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CHAMAS HELP FILE

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0. Remark

This help file has been translated into English by Thomas Zielke (113355 AT DOLUNI1). The CHAMAS operators would like to announce that everyone who would like to translate this help file into languages other than German or English (how about French?) is heartily welcome to do so.

1. Introduction

1.1 General explanations

Why an introduction?

Well, that's simple...I don't know where to start...

Ok...CHAMAS stands for Chaos Mailbox System. The word Chaos has its roots in the period where CHAMAS was developed and programmed, a time when we had chaos at its best.

CHAMAS is on-line since April 1988 and can be reached via EARN under userid \$ nodeid 107633 \$ DOLUNI1.

This mailbox is menu-operated which means that there is one root- and several submenus.

At some points of the structure there are sub-submenus to some sub-menus, but generally our structure is not deeper than two levels.

CHAMAS is supporting the GEONET-standard, which has been developed some years ago for the GE01-mailbox. Up to now there are several

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mailboxes supporting this standard and thereby simplifying the use of them.

Because of CHAMAS' connection to EARN, we were unable to produce a fully-compatible GEO-shell, which can easily be seen in the fact, that contributing to a board does not happen through a kind of editor-like menu but by sending a file to CHAMAS in BTSMP-format (which is generally required from all gateways and servers on EARN).

1.2 Level structure

After subscribing to CHAMAS with the command NICK <nickname> (a procedure that is only necessary when using CHAMAS for the very first time), one is given the level-3-user privilege class. On CHAMAS, we have five user-privilege levels:

- Level 1 - System operators
(at the moment: TERRA and WALDI)
- Level 2 - OBBS-board administrators
In some cases we give level-2-privileges to other users, as long as they support us by giving advice or supervising CHAMAS.
- Level 3 - Normal user.
- Level 4 - Banned user, someone who has tried to 'sabotage' or misuse CHAMAS (for example, by steadily and unnecessarily using the NEWS-gateway).
Remember also the RELAY conventions on the use of bad language, offending other users etc.
- Level OUT - This level hinders level-3-users from accessing CHAMAS, which may happen during maintenance-time.
In that case, users trying to access CHAMAS get the message:
*Chamas shutdown in progress - Try again later

Users with levels 1 and 2 have a larger set of commands than level-3 users. These additional commands can be seen by sending the SYSCMD command. Level 1 and 2 also include the permission of writing onto the OBBS-boards which means that all OBBS-format-files sent to CHAMAS will be processed and added to the board. Sending files without having this special permission will result in re-sending the file then named ERROR NOTE to the contributing userid.

2. Menu system

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2.1 Root menuue

In the root menuue, we are offering the following services:

PBBS	- Public Bulletin Board System
OBBS	- Official Bulletin Board System
INFO	- Infos on CHAMAS and its site Oldenburg You can also find special information, i.e. on data networks, in this section.
SUBNET	- Info/and Diskussion via UUCP by Netmbx Berlin
GATES	- Gateway to CCC, MCS and CHAMAS-users
PD	- Public Domain software bank
MANAGER	- User Manager with system-functions

PBBS includes read/write-boards like CHAMAS or HACK.

OBBS includes read-only-boards like CCC or MCS. Only level-2-users have permission to contribute to these boards, which, however, means that they are responsible for 'their' board.

The PD-system can be used for exchanging public-domain-software (which we understand to be software without copyright restrictions).

The Manager includes general functions like changing one's nickname, asking for a list of users etc.

2.2 Sub menuue - BBS

BBS includes the submenuees PBBS and OBBS, which are working in a similar way. Valid commands are:

LIST PBBS / LIST OBBS	- will list the said boards and tell your the date when they were last changed.
INV <board>	- will list the contents of a board. The list contains fileid, sending userid, date and topic of all contributions to the board. The fileid is necessary for all requests to read or getting sent a message.
INFO OBBS	- gives you short information on OBBS.
RE <fileid>	- enables you to read a message. This is especially useful for PBBS-files as these are generally that short, that a send request would be quite a waste of time. However, if a file is larger than 50 lines,

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the file will not be sent and the user will be asked to submit a send request (cf. SE-command)

RE <id1> <id2> .. <idn> - Read more than one message

SE <fileid> - will tell CHAMAS to send you a copy of a message in NETDATA format. This command is of great use in OBBS, as messages there are normally larger than 50 lines.

SE <id1> <id2> .. <idn> - Send more than one message

DE <fileid> - deletes a message. Note that you are only authorized to delete your own messages.

WR <board> (PBBS only) - will give you a short help about how to contribute to a board via mail.

Writing to a board is accomplished only by sending a note or a file.
If you want to contribute to a PBBS-boards, you have to do it like this:

First you have to write a file with your site-specific editor.
The file header should look like this:

FROM: <nickname> <userid&nodeid>
BOARD: <boardname>
SUBJECT: <name of subject (no more than 25 characters|)>
DATE: <date>

<text>
<blank line>

NOTE:

The headlines beginning with SUBJECT and BOARD must not be omitted, and you have to provide a blank between SUBJECT: and the name of the subject you want to contribute to.

The following forms are used in CHAMAS:

BOARD: RPO /* contribute to the RPO-board */
SUBJECT: <text> /* where <text> can also be a general remark */
SUBJECT: RE: <text> /* answer or comment to a file
Make sure to specify the subject of the file
you want to comment or answer. */
SUBJECT: Q:<text> /* question */
SUBJECT: A:<text> /* answer to a question, where <text> should
be the same as in the 'question-file' header.*/

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Examples:

SUBJECT: Virus in Arpanet /* a simple header */

SUBJECT: RE: Virus in Arpanet /* remarks or comment to a contribution*/

SUBJECT: Q: Where's Singapore? /* Can anyone tell me where ... */

SUBJECT: A: Where's Singapore /* I know where... */

WARNING: The filetype of your message must not be CCC or NEWS or MCS, which would be mixed up by CHAMAS with the name of a gateway (see also the section on gateways).

2.3 Submenue PD

I've no idea 'bout that... Waldi is working at it at the moment...

2.4 Submenue MANAGER

The MANAGER offers you the following commands:

NICK	- changes your nickname
CMD	- shows the rootmenue
HELP	- returns the CHAMAS-logo, nickname and total amount of commands you have sent to CHAMAS up to now.
WHOIS <nick>	- tell you userid and nodeid of a CHAMAS-user
WHOAT <node>	- List of User at a Node
CALL	- calls a system-operator (if anyone's there)
NEWS <opt>	- informs you which new messages have been added to the NEWS service
opt could be:	
-l	- See a List of New Messages
-s	- Send new messages as File
-p	- Send a List of new PD-Software
optional: n	- Don't erase the entry in the Userlist.

i.e.: news -l , news -ln , news -p , news -sn , a.s.o.

2.5. Subnet

No Help available - Type SUBNET