

## Introduction

Although the configuration wizard walks you through a number of the main setup decisions you need to make, it does not cover all of them. This document provides a more complete list and an overview of why and how for each. Here's a list of the decisions covered, all but the first two are optional:

- To Assign Function Keys
- To Define Messages
- To Define County Line Crossings
- To Define Way Points
- To Use a Real-Time Tracking Map
- To Add a Polygon Region to a County
- To Define User-Supplied Help Files
- To Use the Spot Window for Call Sign Search
- To Use Previous Exchange Information to Auto-Fill the Exchange
- To Keep a Log for GPS-Enabled QSLing
- To Maintain a Backup Log
- To Schedule CQT/QRZ QSO Closing Message

### To Assign Function Keys

While it is possible to operate CQ/X without the use of function keys and their ALT/CTRL/SHIFT combinations, it is advisable to define at least a basic set which will help minimize use of the mouse. Function keys are assigned using menu item **Keyer | Assign Function Keys**. Once these assignments are made they will remain in effect across restarts of the program so it is necessary to perform this step only when it is desired to modify the assignments. A default set is available for each contest and may provide a good starting point. If it is desired to use several different sets of assignments the capability exists to save these sets for later retrieval. Once a set of keys has been assigned the assignments will show up under the Key Assigns tab in the upper right hand side of the main display for easy reference.

### To Define Messages

Define your specific messages using the menu item **Keyer | Edit Message Template**. A default set is available for each contest and each mode of operation (inside mobile, inside fixed, outside fixed). If operating QSO party mobile you should include the current and next county designators (# and ! respectively) to allow the program to automatically insert the appropriate abbreviations into the messages as you move from one county to the next. Once these definitions are made they will remain in effect across restarts of the program so it is necessary to perform this step only when it is desired to modify the messages. Also, once a message set has been defined and applied the messages will show up under the Messages tab in the upper right hand side of the main display for easy reference, but will show with the current and next counties resolved into specific values.

### To Define County Line Crossings

When operating QSO party mobile with a GPS it is desirable to develop a route plan that defines how you are going to traverse the counties in your route including the specific lat/lon points at which each county line is going to be crossed. If you are planning to allow the GPS to automatically detect the

current county it is not mandatory to develop such a route plan since the program will automatically update the messages – **once you enter the county**. However, providing a list of county line crossings allows the program to provide information such as Distance and Time to Next County as well as improving the time delay of detecting each new county. Once you have settled on a route, the definition of the county line crossings is best performed using a mapping program that contains county lines such as Streets & Trips. The CQ/X help file explains how to do this, the format required, etc. Once the file of crossing points has been defined it can be imported into CQ/X using the menu item **QP Tools | Build Plan from Crossings**.

### **To Define Way Points**

It may be desirable to be able to monitor the distance to certain points along your route. In order to provide this capability it is necessary to define the lat/lon of each of these way points and to provide some description that will allow you to easily select a given way point for monitoring. Typical way points are important turns, important changes of highway, anticipated gas/bio stops, anticipated lunch/dinner/lodging stops. Definition of the way points is best performed using a mapping program such as Streets & Trips. The CQ/X help file explains how to do this, the format required, etc. Once the file of way points has been defined it can be imported into CQ/X using the menu item **GPS | Define Way Points**. Once these definitions are made they will remain in effect across restarts of the program so it is necessary to perform this step only when it is desired to modify the way points. Selection of the way point to monitor is performed using the combo box on the GPS panel.

### **To Use a Real-Time Tracking Map**

Even though I always provide the driver with written driving instructions there is often the need to provide verbal direction to the driver and to check to verify that he/she has not strayed from the designed route. To do this I usually run a real-time tracking map in the background that can be accessed quickly via ALT+TAB. A mapping program like Streets & Trips or Street Atlas can provide this function when driven by GPS data. CQ/X provides a GPS Pass Through mechanism for passing data to these mapping programs. The most convenient way to do this is to install virtual serial port (VSP) software which functions like a real null modem connection. The Help file discusses where to obtain free versions of such software. To set up the CQ/X end of the GPS Pass Through use the menu item **GPS | Setup GPS Pass Through**. You will need to be aware of the pair of ports that form the VSP.

### **To Add a Polygon Region to a County**

On rare occasions it becomes necessary to add to the USGS polygons to cover long stretches of a bridge that crosses one or more county lines. A case in point is the IH275 bridge in the Tampa Bay region of Florida in which there are two county lines. The USGS data is land-based and hence does not include the regions on the IH275 bridge. In order for the automatic county detection logic to function on this long bridge it is necessary to add a polygon region to cover the bridge. Adding a region is something that should be done prior to the trip so a careful review of the route is required in order to identify these regions, if any. Once identified use the menu item **QP Tools | Add a Polygon Region** and follow the steps described in the Help file.

### To Define User-Supplied Help Files

It is not desirable to try to remember the location of certain information files during the heat of the contest. In order to avoid this you can define a list of files for easy access. Once this list is defined the file descriptors show up on the Help menu for easy access. Typical files that I have found useful to include in this list are: Route maps for each day, Contest Rules saved as a single html (mht) file, notes on antenna tuning positions, equipment manuals, email confirmation of lodging, driving instructions, etc. Once defined this list of help files will be retained across restarts of the program so it is only necessary to perform this step when it is desired to modify the list. Use menu item **Options | Configure User-Supplied Help** to define the list.

### To Use the Spot Window for Call Sign Search

The Spot window, located just above the QSO Entry window, can be used for performing a partial call sign search. To set this up use the menu item **Options | Use Spot Windows for Call Search** and then use the resulting dialog to specify log files from which the search data will be built. Any log file in the Cabrillo format can be used. When this option is set up QSO entry begins in the Spot window. After entering a partial call press Enter and an list of calls containing the entered string will appear from which a call may be selected by cursoring up/down. Once selected, pressing Enter again will copy the selected call to the QSO Entry window and a subsequent Enter will send the exchange message (CQX) to that station. Once the QSO is concluded the focus will return to the Spot window for the next entry. To turn this feature on/off use the Options | Use Spot Windows for Call Search to check/uncheck the option.

### To Use Previous Exchange Information to Auto-Fill the Exchange

Use the menu item **Options | Auto-Fill Previous Exchange Info** to set up the option for automatically filling in exchange information gathered from previous QSOs, either in the current contest or in a previous contest. You will be asked to specify the logs that provide the previous exchange information. When this feature is used any exchange that is not appropriate for the current contest will be ignored but it is important to note that, on occasion, the wrong information might be automatically inserted. For example, suppose you have previously worked station X in a QSO party in which his state has a county with the abbreviation JEF. You are currently working another state QSO party from a state that also has a county with abbreviation JEF but the appropriate abbreviation you need from station X is now his state abbreviation. Bottom line – be careful in using the auto-fill feature. Always use the check area to verify that the correct information has been inserted and, if not, override the auto-fill by simply typing the correct information in the QSO Entry window.

### To Keep a Log for GPS-Enabled QSLing

CQ/X offers a feature for logging the GPS coordinates for each QSO in a file separate from the QSO log. Use the menu item **GPS | Setup GPS Log** to specify this type of GPS logging and to define the file in which this information is to be saved. Once the trip is over you can access the information for each station using the menu item **QP Tools | Prepare QSL Log Files** which will prepare information in a format that can be imported into Streets & Trips. Screen captures can then be used to produce the desired QSL. See the help file for details on how to do this. See the web site for examples.

**To Maintain a Backup Log**

If you wish to maintain a backup log use the menu item **File | Setup Backup Log** to define where the backup logs will be kept and their periodicity. A thumb drive is an excellent choice for a backup medium. Currently, at each backup the full log will be backed up so it is important to make sure that the backup media has ample free space.

**To Schedule CQT/QRZ QSO Closing Message**

The normal ending for completing a QSO and soliciting the next one is the CQ mode Thank you message (CQT). Normally this is a rather verbose message suitable when the rate is low but to be avoided or sent infrequently when the rate is high. When the rate is high a simple TU QRZ interspersed with the CQT will usually be preferred. Use the menu item **Keyer | Set CQT/QRZ Schedule** to set up the schedule for switching between these two closing messages. Set the rate above which the QRZ message will be sent and the rate below which the messaging will return to the CQT message. You can also set to insert the CQT message after a specified number of QSOs or after a certain elapsed time.