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# **Outpost PMM**

## **ICS 309 Comm Log Builder**

### **User Guide**

March 2023  
Version 3.7.0



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# 1 About ICS309clb

## 1.1 Introduction

This guide will introduce you to Outpost’s ICS 309 Communications Log Builder program and how to create an ICS Communications Log.

## 1.2 What is ICS 309?

In the world of voice nets, the ICS 309 Communications Log is used to record the summary of message traffic both into and out of a message-handling station. The ICS 309 is maintained the Net Control operator as well as operators at a field location that is in place to support the any drill or activation event.

Completed logs are submitted to the supervisor who forwards them to the Documentation Unit after an event.

[illegible]

**Figure 1: Typical ICS-309 Form**

### 1.3 ICS 309 and Outpost

The need for logging and submitting records is the same for packet. The difference is that the Ics309clb program can generate an official, submit-able ICS 309 Comm Log based on the message history created by Outpost.

There are two components of the ICS 309 subsystem:

- **Ics309clb.exe.** This is a single-form program that helps the user set up for generating the ICS 309 Report. It guides the user in defining the Log headers, presents the options for populating and formatting the report, and then manages the report output.

Figure 2: The Ics309clbmm Program

- **Outpost.** Outpost populates the message.log file that includes all types of message activities, particularly those which are used to support the Ics309 report process. It also presents 2 methods for running the Ics309clb program.

#### 1.4 Why use Ics309clb?

- **Productivity** – The obvious reason for using this program is that it automatically creates the Communications Log for all packet traffic for you, meaning you do not need to manually fill in the form.
- **Reduce transcription errors** – Instead of making log entries on paper, Ics309clb derives the log entries based on the actual events of incoming and outgoing messages, thereby eliminating the possibility of transcription errors.
- **Flexibility** – Ics309clb offers several report options that allow you to customize the output based on the needs of your served agency.

### 1.5 Ics309clb Features

Some of the key features of Outpost's Ics309clb program are:

- Retained Headers. All log header entries are remembered from run to run, making the creation of incremental logs (by time, or layout) easy.
- There are several content selection and format options that give you the flexibility to view the message history in ways that are meaningful to your situation. These options are:
  - Period – Define the reporting period (date/time range) for the produced report.
  - Content – Lets the user pick what types of message log entries are included, as well as what can be excluded from the report.
  - Sort – The log entry can be sorted based on different fields.
  - Layout – Some fields can be excluded from the report thereby helping to focus the report on what is important to the served agency.
  - Output – The report can be either a standard formatted ICS 309 report, an ASCII formatted report, or a comma-delimited report.
  - e-Signing – Allows the operator to digitally sign the report so that a .pdf could be immediately emailed if required.
- Ics309clb can be run manually, or set up to run at a predefined interval from Outpost thereby automating the report process.

### 1.6 Notes, assumptions, and disclaimers

- Error handling will continue to evolve over time. Most of the errors are properly trapped and reported, however, it is not 100% foolproof.

### 1.7 Find an Error?

If you find an error or unsure how Outpost's ICS 309 program is supposed to work, post a message to the Outpost Users Group or send me email to [kn6pe@arri.net](mailto:kn6pe@arri.net).

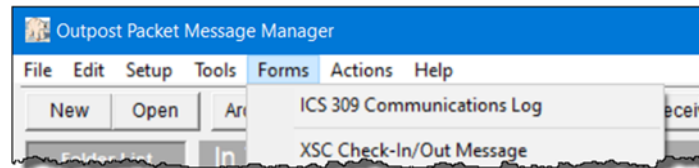
## 2 Getting Started

All ICS 309 log generation activities are managed and controlled by the lcs309clb.exe program. This section provides an overview of the program.

### 2.1 Running the program

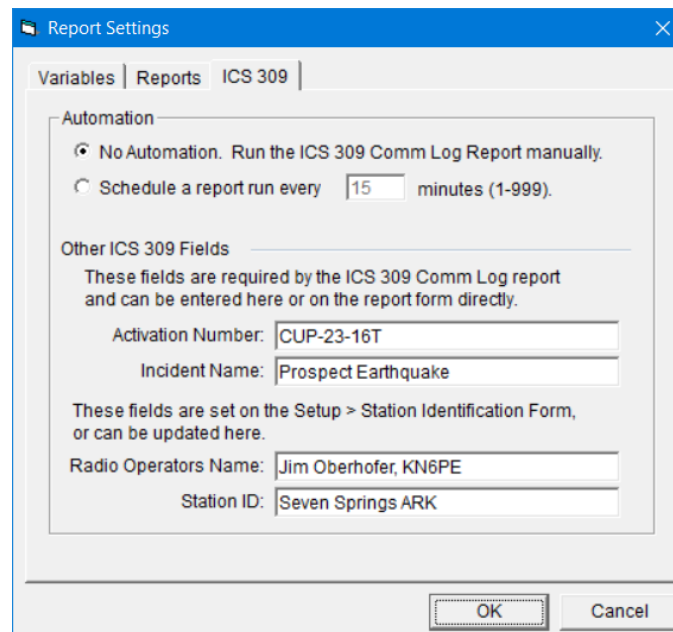
There are a couple of different ways to get the lcs309clb program scheduled. This section describes them all.

1. Manually from Outpost. The program can be kicked off from the main Outpost menu named Forms.



There may be several entries under this menu, click on the top entry:  
**ICS 309 Communications Log.**

2. Automatically from Outpost. Outpost can automatically schedule the lcs309clb program at a regular interval. Navigate to the Outpost **Tools > Report Settings** menu.



3. Desktop Icon. If selected at installation time, the install program will place an lcs309clb.exe shot-cut on your desktop. Double-click on it to run the program.

## 2.2 A typical ICS 309 Comm Log report scenario

In general, you will do the following when creating a Communications Log

1. **Define the event.** From Outpost, Tools > Report Settings > ICS 309 tab. Enter in the information about this particular event. Press OK when done.
2. **Run the program.** See the above description. The program opens and reads Outpost's message.log file.
3. **Fill in the header.** Following the standard ICS 309 Form structure, fill in the headers for your event (this may be automatically filled in by the settings made in Outpost).
4. **Select your report options.** Choose how you want the report to look like in terms of date/time range, content, sorts, fields, output, and e-signature.
5. **Build the Data set.** Pressing **Build Data Set** button pulls in message entries by the Period, sorts them, and then displays them in the Preview Window.
6. **Print.** When you have the report the way you want it, press Print to output the report.

## 2.3 The main lcs309clb form

When you start the program, you will see the main program window open letting you know that lcs309clb.exe is ready.

## 2.4 Menus and Toolbars

The *Program Controls* portion of the User Interface controls the operation and execution of all program tasks.

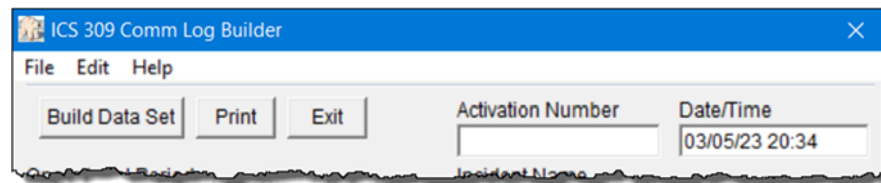


Figure 3: Main Screen Menu and Tool Bar

Menus	Description
<b>File</b>	<p><b>Save as .txt:</b> The program to create an ASCII-formatted text report file.</p> <p><b>Save as .csv:</b> The program to create a comma-delimited text file of the report content.</p> <p><b>Reload:</b> The program reloads the message.log file. This would be useful if some last minute messages were received and needed to be part of the report.</p> <p><b>Print Setup.</b> Let's the user to select a default printer.</p> <p><b>Print.</b> Let's the user to select a printer, and then print the Communications Log in a standard ICS 308 format.</p> <p><b>Exit:</b> Exits the program.</p>
<b>Edit</b>	<p><b>Cut:</b> Copies and deletes any highlighted text from any text area of the form. The text is placed in the MS-Windows clipboard.</p> <p><b>Copy:</b> Copies any highlighted text in any from any text area of the form. The text is placed in the MS-Windows clipboard.</p> <p><b>Paste:</b> Inserts text from the clipboard at the position where the cursor is located.</p> <p><b>Select All:</b> Highlights the contents of whatever field in which the cursor is placed. A Copy or Cut usually follows this.</p>
<b>Help</b>	<p><b>About:</b> Lists information about Ics309clb.</p>



The following are other controls found on the main form.

Controls	Description
<b>Build Data Set</b>	Pulls in message entries by the Period, sorts them, and then displays them in the Preview Window.  If the user changes an option, then you must rebuild the data set for the change(s) to be reflected.
<b>Print</b>	Initiate a Print activity based on the Output options that are set.
<b>Exit</b>	Exits the program.

## 2.5 Report Header Fields

Field	Description
<b>Activation Number</b>	<b>Manual:</b> The Activation Number that is assigned by the EOC or local Emergency Manager. <b>Default:</b> Blank, or loaded with the value previously entered.
<b>Date/Time</b>	<b>Automatic:</b> set to the date and time when the program was run.
<b>Operational Period</b>	<b>Automatic:</b> Set to the data range identified by the Period option.
<b>Incident Name</b>	<b>Manual:</b> The Incident Name that is assigned by the EOC or local Emergency Manager. <b>Default:</b> Blank, or loaded with the value previously entered.
<b>Radio Operators Name</b>	<b>Manual:</b> The name and call sign of the operator. <b>Default:</b> Blank, or loaded with the value previously entered.
<b>Station ID</b>	<b>Manual:</b> Could be the physical location or tactical call assigned to this operator. <b>Default:</b> Blank, or loaded with the value previously entered.
<b>Preview</b>	This area presents a preview of the data to be written to the report.

## 3 Setup

There is a mix of report options that can be applied. This section describes them.

### 3.1 Period Option

This option defines the date/time range that the report will cover. The *from* and *to* date/time range is also written into the *Operational Period* field as shown here.

The screenshot shows the 'ICS 309 Comm Log Builder' window. At the top, there are buttons for 'Build Data Set', 'Print', and 'Exit'. Below these are fields for 'Activation Number' (CUP-23-16T) and 'Date/Time' (03/05/23 20:40). The 'Operational Period' field displays '03/05/23 08:00 to 03/05/23 23:00'. Below this are fields for 'Incident Name' (Prospect Earthquake), 'Radio Operator Name' (Jim Oberhofer, KN6PE), and 'Station ID / Call Sign' (Seven Springs ARK). A tabbed interface at the bottom shows 'Period' as the active tab. Under 'Reporting Period', four radio button options are listed: 'Today (03/05/2023)' (selected), 'Since last report run (10/02/22 22:11)', 'All (02/04/2019 to 03/05/2023)', and 'Range'. To the right of these options, a date/time range selector is visible with 'From Date' (1 / 1 / 2022), 'From Time' (08:00), 'To Date' (3 / 16 / 2022), and 'To Time' (23:00).

There are 4 period options that can be used:

1. **Today.** The range is <today's\_date> 00:00 to <today's\_date> 23:59.
2. **Since last report run.** The range is from the date/time listed on the form (the last time that a report was produced) to <today's\_date> 23:59. This option is useful when you want to automatically generate incremental (See **Outpost > Tools > Report Settings**, 3<sup>rd</sup> Tab).
3. **All.** The report period is derived from the data file that was loaded, and will set the start date/time to the earliest date entry found and the end date/time to the last date entry found.
4. **Range.** The report period is manually set. When this option is selected, the fields to the right of the option choices are enabled.

### 3.2 Content Option

This option defines which messages will be included in and excluded from the report.

There are 2 ways the report content is determined:

1. **Include these messages.** You can select Sent and/or Received messages. You can also include messages by message type – Private, NTS, Bulletins. Any combination of these messages states and types can be selected.
2. **Exclude these messages.** Messages can be excluded by specific words in the message subject line. This is useful if you want to include informational messages and exclude administrative messages, such as READ and/or DELIVERY receipts as shown in the example above. Enter the exact word you are looking for to exclude. Any number of words can be entered. Separate each entry by a space.

### 3.3 Sort Option

This option defines how the messages will be listed in the report.

There are 5 sort options available:

1. **DateTime.** This is the standard chronological sort based on when a message was sent or received.
2. **From, DateTime.** This is a two-step sort; first by the call sign of the originator, and then by date for that specific originator. With this option, the Break option is also enabled and lets you put a space whenever the call sign changes. This helps readability.
3. **To, DateTime.** This is a two-step sort; first by the call sign of the sender, and then by date for that specific originator. The Break option is also available.
4. **Local Msg ID, DateTime.** This is a two-step sort; first by the Local Message ID, and then by date for that specific originator. The Break option is also available.

5. **Subject, DateTime.** This is a two-step sort; first by the Subject, and then by date for that specific originator. The Break option is also available.

### 3.4 Layout Option

This option lets you exclude some columns from the report.

The screenshot shows the 'Layout' tab selected in the top navigation bar. Below the navigation bar, the 'Form Layout' section is visible. It contains a box titled 'Include these fields on the report' with three checked items: 'To', 'Msg ID', and 'Local ID'.

### 3.5 Output Option

This option lets you define where the report output will go.

The screenshot shows the 'Output' tab selected in the top navigation bar. Below the navigation bar, the 'Output controls' section is visible. It contains a box titled 'Define what the "Print" button does' with three checked items: 'Write report to printer', 'Write report to ASCII file \*\*', and 'Write report to CSV file \*\*'. A note below states: '\*\* Does not reset "Since report last run"'

1. **Write report to printer.** When selected, and the Print button is pressed, the report is sent to the printer.
2. **Write report to ASCII file.** When selected, the report is written to an ASCII file formatted similar to the printed report. A file by the name "ics309clb<yymmddhhmmss>.txt" is created where the last 12 digits represent the year, month, day, hour, minute, and seconds.
3. **Write report to CSV file.** When selected, the report is written to a comma delimited file where it could be imported into a spreadsheet application. The file "ics309clb<yymmddhhmmss>.csv" is created.

### 3.6 E-Signature

This option essentially "signs" the report on the user's behalf.

The screenshot shows the 'e-Signature' tab selected in the top navigation bar. Below the navigation bar, the 'e-Signature' section is visible. It contains a checkbox labeled 'Add Electronic Signature' which is currently unchecked. Below the checkbox is a statement: 'I understand that by checking the "Add Electronic Signature", my signature on this report is as valid as if I signed the document in writing.'

1. Clicking on Add Electronic Signature will write a script signature of the Radio Operator's name. Check if this method is acceptable with your local jurisdiction. See the example in the next section.

## 4 Running the Program

The goal is to get the ICS 309 printed and submitted to satisfy the reporting needs of your local jurisdiction. You are encouraged to test the different report options during local exercises to understand how the ICS 309 report works.

### 4.1 Output formats

Three output formats are available:

1. **.PDF Format.** This produces a clean output that is consistent with most general ICS 309 Communications Logs. In this example, the e-Signature box was checked and the signature is placed on each form.

ICS 309					
<b>COMMUNICATIONS LOG</b>			Activation No. <b>CUP-23-16T</b>		Date/Time Prepared: <b>03/05/23 20:40</b>
Operational Period: <b>03/01/22 08:00 to 03/16/22 23:00</b>			Incident Name: <b>Prospect Earthquake</b>		
Radio Operator Name: <b>Jim Oberhofer, KN6PE</b>			Station ID: <b>Seven Springs ARK</b>		
LOG					
Time	From	To	Msg ID	Local ID	Subject
03/07 19:51	KN6PE@W1XS...	CUP@XSC	6PE-249P	6PE-552P	6PE-249P_R_city notice reply test
03/07 19:51	KN6PE@W1XS...	CUP@XSC	6PE-252P	6PE-553P	6PE-252P_R_city notice reply test
03/07 19:55	KN6PE	PKTMON@W2X...	6PE-554P		6PE-554P_R_EOC213RR_Practice KN6PE, Jim, Cupertino, 7-Mar-2022
03/07 19:58	KN6PE	PKTTUE@W2X...	6PE-555P		6PE-555P_R_EOC213RR_Practice KN6PE, Jim, Cupertino, 8-Mar-2022
03/07 19:58	KN6PE@W4XS...	PKTMON@W2X...	6PE-554P	6PE-556P	6PE-554P_R_EOC213RR_Practice KN6PE, Jim, Cupertino, 7-Mar-2022
03/16 16:16	XND020	XNDEOC@W1X...	X20-571P		X20-571P_R_Reporting Point 20 intersection confirmation
03/16 16:32	XND020	XNDEOC@W1X...	X20-572P		X20-572P_R_IC213_Reporting Point 20 starting status
03/16 16:38	XNDEOC@W1X...	XND020@W1X...	XND-8568P	X20-573P	XND-8568P_R_IC213 please send XSC EOC-213RR for refreshments
03/16 17:01	XND020	XNDEOC@W1X...	X20-574P		X20-574P_P_EOC213RR_Xanadu City St Patrick's ARK and Green Beer Festival and 911 Outage
03/16 17:05	XNDEOC@W1X...	XND020@W1X...	XND-8575P	X20-575P	XND-8575P_R_CSV form from Planning section for incident counts
03/16 17:05	XNDEOC@W1X...	XND020@W1X...	XND-8574P	X20-576P	XND-8574P_R_resource request received, please to fill out and return CSV form
03/16 17:24	XND020	XNDEOC@W1X...	X20-577P		X20-577P_R_Planning form update for Reporting Point 20.csv
Page 1, more...			Prepared by: Jim Oberhofer, KN6PE		e-Signature: <i>Jim Oberhofer, KN6PE</i>

ICS 309 Communications Log Builder (ics309lb.exe v3.7.0)

2. **ASCII Format.** This output is a text version of the same report. Because of the ASCII text nature of the report, paging and e-Signature are not included. The file is written to the Outpost reports directory with a datetime stamp name.

```

ics309cib230305210310.txt - Notepad
File Edit Format View Help
ICS 309 COMMUNICATIONS LOG

Task #          CUP-23-16T
Prepared Date:   03/05/23  20:40
Operational Period: 03/01/22 08:00 to 03/16/22 23:00
Task Name:       Prospect Earthquake
Radio Operator Name: Jim Oberhofer, KN6PE
Station ID:      Seven Springs ARK

Includes:        Sent, Received, Private, NTS, Bulletin messages
Excludes:        Messages containing "READ DELIVERED"

Date/Time      From          To          Msg ID    Local ID Subject
-----
03/07/22 19:51 KN6PE@W1XS~ CUP@XSC    6PE-249P  6PE-552P 6PE-249P_R_city notice reply test
03/07/22 19:51 KN6PE@W1XS~ CUP@XSC    6PE-252P  6PE-553P 6PE-252P_R_city notice reply test
03/07/22 19:55 KN6PE      PKTMON@W2X~ 6PE-554P          6PE-554P_R_EOC213RR_Practice KN6PE, Jim,
Cupertino, 7-Mar-2022
03/07/22 19:58 KN6PE      PKTTUE@W2X~ 6PE-555P          6PE-555P_R_EOC213RR_Practice KN6PE, Jim,
Cupertino, 8-Mar-2022
03/07/22 19:58 KN6PE@W4XS~ PKTMON@W2X~ 6PE-554P  6PE-556P 6PE-554P_R_EOC213RR_Practice KN6PE, Jim,
Cupertino, 7-Mar-2022
03/07/22 19:58 KN6PE@W4XS~ PKTTUE@W2X~ 6PE-555P  6PE-557P 6PE-555P_R_EOC213RR_Practice KN6PE, Jim,
Cupertino, 8-Mar-2022
03/14/22 19:40 PKTMON@W2X~ K9STV@W4XS~ MON-3186P 6PE-559P MON-3186P O/R_SCCo ARES/RACES Packet Practice

```

3. **.CSV Format.** This output is a .csv version of the same report. Paging and e-Signatures are not included. This format is useful if there is a need to consolidate different ICS 309 packet comm logs into a single report for analysis.

```

ics309cib230305210706.csv - Notepad
File Edit Format View Help
ICS 309 COMMUNICATIONS LOG

Task #,CUP-23-16T
Prepared Date:,03/05/23  20:40
Operational Period:,03/01/22 08:00 to 03/16/22 23:00
Task Name:,"Prospect Earthquake"
Radio Operator Name:,"Jim Oberhofer, KN6PE"
Station ID:,"Seven Springs ARK"

Includes:,"Sent, Received, Private, NTS, Bulletin messages"
Excludes:,"Messages containing "READ DELIVERED""

Date/Time,From,To,Msg ID,LMI,Subject
03/07/22 19:51,KN6PE@W1XS~,CUP@XSC,6PE-249P,6PE-552P,"6PE-249P_R_city notice reply test"
03/07/22 19:51,KN6PE@W1XS~,CUP@XSC,6PE-252P,6PE-553P,"6PE-252P_R_city notice reply test"
03/07/22 19:55,KN6PE,PKTMON@W2X~,6PE-554P,,,"6PE-554P_R_EOC213RR_Practice KN6PE, Jim, Cupertino, 7-Mar-2022"
03/07/22 19:58,KN6PE,PKTTUE@W2X~,6PE-555P,,,"6PE-555P_R_EOC213RR_Practice KN6PE, Jim, Cupertino, 8-Mar-2022"
03/07/22 19:58,KN6PE@W4XS~,PKTMON@W2X~,6PE-554P,6PE-556P,"6PE-554P_R_EOC213RR_Practice KN6PE, Jim, Cupertino, 7-Mar-2022"
03/07/22 19:58,KN6PE@W4XS~,PKTTUE@W2X~,6PE-555P,6PE-557P,"6PE-555P_R_EOC213RR_Practice KN6PE, Jim, Cupertino, 8-Mar-2022"
03/14/22 19:40,PKTMON@W2X~,K9STV@W4XS~,MON-3186P,6PE-559P,"MON-3186P O/R_SCCo ARES/RACES Packet Practice
Report For: Monday, March 07, 2022. Total = 34 call signs /36 messages"
03/14/22 19:42,KN6PE,PKTMON@W4X~,6PE-558P,,,"6PE-558P_R_EOC213RR_Practice KN6PE, Jim, Cupertino, 14-Mar-2022"

```

