
Outpost PMM

ICS 309 Comm Log Builder

User Guide

June 2022
Version 3.6.0



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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.

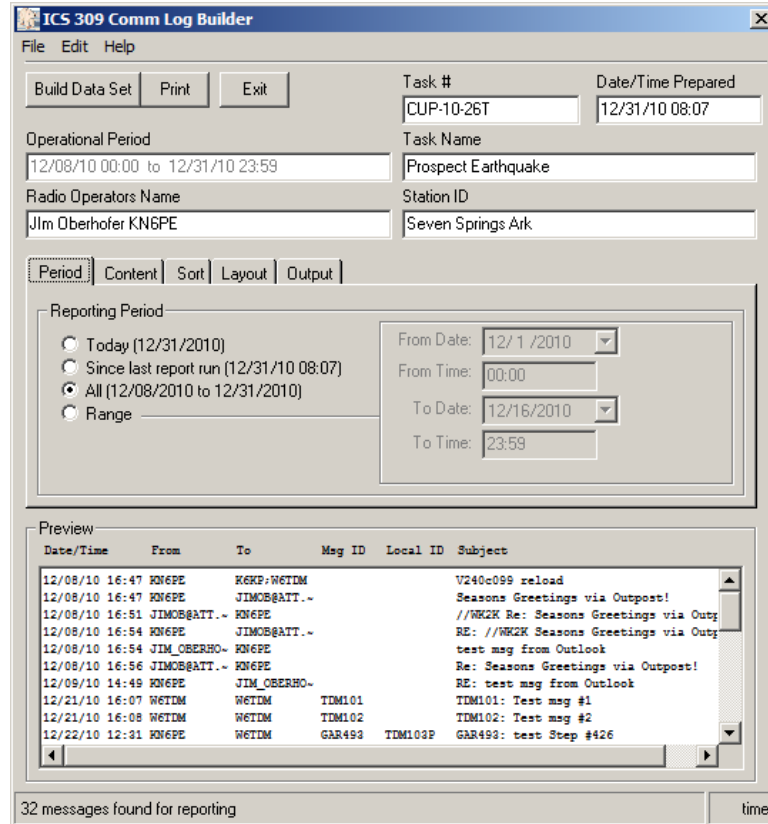


Figure 2: The Ics309clbmm Program

- **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 .
- 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@arrl.net.

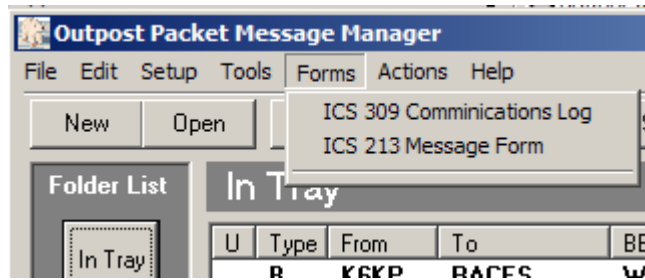
2 Getting Started

All ICS 309 log generation activities are managed and controlled by the Ics309clb.exe program. This section provides an overview of the program.

2.1 Running the program

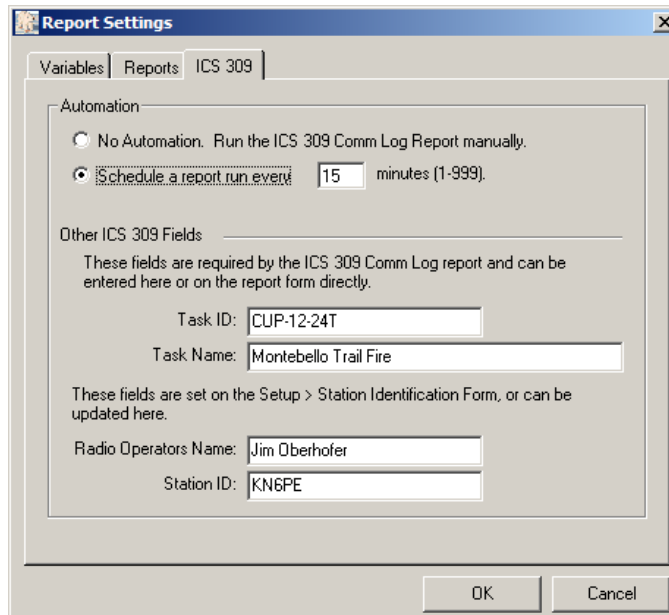
There are a couple of different ways to get the Ics309clb program scheduled. This section describes them all.

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



There are 2 sub menu items under this menu, click on **ICS 309 Communications Log**.

2. Automatically from Outpost. Outpost can automatically schedule the Ics309clb 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 Ics309clb.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. **Run the program.** See the above description. The program opens and reads Outpost's message.log file.
2. **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).
3. **Select your report options.** Choose how you want the report to look like in terms of date/time range, content, sorts, fields, and output.
4. **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.
5. **Print.** When you have the report the way you want it, press Print to output the report.

2.3 The main Ics309clb form

When you start the program, you will see the main program window open letting you know that Ics309clb.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.

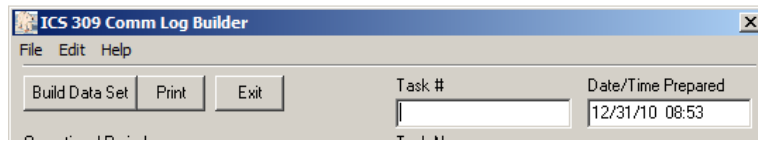


Figure 3: Main Screen Menu and Tool Bar

Menus	Description
File	<p>Save as .txt: The program to create an ASCII-formatted text report file.</p> <p>Save as .csv: The program to create a comma-delimited text file of the report content.</p> <p>Reload: 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>Print Setup. Lets the user to select a default printer.</p> <p>Print. Lets the user to select a printer, and then print the Communications Log in a standard ICS 308 format.</p> <p>Exit: Exits the program.</p>
Edit	<p>Cut: Copies and deletes any highlighted text from any text area of the form. The text is placed in the MS-Windows clipboard.</p> <p>Copy: Copies any highlighted text in any from any text area of the form. The text is placed in the MS-Windows clipboard.</p> <p>Paste: Inserts text from the clipboard at the position where the cursor is located.</p> <p>Select All: Highlights the contents of whatever field in which the cursor is placed. A Copy or Cut usually follows this.</p>
Help	<p>About: Lists information about lcs309clb.</p>

The following are other controls found on the main form.

Controls	Description
Build Data Set	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.
Print	Initiate a Print activity based on the Output options that are set.
Exit	Exits the program.

2.5 Report Header Fields

Field	Description
Task ID	Manual: The Task Number that is assigned by the Communications Team Leader. Default: Blank, or loaded with the value previously entered.
Date/Time Prepared	Automatic: set to the date and time when the program was run.
Operational Period	Automatic: Set to the data range identified by the Period option.
Task Name	Manual: The Task Name that is assigned by the Communications Team Leader. Default: Blank, or loaded with the value previously entered.
Radio Operators Name	Manual: The name and call sign of the operator. Default: Blank, or loaded with the value previously entered.
Station ID	Manual: Could be the physical location or tactical call assigned to this operator. Default: Blank, or loaded with the value previously entered.
Preview	This area holds 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.

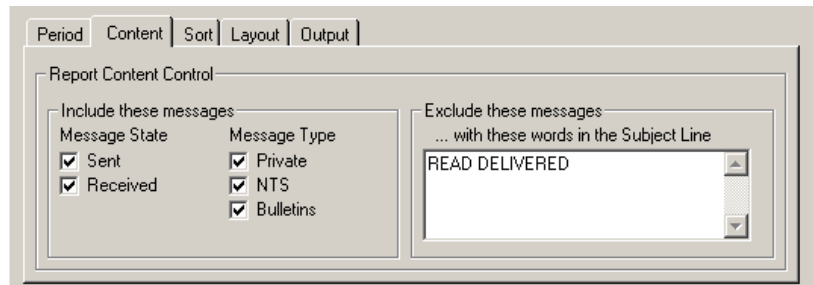
The screenshot shows the 'ICS 309 Comm Log Builder' application window. The 'Operational Period' field contains '01/02/11 00:00 to 01/02/11 23:59'. The 'Reporting Period' section has four radio button options: 'Today (01/02/2011)', 'Since last report run (12/31/10 08:07)', 'All (12/08/2010 to 01/02/2011)', and 'Range'. The 'Range' option is selected, and the 'From Date' is '12/1/2010', 'From Time' is '00:00', 'To Date' is '12/16/2010', and 'To Time' is '23:59'. Other fields include 'Task #' (Cup-10-25T), 'Date/Time Prepared' (01/02/11 17:20), 'Task Name' (Earthquake), 'Radio Operators Name' (Jim Oberhofer KN6PE), and 'Station ID' (Seven Springs Ark).

There are 4 period options that can be used:

1. **Today.** The range is <todays_date> 00:00 to <todays_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 <todays_date> 23:59. This option is useful when you want to automatically generate incremental reports from Outpost (**Tools > Report Settings**, 3rd 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.

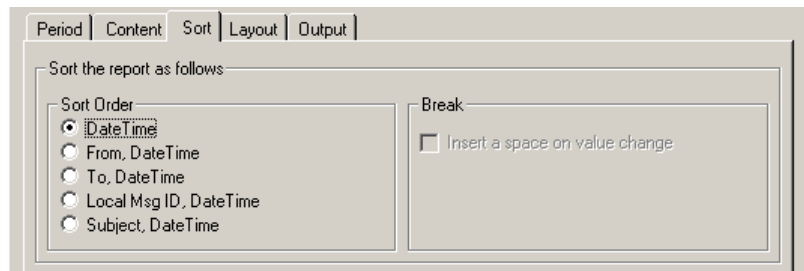


There are 2 ways the report content is determined:

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.

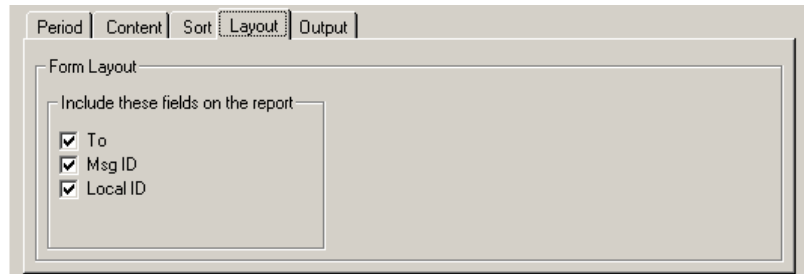


There are 5 sort options available:

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.



Period | Content | Sort | **Layout** | Output

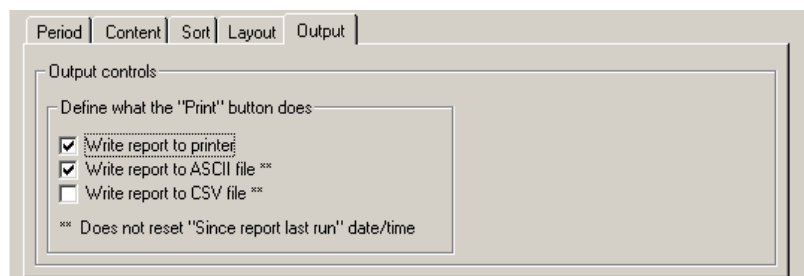
Form Layout

Include these fields on the report

- To
- Msg ID
- Local ID

3.5 Output Option

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



Period | Content | Sort | Layout | **Output**

Output controls

Define what the "Print" button does

- Write report to printer
- Write report to ASCII file **
- Write report to CSV file **

** Does not reset "Since report last run" date/time

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.