that you tested successfully.

[Save Check in Data](#) [Submit](#) [Reset Form](#) Ver 4.0.8.5